



**State Fiscal Note for Bill
Number: 2019-H-5426**

Date of State Budget Office Approval:

Date Requested: Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Date Due: Friday, April 12, 2019

Impact on Expenditures

FY 2019 \$0
FY 2020 See Below
FY 2021 See Below

Impact on Revenues

FY 2019 N/A
FY 2020 N/A
FY 2021 N/A

**Explanation by State
Budget Office:**

This bill creates RIGL Chapter 16-67.2, entitled "Screening and Education of Children with Dyslexia and Related Disorders," establishing a statewide screening, intervention, and accommodation strategy addressing the impact of dyslexia and related learning disorders. Below is a section by section outline of all proposed additions to the General Laws of Rhode Island associated with the creation of this Chapter.

Changes by Section:

RIGL 16-67.2-1 establishes the General Assembly's "Findings," outlining dyslexia as a learning disability impacting approximately 20.0 percent of school-aged children in the United States. The findings state that dyslexia can be successfully remediated using explicit, systematic, multisensory instruction in phonics and morphology. The early screening and treatment of dyslexia is described as "significantly" more cost effective compared to intensive remediation in later years.

Section 16-67.2-2, entitled "Screening for Dyslexia and Related Disorders," requires all K-12 students be screened for dyslexia and similar disorders, commencing school year 2020-2021. All public school students henceforth will be screened yearly to monitor progress. If a student is identified as at risk, the student will receive an immediate intervention using the "Orton-Gillingham" method. Legal guardians of at-risk students can submit results of an independent neuropsychological evaluation, the results and recommendations of which shall be implemented by the school. This evaluation will be financed at self-cost unless the guardian is receiving "state assistance," where the state shall assume fiscal responsibility through the guardian's state supported health insurance. The type of "state assistance" is not specified in this section.

Section 16-67.2-3, entitled "Teacher Certification," establishes a schedule for when teachers must complete certification, defining certification as completing the Orton-Gillingham Classroom Educator program, as described by the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators (AOGPE). This section requires all kindergarten teachers be certified no later than September 1, 2021, requiring an additional grade each year thereafter (i.e. all first-grade teachers must be certified by September 1, 2022). This continues until all k-6 grade teachers are certified by no later than September 1, 2027.

Section 16-67.2-4, entitled "Teacher Professional Development and Training,"

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Page 1 of 6

requires each school district to develop and make available materials outlining best practices on recognition of, and evidence-based interventions/accommodations for, dyslexia and related disorders. Materials must be developed and made available no later than September 1, 2021.

Section 16-67.2-5, entitled “Dyslexia Professional Awareness,” requires the Department of Education to ensure that each teacher receives professional awareness training on the characteristics of dyslexia, as well as evidence-based interventions/accommodations for the disorder.

Section 16-67.2-6, entitled “Dyslexia Resource Guide,” requires all school districts to publish a “reading support resource guide” on their district’s respective school website no later than September 1, 2021.

Section 16-67.2-7, entitled “Funding for Professional Development,” builds on Section 4 of this chapter, requiring all school districts to provide funding for the professional development of teachers, and allowing teachers to complete the Orton-Gillingham Classroom Educator program. This section also requires school districts to coordinate their dyslexia related professional development program with Rhode Island College (RIC) and the University of Rhode Island (URI).

Section 16-67.2-8, entitled “Department of Education Responsibilities,” requires the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) to disseminate best practices utilizing a web-based platform. Best practices must include trainings and materials for teachers’ professional development and be inclusive of “middle grades.” The Department must also display the progress of all students and shall report annually to the Board of Education and the General Assembly if any district has failed to provide an adequate professional development system. Finally, RIDE is required to establish/hire a reading specialist position that is certified by Orton-Gillingham.

