

2021 -- H 5839

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LC001736
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION DYSLEXIA - THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR
DYSLEXIA ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Quattrocchi, Place, Filippi, Nardone, and Price

Date Introduced: February 24, 2021

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 16 of the General Laws entitled "EDUCATION" is hereby amended by
2 adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 67.3

4 THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR DYSLEXIA ACT

5 **16-67.3-1. Short title.**

6 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Rhode Island School for Dyslexia
7 Act."

8 **16-67.3-2. Legislative findings.**

9 (1) Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin, characterized
10 by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities
11 that typically result from a deficiency in the phonological component of language.

12 (2) Twenty percent (20%) of school-aged children in the United States are dyslexic.

13 (3) Approximately eighty-percent (80%) of children placed in special education for
14 learning disabilities are dyslexic.

15 (4) Dyslexia does not reflect an overall defect in language, but a localized weakness within
16 the phonologic module of the brain, where sounds of language are put together to form words or
17 break words down into sounds.

18 (5) Most children identified as having characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders can

1 be remediated successfully by explicit, systematic, multisensory instruction in phonics and
2 morphology.

3 (6) When intervention is delayed, it takes four (4) times as long to intervene in fourth grade
4 as it does in late kindergarten because of brain development and because of the increase in content
5 for students to learn as they grow older.

6 **16-67.3-3. Rhode Island school for dyslexia.**

7 (a) Upon the submission of all requirements pursuant to § 16-77.2-2 the commissioner is
8 hereby directed to authorize the creation of a charter school to admit all children found to have
9 identifying characteristics for dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia, eligible to attend public school,
10 or a charter school, subject to space limitations, with an explicit mission and purpose to educate
11 children found to have dyslexia, through a multi-sensory phonics based Orton-Gillingham Infused
12 approach.

13 (b) There shall be two (2) alternative education campuses, one located at Rhode Island
14 college, and a second located at the university of Rhode Island.

15 (1) The initial alternative education campus located at Rhode Island college shall be
16 operational within one year of the passage of this act, and the second alternative education campus
17 will be operational within two (2) years of the passage of this act.

18 (c) If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or
19 building, students must be accepted based on the severity of dyslexia. If the applications exceed
20 the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building, additional space must be made available
21 by the following calendar school year.

22 (d) The dyslexic charter school may give enrollment priority to a sibling of a dyslexic pupil
23 currently enrolled and attending, as long as said sibling has a diagnosis of dyslexia, or who, within
24 the last six (6) years, attended the school for at least one complete academic year. The charter
25 school must also give enrollment preference to students enrolled in the charter school for dyslexia
26 the previous school year.

27 (e) The principle of the dyslexia charter schools shall have the requisite knowledge and
28 experience in a direct, explicit, multisensory, phonics based, structured, sequential, diagnostic, and
29 prescriptive way of teaching literacy, have completed the IMSE comprehensive thirty (30) hour
30 Orton-Gillingham training, and have experience in the indices of teaching children who have
31 dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia, including the use of assistive technology, assistive software
32 programs, and evaluating the children without the use of testing or grading.

33 (f) The teachers of the dyslexia charter schools shall have the requisite knowledge and
34 experience in a direct, explicit, multisensory, phonics based, structured, sequential, diagnostic, and

1 prescriptive way of teaching literacy, as well as having completed the IMSE comprehensive thirty
2 (30) hour Orton-Gillingham training.

3 (g) The reading specialist schools shall have the requisite knowledge and experience in a
4 direct, explicit, multisensory, phonics based, structured, sequential, diagnostic, and prescriptive
5 way of teaching literacy, as well as having completed the IMSE comprehensive thirty (30) hour
6 Orton-Gillingham training, as well as giving completed the IMSE intermediate thirty (30) hour
7 Orron-Gillingham training.

8 (h) Both schools shall create a governing board, comprised of two (2) parents of currently
9 enrolled children, one parent of a dyslexic student who has graduated eighth grade from the charter
10 school, the principle and one teacher from the charter school, a representative from academia versed
11 in the science of reading, and a representative from an established dyslexic school within the United
12 States.

13 (i) The board shall meet monthly and as needed, to receive a report from the principle, and
14 to make necessary decisions pertaining in the school.

15 (j) The Rhode Island school for dyslexia shall be exempt from state mandated testing due
16 to the unique characteristics of the school population.

17 (k) The dyslexic charter schools shall be named "The Rhode Island school for dyslexia",
18 and shall have a motto "Strength, Determination, Fortitude".

19 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION DYSLEXIA - THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR
DYSLEXIA ACT

- 1 This act would establish a charter school for students with dyslexia.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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