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Bill Analysis

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Primary Sponsor: Sens. Lehner and Brenner

Mike Niemi, Research Associate

SUMMARY

- Requires the Department of Education, in consultation with the International Dyslexia Association in Ohio, to develop guidelines regarding best practices for, and maintain a list of approved professional development courses regarding, dyslexia screening and intervention.
- Requires that new public school teachers complete a dyslexia screening and intervention professional development course, and that certain teachers and specialists complete further courses on a regular basis.
- Requires that each school district and other public school develop a structured literacy certification process beginning in the 2020-2021 school year and then gradually increase the number of teachers certified under the process to one teacher per 100 K-5 students by the end of the 2024-2025 school year.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Dyslexia screening and intervention guidelines

The bill specifies the Department of Education, in consultation with the International Dyslexia Association in Ohio (IDA), must develop guidelines regarding the best practices for universal screening and intervention for children who either have dyslexia or are displaying dyslexic characteristics or tendencies.¹

For purposes of the bill, dyslexia is a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person's intelligence, motivation,

¹ R.C. 3319.077(B).

and sensory capabilities, which typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language.²

Teacher professional development regarding dyslexia

The bill requires the Department, in consultation with IDA, to maintain a list of dyslexia professional development courses, which may consist of online or classroom learning models. Approved courses must align with the guidelines adopted by the Department (see above), be evidenced-based, and require training for both identifying characteristics of dyslexia and understanding the pedagogy for instructing children with dyslexia.³

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, new public school teachers who provide instruction in any of grades K-12, including special education teachers, must complete an initial professional development course from the Department's list. In addition, each school district or other public school must require its teachers or specialists providing instruction in special education, English language arts, or literacy to complete additional approved courses on a regular basis.⁴

Certification in structured literacy

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, the bill requires each school district and other public school to establish a structured literacy certification process for teachers providing instruction in grades K-5. The certification process must require the completion of a practicum and align with the Department's guidelines.

It also phases in a required ratio of teachers certified under that process as shown in the table below.⁵

By the end of school year	Number of K-5 students per certified teacher
2022-2023	200
2023-2024	150
2024-2025	100

² See R.C. 3323.25, not in the bill.

³ R.C. 3319.077(C).

⁴ R.C. 3319.077(D), which applies to community schools, STEM schools, and college-preparatory boarding schools through references in R.C. 3314.03, 3323.11, 3326.11, and 3328.24.

⁵ R.C. 3319.078, which applies to community schools, STEM schools, and college-preparatory boarding schools through references in R.C. 3314.03, 3323.11, 3326.11, and 3328.24.

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	09-17-19