Section 16-67.2-9, entitled “Dyslexia and Related Disorder Education in Teacher Preparation Programs,” requires the coordination and collaboration between the RI Department of Education and the Commissioner on Postsecondary Education. Further, the three institutions of higher education (CCRI, RIC, and URI) are to require that all teacher education programs offered must include dyslexia awareness and evidenced based intervention/accommodation training, and the completion of an Orton-Gillingham classroom Educator program as established by the AOGPE.

Section 16-67.2-10, entitled “Dyscalculia,” requires that any student identified as having dyslexia automatically be diagnosed with dyscalculia and instructed in “Singapore Math,” no later than September 1, 2021.

Section 16-67.2-11, entitled “Research Committee,” requires the General Assembly to form a study commission to establish a plan for two schools to be located at RIC and URI that are solely dedicated to the instruction of dyslexic children. The commission will convene no later than January 1, 2020, and is to issue/deliver a report to the General Assembly prior to the commencement of the 2021 Legislative Session.

*Comments on
Sources of Funds:*

As written, this bill places much of the financial responsibility of identifying and teaching students with dyslexia and related disorders, as well as the professional development required for effective intervention, on the LEA (Local Education Authority or district) of attendance. Local financing will be thus ultimately determined by the impacted LEA.

For Sections of 16-67.2 that determine the State as the financial actor responsible, the State will appropriate general revenues to either the ACES (Administration of the Comprehensive Education Strategy) program, the Education Aid program, or one of the state schools, which include William M. Davies, Jr. Career and Technical School (Davies), the Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center (Met Center), and the RI School for the Deaf (RISD), as well as the Central Falls School district, all individual programs housed in the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Regarding the financial impact of the proposed RIGL Section 16-67.2-11, and the potential establishment of two dyslexia specific schools at RIC and URI, the financial impact is outside the time period of this fiscal note (FY 2019 – FY 2021). Note, a financing mechanism is not described in this bill, therefore any out-year forecast based on source of funding cannot be estimated. However, a potential comparison could be the Henry Barnard School, a RIC run elementary school. The operating costs of this school in FY 2019 is estimated to be \$4.3 million all funds in FY 2019, and it is currently serving 220 students.

*Summary of Facts
and Assumptions:*

Sections of 16-67.2 with State Financial Impact Only:
Proposed RIGL Sections 16-67.2-2, 8, 9, and 11 all present a general revenue impact to the State, noting several other sections intended to impact local districts will also impact state resources, with the Department of Education being financially responsible for Central Falls School District and the three state schools.

Subsection (f) of RIGL 16-67.2-2 requires the state to be fiscally responsible for independent dyslexia and related disorder evaluations if the participating student's guardian receives state assistance. Such screenings are already financed through the state Medical Assistance program, therefore there is no assumed fiscal impact unless this bill promotes more awareness for qualified services.

Section 16-67.2-8 requires RIDE to disseminate best practices and professional development utilizing a web-based platform and annually report the progress of all students. This section also requires RIDE to hire a "Reading Specialist" position. It is assumed that the Department will not incur any costs specific to the displaying of information on their website, utilizing its current information technology (IT) staff. As for the web-based professional development component, RIDE estimates based on similar projects, and after the conclusion of an RFP process, best practice curriculum will like cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars (general revenues). Finally, the Budget Office estimates approximately \$133,000 in total personnel expenditures associated with the hiring of a Reading Specialist position. This general revenue estimate assumes a salary of \$80,000 and the position will be hired at the beginning of FY 2021.

Section 16-67.2-9 requires all teacher education programs at the public institutions

(RIC and URI) incorporate Dyslexia awareness, evidence-based interventions, and the completion of an Orton-Gillingham Classroom Educator program, no later than the 2021-2022 school year (FY 2022). The certification requirements of the "Classroom Educator" level, are a minimum of 30 hours of coursework and 5 supervised observations. It is assumed by the Budget Office that the institutions will incorporate these requirements into their teaching curriculum and absorb any incremental cost with institutional dollars.

