

2022 -- H 7606

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

Introduced By: Representatives Quattrocchi, Price, Nardone, Roberts, Fenton-Fung, and
Filippi

Date Introduced: March 02, 2022

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The general assembly hereby adopts the following findings:

2 1. Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin, characterized
3 by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities
4 that typically result from a deficiency in the phonological component of language, and often
5 unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom
6 instruction, with secondary consequences which include problems with reading comprehension and
7 reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. See
8 International Dyslexia Association.

9 2. Twenty percent (20%) of school age children in the United States are dyslexic. See, the
10 Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity.

11 3. Dyslexia does not reflect an overall defect in language, but a localized weakness within
12 the phonologic module of the brain, where sounds of language are put together to form words or
13 break words down into sounds.

14 5. Most children identified as having characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders can
15 be remediated successfully by explicit, systematic, multisensory instruction in phonics and
16 morphology.

17 6. Research suggests that learning to read and write in cursive benefits the development of
18 cognitive, motor, and literacy skills. See, Cursive Writing Benefits To Help Dyslexic Children,
19 StartWrite India, July 2018, medium.com.

1 7. The instruction in cursive handwriting has been associated with improved academic
2 outcomes for students with learning disabilities such as dyslexia. See, Why Bother With Cursive,
3 Diana Hanbury King, 2015, dyslexiaida.org; Cursive Handwriting Helps Students Overcome
4 Dyslexia, 2016, newroom.domtar.com.

5 8. When intervention is delayed, it takes four (4) times as long to intervene in fourth grade
6 as it does in late kindergarten because of brain development and because of the increase in content
7 for students to learn as they grow older. See, National Institute of Child Health and Human
8 Development.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 16-22 of the General Laws entitled "Curriculum [See Title 16
10 Chapter 97 - the Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended by adding thereto the
11 following section:

12 **16-22-23.1. Instruction in handwriting in public school curriculum.**

13 (a) All school districts shall incorporate instruction on cursive handwriting into the
14 curriculum for students in elementary school.

15 (b) The curriculum shall include activities and instructional materials that promotes
16 students to become proficient in reading cursive and writing in cursive legibly by the end of grade
17 three (3) in elementary school.

18 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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- 1 This act would provide that all school districts shall incorporate cursive handwriting into
- 2 elementary school curriculum in order to be proficient by third grade.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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