

Senate Bill No. 111

(By Senators Unger, Jenkins, Laird and McCabe)

[Introduced February 13, 2013; referred to the Committee on
Education; and then to the Committee on Finance.]

**FISCAL
NOTE**

9
10 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by
11 adding thereto a new section, designated §18-2-36a; and to
12 amend said code by adding thereto a new section, designated
13 §18-20-1e, all relating to defining "dyslexia"; establishing
14 a dyslexia screening and intervention pilot project; and
15 establishing a dyslexia teacher training pilot program.

16 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

17 That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended
18 by adding thereto a new section, designated §18-2-36a; and that
19 said code be amended by adding thereto a new section, designated
20 §18-20-1e, all to read as follows:

21 **ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

22 **§18-2-36a. Dyslexia Screening and Intervention Pilot Project.**

23 (a) As used in this section, "dyslexia" means a specific

1 learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is
2 characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent
3 word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not
4 consistent with the intelligence, motivation and sensory
5 capabilities of the person, which difficulties typically result
6 from a deficit in the phonological component of language.

7 (b) The state board shall establish a pilot project to provide
8 early screening and intervention services for children with risk
9 factors for dyslexia.

10 (1) The state superintendent shall select three school
11 districts to participate in the pilot project.

12 (2) To be considered for the pilot project, a school district
13 shall submit a proposal to the state superintendent that identifies
14 a method of screening children for low phonemic awareness and other
15 risk factors for dyslexia, provides for the enrollment of children
16 identified as having risk factors for dyslexia in a reading program
17 staffed by teachers trained in multisensory structured language
18 programs and includes a methodology for evaluating the effects of
19 the reading program on the children's identified risk factors.

20 (3) Each participating school district, through early
21 childhood reading instruction and reading assistance programs,
22 shall screen children six years of age or younger for indications
23 of dyslexia, provide appropriate reading intervention services for
24 those children identified as having risk factors for dyslexia and

1 administer assessments, approved by the state superintendent, to
2 ascertain whether the intervention services improve those students'
3 reading and learning.

4 (A) When a child is identified as having risk factors for
5 dyslexia, the school district shall notify the child's parent or
6 guardian of that fact and that the child, as part of the pilot
7 project, is eligible to receive reading intervention services to
8 measure the effectiveness of early reading assistance programs.

9 (B) The parent or guardian shall indicate in writing that he
10 or she voluntarily and knowingly consents to the child's
11 participation in the pilot project for the provision of reading
12 intervention services.

13 (C) Each school district shall provide to the parents of
14 children identified as having risk factors for dyslexia information
15 about the learning disability, recommended multisensory treatments
16 and available services.

17 (4) The state superintendent shall apply for private and other
18 nonstate funds and shall use available state funds appropriated to
19 the Department of Education for the pilot project.

20 (5) The state superintendent shall establish guidelines and
21 procedures for the pilot project.

22 (6) The state superintendent shall consult with an
23 organization or organizations that specializes in multisensory
24 structured language programs for the treatment of dyslexia in

1 establishing and operating the pilot project.

2 (7) Each participating school district shall report to the
3 state superintendent regarding the progress of the pilot project
4 with a level of frequency to be determined by the superintendent,
5 but no less frequently than twice annually.

6 (8) The pilot project shall run for three full school years,
7 beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

8 (9) The goal of this pilot project is to demonstrate and
9 evaluate the effectiveness of early reading assistance programs for
10 children with risk factors for dyslexia and to evaluate whether
11 those programs can reduce future special education costs.

12 (c) The state board shall report to the Legislative Oversight
13 Commission on Education Accountability by December 1, 2013 and by
14 December 1 thereafter for the duration of the pilot projects on the
15 effect of the projects on diagnosing and treating children with
16 risk factors for dyslexia.

17 **ARTICLE 20. EDUCATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN.**

18 **§18-20-1e. Creation of a dyslexia teacher training pilot program.**

19 (a) As used in this section, "dyslexia" means a specific
20 learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is
21 characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent
22 word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not
23 consistent with the intelligence, motivation and sensory
24 capabilities of the person, which difficulties typically result

1 from a deficit in the phonological component of language.

2 (b) The state board shall establish a pilot project to educate
3 teachers on recognizing and adapting to children with risk factors
4 for dyslexia.

5 (1) The state superintendent shall select one or more
6 institutions of higher education and three school districts to
7 participate in the pilot program.

8 (2) The selected institution(s) of higher education shall:

9 (A) Provide teachers of grades kindergarten through fourth in
10 the selected school districts with programs or institutes designed
11 to train teachers on the indicators of dyslexia and the types of
12 instruction that children with risk factors for dyslexia need to
13 learn, read, write and spell, including multisensory structured
14 language programs; and

15 (B) Provide instruction for teacher candidates enrolled in the
16 elementary, early childhood education or special education program
17 at the institution, which is incorporated into the programs for the
18 school districts and is designed to train the teacher candidates on
19 the indicators of dyslexia and the type of instruction that
20 children with risk factors for dyslexia need to help them learn,
21 read, write and spell, including multisensory structured language
22 programs.

23 (3) The state superintendent shall apply for private and other
24 nonstate funds and shall use available state funds appropriated to

1 the Department of Education for the pilot project.

2 (4) The state superintendent shall establish guidelines and
3 procedures for the pilot project, including benchmarks for the
4 evaluation of the project.

5 (5) The pilot project shall run for a length of time to be
6 determined by the state board.

7 (6) The participating institution(s) of higher education and
8 participating school districts shall file reports concerning the
9 pilot program with the state superintendent at intervals to be
10 determined by the superintendent.

11 (7) The goal of this pilot project is to demonstrate and
12 evaluate the effectiveness of training teachers to provide early
13 reading assistance programs for children with risk factors for
14 dyslexia and to evaluate whether the early assistance programs can
15 reduce future special education costs.

16 (c) The state board shall report to the Legislative Oversight
17 Commission on Education Accountability by December 1, 2013, and
18 each December 1 thereafter for the duration of the pilot projects
19 on the effect of the projects on teachers' and teacher candidates'
20 ability to detect and adapt to dyslexia.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to establish a pilot project for dyslexia screening and intervention and a pilot project to educate teachers on recognizing and adapting to children with dyslexia in order to improve the education children with dyslexia receive in West Virginia.

§18-2-36a and §18-20-1e are new; therefore, strike-throughs and underscoring have been omitted.