

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 776 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY TOMLINSON, KILLION, BARTOLOTTA, GREENLEAF, COSTA, HUGHES, BLAKE, BREWSTER, SABATINA, FARNESE, VULAKOVICH, MENSCH AND BROWNE, JUNE 16, 2017

SENATOR EICHELBERGER, EDUCATION, AS AMENDED, JANUARY 29, 2018

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in preliminary provisions, further
6 providing for definitions; and, in Dyslexia and Early
7 Literacy Intervention Pilot Program, further providing for
8 definitions and for establishment of program.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Section 102 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30,
12 No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by
13 adding a definition to read:

14 Section 102. Definitions.--When used in this act the
15 following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

16 * * *

17 "Dyslexia." A condition that is characterized by difficulty
18 with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling
19 and decoding abilities, which characteristics typically result
20 from a deficit in one or more processes related to the

1 phonological component of language, that is often unexpected in
2 relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of
3 effective classroom instruction and that may result in problems
4 in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that may
5 impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

6 * * *

7 Section 2. Sections 1702-C and 1703-C(b) AND (C) of the act <--
8 are amended to read:

9 Section 1702-C. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this article
11 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

13 "Department." The Department of Education of the
14 Commonwealth.

15 ["Dyslexia." A condition that is characterized by difficulty
16 with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling
17 and decoding abilities, which characteristics typically result
18 from a deficit in one or more processes related to the
19 phonological component of language, that is often unexpected in
20 relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of
21 effective classroom instruction and that may result in problems
22 in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that may
23 impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. The
24 term shall apply only for purposes of the pilot program.]

25 "Intensive intervention." Explicit, multisensory, synthetic
26 phonics instruction and a structured language program delivered
27 with fidelity by a trained interventionist. The term shall apply
28 only for purposes of the pilot program.

29 "Pilot program." The Dyslexia and Early Literacy
30 Intervention Pilot Program established under this article.

1 Section 1703-C. Establishment.

2 * * *

3 (b) Program operation.--The pilot program shall operate for
4 [three] five full school years, beginning with the school year
5 that begins at least six months after the effective date of this
6 article.

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8 (C) ELIGIBILITY.--THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SELECT AT LEAST
9 [THREE] EIGHT SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PILOT
10 PROGRAM. TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE PILOT PROGRAM:

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11 (1) A SCHOOL DISTRICT MUST ENROLL [3,000 TO] NO MORE
12 THAN 15,000 STUDENTS AND PROVIDE FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN.

13 (2) THREE MONTHS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS
14 SECTION, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT MUST SUBMIT A PROPOSAL TO THE
15 DEPARTMENT THAT IDENTIFIES HOW IT WILL MEET THE GUIDELINES OF
16 THE PILOT PROGRAM'S:

17 (I) EVIDENCE-BASED CORE READING PROGRAM;

18 (II) EVIDENCE-BASED METHOD OF SCREENING ALL
19 KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS;

20 (III) EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMS; AND

21 (IV) A METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF THE
22 PROGRAM ON THE STUDENTS' IDENTIFIED RISK FACTORS.

23 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.