
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. With only just over half of Hawaii's students
2 reading proficiently, the legislature finds that there are
3 insufficient early detection policies and assessment regulations
4 in Hawaii to address students at risk of having dyslexia.
5 Evidence shows that students who are not identified as
6 struggling before grade three and brought up to proficiency have
7 significantly lower rates of success in the future. To ensure a
8 higher likelihood of success, students need proper intervention
9 methods that are scientifically based. Additionally, Hawaii is
10 one of a small number of states that does not have dyslexia-
11 specific laws related to student support.

12 The purpose of this Act is to support students with
13 dyslexia and other literacy challenges by requiring the
14 department of education to conduct universal screenings for
15 students in kindergarten through third grade to identify those
16 at risk of having dyslexia and other learning disabilities.



1 SECTION 2. Section 302A-101, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding three new definitions to be appropriately
3 inserted and to read as follows:

4 "Dyslexia" means a specific learning disability that is
5 neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with
6 accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and
7 decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a
8 deficit in the phonological component of language that is often
9 unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the
10 provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary
11 consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and
12 reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of
13 vocabulary and background knowledge.

14 "Phonemic awareness" means the ability to recognize that a
15 spoken word consists of a sequence of individual sounds and the
16 ability to manipulate individual sounds when speaking.

17 "Qualified dyslexia screening tool" means an assessment
18 that measures a student's ability to demonstrate phonological
19 awareness skills, phonemic decoding efficiency skills, sight
20 word reading efficiency skills, rapid automatic naming skills,
21 and accuracy of word reading on grade-level text."



1 SECTION 3. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§302A- Learning disabilities; universal screening. By
5 the 2026-2027 school year, all public schools shall conduct
6 universal screening using screeners approved by the department
7 for students in kindergarten through third grade to identify
8 those at risk of having a specific learning disability, such as
9 dyslexia, so as to provide for identification of and support for
10 these students. This screening process shall include:

11 (1) A list of approved qualified dyslexia screening tools
12 that address the following components:

13 (A) Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness;

14 (B) Sound symbol recognition;

15 (C) Alphabet knowledge;

16 (D) Decoding skills;

17 (E) Encoding skills; and

18 (F) Rapid naming;

19 (2) A process for parents or guardians to provide informed
20 consent for use of a qualified dyslexia screening
21 tool;



H.B. NO. 1657

Report Title:

Department of Education; Dyslexia Screening; Literacy

Description:

Requires all public schools to implement universal screenings for students in kindergarten through third grade to identify and support students who are at risk of dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

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