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S.B. 200
(1_133_1555-3)
133rd General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for S.B. 200's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: In Senate Education

Primary Sponsors: Sens. Lehner and Brenner

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: Yes

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Highlights

- The bill's structured literacy certification requirements for teachers may increase costs to public schools by \$3.8 million or more statewide through the 2024-2025 school year for new certifications and annual renewals, depending on the certification program chosen. Annual renewal costs thereafter may be \$1.1 million or more statewide.
- The bill may also increase professional development costs of school districts and other public schools to provide training on dyslexia to new teachers.
- The administrative costs of the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) may increase to develop professional development guidelines and a list of approved professional development courses on dyslexia.

Detailed Analysis

Structured literacy certification

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 for students in grades K-5. According to the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), structured literacy is evidenced-based instruction that emphasizes the structure of language, including speech sounds (phonology); writing and spelling (orthography); the meaningful parts of words (morphology); grammar and sentence structure (syntax); the relationship between words, phrases, and sentences (semantics); and the organization of spoken and written language (discourse). The bill requires the process to align with ODE's guidelines for dyslexia screening and intervention (see below) and to require a practicum. The bill specifies certain student-to-teacher ratios for the number of teachers that must be certified under the structured literacy certification process for students in grades K-5. The ratios are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Required Structured Literacy Certification Student-to-Teacher Ratios Under S.B. 200	
By the End of School Year	Number of K-5 Students Per Certified Teacher
2022-2023	200
2023-2024	150
2024-2025	100

In FY 2019, there were approximately 746,000 full-time equivalent public school students enrolled in grades K-5 throughout the state. Assuming a similar number of students in grades K-5 each year, the student-to-teacher ratios required by the bill ultimately will require an estimated 7,900 teachers to be certified by the end of the 2024-2025 school year.

Cost of certification

School districts are likely to pay the cost of the certifications for their teachers, according to an official with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators. This analysis assumes that all school districts and public schools will do so. If some do not, the cost will be lower. The cost may also be lower depending on the number of teachers that already have obtained a structured literacy certification. The cost for the certifications appears to vary depending on the certification program chosen and the fees charged by providers. One option may be the Center for Effective Reading Instruction (CERI), an affiliate of the IDA, which offers two types of structured literacy certifications that include a practicum: one for dyslexia interventionists and another for dyslexia specialists, the latter of which carries additional training hour and practicum requirements. The fee for these initial certifications is \$290 for interventionists and \$315 for specialists. Annualized renewal fees are up to \$115 and up to \$140, respectively. Certification renewal requires completion of ten hours of continuing education each year. As a baseline, the following estimates the cost of a scenario in which all districts would seek certification for their teachers through CERI, though there are other programs that a district or school may wish to use (see more on that topic below). As Table 2 below shows, the cost for initial certification at CERI's fee levels and at the bill's fully phased-in student-to-teacher ratio for the 2024-2025 school year is estimated to be between \$2.3 million and \$2.5 million, again assuming a similar number of students in grades K-5 each year.

Table 2. Estimated Costs for Initial Structured Literacy Certifications (CERI Program)			
School Type	Number of Students in Grades K-5 FY 2019	New Interventionist Certification Cost (\$290)	New Specialist Certification Cost (\$315)
Traditional	696,000	\$2.1 million	\$2.3 million
Community or STEM	50,000	\$179,000	\$194,000
Total	746,000	\$2.3 million	\$2.5 million

Table 3 below shows the range of total estimated costs for each school year for both structured literacy certifications and renewals at CERI fee levels. The actual cost would likely be somewhere in between depending on the mix of interventionist and specialist certifications. Across the first three school years, the total cost in this scenario is estimated to be between \$3.4 million and \$3.8 million. Each year thereafter, the primary cost would be for renewals. Annual renewal costs after the 2024-2025 school year are estimated to range from about \$907,000 to \$1.1 million.

Table 3. Total Estimated Annual Costs for Structured Literacy Certification and Renewal (CERI Program)		
School Year	Low Estimate	High Estimate
2022-2023	\$1.2 million	\$1.3 million
2023-2024	\$830,000	\$965,000
2024-2025	\$1.3 million	\$1.5 million
Total for First Three Years	\$3.4 million	\$3.8 million
Each Subsequent Year	\$907,100	\$1.1 million

Other structured literacy certification programs, such as the Wilson Language Program or Orton-Gillingham, may carry a higher cost per teacher. Training for the Wilson Language Program is provided at only select locations across the country. One district that participated in this program estimated that it cost \$5,200 per teacher to become fully certified, which includes covering accommodations and travel to training sessions. According to Wilson Language Training, the organization offers a limited number of comprehensive programs each year for school districts and schools considering certification for a group of educators though it is unclear if there are discounted fees for this option. A credential earned through the Wilson Language Program is valid for five years and may be renewed at a cost of \$150. The Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators indicates that the cost of training for the Orton-Gillingham approach, including coursework and practicum, varies by provider. Some anecdotal information obtained through an internet search suggests that the cost of Orton-Gillingham certification may be somewhat similar to the cost for the Wilson Language Program.

Professional development requirements

The bill requires ODE to develop guidelines for dyslexia screening and intervention and to maintain a list of dyslexia professional development courses. The courses must align with the guidelines adopted by ODE, be evidence-based, and require training for identifying characteristics of dyslexia and understanding instruction of children with dyslexia. These requirements may increase ODE's administrative costs.

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, the bill requires all public school teachers, including special education teachers, to complete an initial professional development course from a list of the courses approved by ODE if they did not receive pedagogical instruction

regarding dyslexia or reading in their bachelor's degree program. The course may be delivered online or in a classroom setting. It appears most teachers likely received this training as part of their educator preparation program if they attended an Ohio higher education institution, based on current administrative rules with respect to the Department of Higher Education's criteria for approval of those programs (see additional details below). In addition, teachers or specialists providing instruction in special education or elementary literacy are required to complete additional approved courses on a regular basis, as determined by the school district's board of education. A variety of organizations, such as IDA and Dyslexia and Literacy International, provide free online courses to teachers. Ultimately, the cost to school districts may vary based on the professional development courses approved by ODE and the number of teachers required to take the courses.

Educator preparation program requirements

Current administrative rule requires the Chancellor of Higher Education to base approval of an education preparation program at an institution of higher education on several criteria. Among them, institutions must provide evidence of faculty credentials, coursework, assessments, and experiences that include "coursework in the teaching of reading and phonics" and "training in all programs leading to early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence/young adult, and intervention specialist licensure on effective methods of instruction for individuals with dyslexia."¹ The bill requires a higher education institution operating an educator preparation program to require a candidate for a K-5 or special education instructor license to complete two semester length courses of pedagogical instruction regarding reading, literacy, phonetics, or other related topics. According to a spokesperson with the Inter-University Council of Ohio (IUC),² this provision, effectively, may codify existing practice at institutions and, as such, may result in little, if any, additional costs to institutions offering educator preparation programs.

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¹ Ohio Administrative Code 3333-1-05 (C)(2)(j) and (k).

² IUC represents Ohio's 14 public universities.