

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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HOUSE BILL 420

Short Title: Students w/Dyslexia and Dyscalculia. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Conrad and Lambeth (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of Sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly Web Site.

Referred to: Education - K-12.

April 1, 2015

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND LOCAL BOARDS
3 OF EDUCATION TO IMPLEMENT A SCREENING PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY
4 STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA AND DYSCALCULIA.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 115C is amended by adding a new Article to read:

7 "Article 9D.

8 "Students with Dyslexia and Dyscalculia.

9 **"§ 115C-150.20. Purpose.**

10 It is the intent of the General Assembly that all students with specific learning disabilities,
11 including dyslexia and dyscalculia, receive the necessary and appropriate screenings,
12 assessments, and special education services to provide interventions for learning difficulties
13 with language, reading, writing, and mathematics. To provide a common set of professional
14 standards and guidelines for the identification of and intervention for students with dyslexia
15 and dyscalculia, the State Board of Education and local boards of education shall implement a
16 screening process, comprehensive assessment, and intervention strategies for these students in
17 accordance with the provisions of this Article and Article 9 of this Chapter.

18 **"§ 115C-150.21. Definitions.**

19 The following definitions apply in this Article:

20 (1) Disability. – As defined in G.S. 115C-106.3(2).

21 (2) Dyscalculia. – A specific learning disability involving difficulty in learning
22 or comprehending mathematics.

23 (3) Dyslexia. – A specific learning disability characterized by difficulty with
24 accurate or fluent word recognition, or both, and by poor spelling and
25 decoding abilities.

26 (4) Individualized education program or IEP. – As defined in
27 G.S. 115C-106.3(6).

28 (5) Special education. – As defined in G.S. 115C-106.3(20).

29 (6) Specific learning disability. – A disorder in one or more of the basic
30 psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language,
31 spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the impaired ability to listen,
32 think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. A specific
33 learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the
34 result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of



1 serious emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic
2 disadvantage.

3 **"§ 115C-150.22. Screening, assessment, and intervention.**

4 (a) The State Board of Education shall provide informational materials and screening
5 instruments developed in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(45) to local boards of education to
6 identify students who exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia and dyscalculia. Each local board
7 of education shall (i) provide for parents to receive informational materials related to dyslexia
8 and dyscalculia on an annual basis and (ii) ensure implementation of age-appropriate screening
9 instruments for the early identification of students with dyslexia and dyscalculia.

10 (b) A local school administrative unit shall screen every kindergarten student enrolled
11 in the unit for dyslexia and dyscalculia using the screening instrument adopted by the State
12 Board.

13 (c) A local school administrative unit shall screen any student enrolled in first through
14 sixth grade in the unit who has not been screened for dyslexia and dyscalculia under subsection
15 (b) of this section using an age-appropriate screening instrument adopted by the State Board.

16 (d) If a student is determined to exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia, dyscalculia, or
17 other specific learning disability, the local school administrative unit shall administer a
18 comprehensive assessment adopted by the State Board to determine whether the student has a
19 disability. A student identified as having dyslexia, dyscalculia, or other specific learning
20 disability shall be provided appropriate intervention strategies in accordance with the
21 guidelines adopted by the State Board through the student's individualized education program.

22 **"§ 115C-150.23. Training for school personnel.**

23 (a) Each local school administrative unit shall train one or more school employees to
24 administer the screening instruments provided by the State Board of Education pursuant to
25 G.S. 115C-150.22.

26 (b) Ongoing professional development opportunities shall be made available to teachers
27 and other school personnel on the identification of and intervention strategies for students with
28 dyslexia, dyscalculia, and other specific learning disabilities."

29 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

30 "(45) To Adopt Informational Materials and Guidelines for Students With
31 Dyslexia and Dyscalculia. – The State Board of Education shall develop and
32 adopt informational materials and guidelines for students with dyslexia and
33 dyscalculia in accordance with the provisions of Article 9D of this Chapter,
34 including age-appropriate screening instruments, a comprehensive
35 assessment for students who exhibit potential indicators for dyslexia,
36 dyscalculia, or other specific learning disabilities, and guidelines on
37 appropriate intervention strategies."

38 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 115C-296(b)(1) reads as rewritten:

39 "(1) Licensure standards.

40 a. The licensure program shall provide for initial licensure after
41 completion of preservice training, continuing licensure after three
42 years of teaching experience, and license renewal every five years
43 thereafter, until the retirement of the teacher. The last license renewal
44 received prior to retirement shall remain in effect for five years after
45 retirement. The licensure program shall also provide for lifetime
46 licensure after 50 years of teaching.

47 b. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of
48 Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall evaluate and
49 develop enhanced requirements for continuing licensure. The new
50 requirements shall reflect more rigorous standards for continuing
51 licensure and shall be aligned with high-quality professional

1 development programs that reflect State priorities for improving
2 student achievement. Standards for continuing licensure shall include
3 at least eight continuing education credits with at least three credits
4 required in a teacher's academic subject area. Standards for
5 continuing licensure for elementary and middle school teachers shall
6 include at least three continuing education credits related to literacy.
7 Literacy renewal credits shall include (i) evidence-based assessment,
8 diagnosis, and intervention strategies for students not demonstrating
9 reading proficiency-proficiency and (ii) identification and
10 intervention strategies for students with dyslexia, dyscalculia, and
11 other specific learning disabilities. Oral language, phonemic and
12 phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and
13 comprehension shall be addressed in literacy-related activities
14 leading to license renewal for elementary school teachers.

- 15 c. The State Board of Education, in consultation with local boards of
16 education and the Board of Governors of The University of North
17 Carolina, shall (i) reevaluate and enhance the requirements for
18 renewal of teacher licenses and (ii) consider modifications in the
19 license renewal achievement and to make it a mechanism for teachers
20 to renew continually their knowledge and professional skills."

21 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with
22 the 2015-2016 school year.