

**Sixty-sixth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Thursday, January 3, 2019**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1461
(Representatives Strinden, P. Anderson, Mock, Schatz)
(Senators Davison, Kreun, Myrdal)

AN ACT to create and enact two new sections to chapter 15.1-32 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to reading screenings and a dyslexia screening pilot program; to provide for a report to the legislative management; and to provide for an exemption.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. A new section to chapter 15.1-32 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Reading screening.

Each public elementary school shall include in the developing and processing of assessments and screening of reading, the core components of phonetic awareness, decoding, and spelling. The screening also must be offered if requested by a parent, legal guardian, or teacher.

SECTION 2. A new section to chapter 15.1-32 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Dyslexia screening - Pilot program - Report to legislative management - Professional development.

1. For purposes of this section:
 - a. "Dyslexia" means a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent recognition of words and poor spelling and decoding abilities, independent of the individual's general intelligence level.
 - b. "Specialist trained in dyslexia" means an individual who:
 - (1) Has expertise providing training in phonological and phonemic awareness, sound and symbol relationships, alphabet knowledge, rapid naming skills, and encoding and decoding skills;
 - (2) Is fluent in the dyslexia intervention process; and
 - (3) Has training in identifying dyslexia.
2. Beginning with the 2019-20 school year and continuing through the 2022-23 school year, the superintendent of public instruction shall establish and operate a pilot program to provide early screening and intervention services for children with risk factors for dyslexia, including low phonemic awareness.
3. To be eligible to participate in the program, a school district, regional education association, or special education unit must submit an application to the superintendent which:
 - a. Identifies a method of screening children for low phonemic awareness and other risk factors for dyslexia;
 - b. Provides for the enrollment of children identified as having risk factors for dyslexia in a reading program staffed by specialists trained in dyslexia and multisensory structured language programs; and

- c. Includes a methodology for evaluating the effects of the reading program on the identified risk factors of the child.
4. Each grantee selected to participate in the program shall:
 - a. Provide low phonemic awareness and other dyslexia risk factor screenings for children under seven years of age through a reading program established under subsection 3;
 - b. Provide reading intervention services to students identified as having dyslexia;
 - c. Administer assessments, approved by the superintendent of public instruction, to determine the effectiveness of the program in improving the reading and learning skills of children enrolled in the program; and
 - d. Provide professional development on dyslexia identification and interventions to grant participants.
5. The board of each participating grantee shall report annually to the superintendent of public instruction regarding the operation, results, and effectiveness of the pilot program in a manner prescribed by the superintendent. Before July 1, 2021, the superintendent of public instruction shall compile the information and report to the legislative management with a recommendation whether to continue the pilot program beyond the 2022-23 school year.

SECTION 3. EXEMPTION - DYSLEXIA SCREENING PILOT PROGRAM. Up to \$250,000 of the unexpended amount remaining from the appropriation for integrated formula payments, as authorized in subdivision 1 of section 1 of chapter 12 of the 2017 Session Laws, is not subject to the provisions of section 54-44.1-11 at the end of the 2017-19 biennium, and may be continued into the 2019-21 biennium for the purpose of providing a dyslexia screening pilot program.