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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - SCREENING FOR READING DISABILITIES

Introduced By: Representatives Lombardi, Amore, Hull, Canario, and Craven

Date Introduced: March 04, 2014

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 16 of the General Laws entitled "EDUCATION" is hereby amended  
2 by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 103

4 SCREENING FOR READING DISABILITIES ACT

5 **16-103-1. Short title.** – This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Screening  
6 for Reading Disabilities Act".

7 **16-103-2. Definitions.** – The following words and phrases shall have the following  
8 meanings when used in this chapter.

9 (1) "Potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities" means indicators that  
10 include, but shall not be limited to, difficulty in acquiring language skills; inability to comprehend  
11 oral or written language; difficulty in rhyming words; difficulty in naming letters, recognizing  
12 letters, matching letters to sounds, and blending sounds when speaking and reading words;  
13 difficulty recognizing and remembering sight words; consistent transposition of number  
14 sequences, letter reversals, inversions, and substitutions; and trouble in replication of content.

15 **16-103-3. Distribution of information on screening instruments.** – (a) The  
16 commissioner of education shall distribute to each school district information on screening  
17 instruments available to identify students who possess one or more potential indicators of  
18 dyslexia or other reading disabilities pursuant to this chapter. The commissioner shall provide  
19 information on the screening instruments appropriate for kindergarten through second grade

1 students and on screening instruments that may be suitably used for older students. Each school  
2 district shall select and implement age appropriate screening instruments for the early diagnosis  
3 of dyslexia and other reading disabilities.

4 (b) The commissioner shall develop and distribute to each school district guidance on  
5 appropriate intervention strategies for students diagnosed with dyslexia or other reading  
6 disabilities.

7 **16-103-4. Screening for dyslexia and other reading disabilities.** – (a) A school district  
8 shall ensure that each student enrolled in the school district who has exhibited one or more  
9 potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities is screened for dyslexia and other  
10 reading disabilities using a screening instrument selected pursuant to this chapter no later than the  
11 student's completion of the first semester or trimester of the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) grade.

12 (b) In the event that a student who would have been enrolled in kindergarten or grade one  
13 or two (2) during or after the 2014-2015 school year enrolls in the district in kindergarten or  
14 grades one through six (6) during or after the 2015-2016 school year and has no record of being  
15 previously screened for dyslexia or other reading disabilities pursuant to this act, the school  
16 district shall ensure that the newly-enrolled student is screened for dyslexia and other reading  
17 disabilities using a screening instrument selected pursuant to this act at the same time other  
18 students enrolled in the student's grade are screened for dyslexia and other reading disabilities, or,  
19 if other students enrolled in the student's grade have previously been screened, within ninety (90)  
20 calendar days of the date the student is enrolled.

21 (c) The screening required by this chapter shall be administered by a teacher or other  
22 teaching staff member properly trained in the screening process for dyslexia and other reading  
23 disabilities.

24 **16-103-5. Comprehensive assessment for the learning disorder.** – In the event that a  
25 student is determined through screening conducted pursuant to this chapter to possess one or  
26 more potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities, the school district shall ensure  
27 that the student receives a comprehensive assessment for the learning disorder. In the event that a  
28 diagnosis of dyslexia or other reading disability is confirmed by the comprehensive assessment,  
29 the school district shall provide appropriate evidence-based intervention strategies to the student,  
30 including intense instruction on phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency, vocabulary, and  
31 reading comprehension.

1           SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage and shall be implemented at the  
2 commencement of the 2014/2015 school year.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T  
RELATING TO EDUCATION - SCREENING FOR READING DISABILITIES

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1           This act would require school districts to conduct screening for dyslexia and other  
2 reading disabilities of school children who have exhibited one or more potential indicators using  
3 certain screening methods selected by the commissioner of education.

4           This act would take effect upon passage and would be implemented at the  
5 commencement of the 2014/2015 school year.

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