

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 49th Legislature (2004)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
SENATE BILL 1456

By: Wilcoxson

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

[ schools - dyslexia - teaching competencies -  
renewal of standard certificate - codification -  
effective date ]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.516 of Title 70, unless  
there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Legislature finds that:

1. Dyslexia is one of several distinct learning differences  
characterized by a conspicuous problem with reading and acquiring  
proficiency in writing and spelling and affects twenty percent (20%)  
of the individuals in the United States;

2. At least twenty percent (20%) of students have specific  
learning disabilities, with the majority of those being in reading,  
and seventy-four percent (74%) of the children with disabilities in  
reading who are not identified until third grade continue to have  
reading disabilities in the ninth grade, even though they may be in  
special education classes;

3. If students are identified as dyslexic in the first and  
second grades of school, at least eighty-two percent (82%) can be  
brought to normal classroom level; however, if students are not  
identified until third grade, only forty-six percent (46%) can be  
brought to normal classroom level; and if students are not  
identified until grades five through seven, only ten to fifteen  
percent (10-15%) can be brought to normal classroom level;

4. The first form of assistance to struggling readers is through the Reading Sufficiency Act which requires early screening, intervention and remediation for students identified with reading problems; and

5. A second form of assistance is needed for assessment and treatment of students with dyslexia.

B. It is the intent of the Legislature that all students in public schools demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia or identified as at risk for dyslexia shall be provided multisensory treatment which involves explicit, sequential, systematic phonetic instruction and is aligned with evidence-based research on reading instruction for dyslexia. It is further the intent of the Legislature that this treatment shall be approved by an organization internationally recognized for the education of dyslexia and provided by special education teachers and reading specialists trained in structured, multisensory, phonetic techniques.

C. 1. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules and standards necessary to administer this section that shall be aligned with evidence-based research for the identification and treatment of dyslexia.

2. As used in this section, "dyslexia" means a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin, characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities, and typically is the result of a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.

D. 1. The State Board of Education shall review the teaching competencies for special education. The competencies in the area of mild-moderate disabilities shall ensure that teachers are competent in the principles of instruction and content of multisensory structured language techniques.

2. The State Board of Education shall compile a list of approved providers that meet the standards of an organization internationally recognized for the treatment of dyslexia. School districts may contract with approved providers of teacher training in explicit, sequential, systematic phonetic instruction that is aligned with evidence-based research on reading instruction for dyslexia. Schools are authorized to use federal special education funds, Title I funds, Title II funds under the Highly Qualified Teacher funds, state professional development funds, and any other local monies for this training.

3. No teacher shall be recognized as successfully completing the training until mastery of knowledge and skills of the treatment of students with dyslexia has been objectively demonstrated.

E. Beginning July 1, 2009, all teachers certified in mild-moderate special education or certified as reading specialists shall be required to receive training and demonstrate mastery in explicit, sequential, systematic phonetic instruction that is aligned with evidence-based research on reading instruction for dyslexia as a condition for renewal of a standard certificate.

F. Beginning July 1, 2006, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall not accredit, renew the accreditation of, or otherwise approve any teacher education program of any institution of higher education in this state that has not integrated the standards and competencies for reading instruction for dyslexia adopted pursuant to this section into programs leading to degrees in special education and certification as a reading specialist. Programs shall be designed to achieve competency in all areas of a multisensory structured language program.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2004.