Sections of 16-67.2 with Municipal and State Financial Impact:

Section 16-67.2-2 requires all k-12 students to be screened for dyslexia and similar disorders beginning in the 2020-2021 school year (FY 2021). This section places financial responsibility of the screening, and if necessary interventions, based on the district of origin. However, the Budget Office assumes the State would be financially responsible for students attending the three state schools and the Central Falls School District. Utilizing RIDE's enrollment data as of October 2016, this would require the screenings of 142,142 public school students, of which 4,280 students the state would be responsible to screen, in FY 2021, with follow-up screening annually thereafter.

The bill requires Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP) testing to be used to screen students, and according to "PAR," an education assessment publisher, the CTOPP takes approximately 40 minutes per individual student to administer, and the recording booklets cost \$2.92 per-student. The Budget Office assumes that districts will likely contract-out these testing services because of the sheer volume of students and the total length of each screening. With the assumption that 1.5 tests can be completed per hour, an hourly rate can be assumed to calculate the cost of such screenings, inclusive or exclusive of the costs of individual testing booklets. Excluding state schools, booklets alone will cost districts/charters \$402,557 (137,862 students * \$2.92 per booklet), and an estimated time for one-on-one screenings will total approximately 91,908 hours to complete (137,862 students / 1.5 screenings per- hour). Essentially, for every \$10 per-hour charged by a vendor for screenings, districts would be responsible to pay approximately \$919,080 (91,908 hours * \$10 hourly rate). With the associated labor requirements for screening all public-school children individually, a contracted vendor will likely charge an hourly rate much higher than \$10, thus the impact for districts will likely be in the multiple of millions of dollars.

Following a similar logic for the 4,280 state school students, booklets will cost approximately \$12,498 and screenings will cost \$28,533 for every \$10 per hour charged. Finally, if any student is deemed at-risk, the school district or origin is responsible to provide dyslexia therapy, by an individual who possess a "Level 1" certification in Orton-Gillingham. The financial impact of this is indeterminate but could lead to districts and/or the state hiring or contracting with certified individuals in the short-term, while teachers acquire certifications over the coming months. Initial research by the Budget Office suggests Orton-Gillingham certified tutors hourly rate range between \$40 - \$80. Identified students will likely be prescribed an IEP (Individualized Education Program) and meet with tutors as recommended.

Section 16-67.2-3 requires all k-6 teachers be certified at the Orton-Gillingham

Classroom Educator Level over a six-year period (FY 2022 -2028). With this statutorily prescribed time-period, there is no financial impact for the time horizon of this fiscal note (FY 2019-2021), unless districts require individuals be certified earlier than the summer of FY 2022. The cost of acquiring this certification has two components: 1] Each teacher must complete a minimum of 30 hours of “coursework,” or lecturing by an AOGPE accredited vendor. Coursework can be done in small groups, and according to the Green River Literacy Center (Massachusetts Vendor of Orton-Gillingham) would cost \$1,200 per session for five sessions (\$6,000 total); and 2] Five supervised observations for each individual candidate, costing \$125 per observation or \$625 per individual certification, again according to Green River Literacy Center. Regarding the state, the only schools impacted by this Section is RISD and the Central Falls School District because they both employ teachers at the sixth-grade level and below.

Section 16-67.2-4 requires each school district to develop and make available materials outlining best practices on recognition of, and evidence-based interventions/accommodations for dyslexia and related disorders by no later than September 1, 2021 (FY 2022). Specific to the State, the Budget Office assumes the creation of professional development material requirement associated with RIGL 16-67.2-8 will suffice for the state schools, however it may also potentially save districts’ money in developing individual materials of their own. If districts decide to develop their own programing and materials, they will likely incur a significant and indeterminable cost.

Section 16-67.2-6 requires all school districts to publish a “reading support resource guide” on their district’s respective school website no later than September 1, 2021 (FY 2022). The Budget Office assumes that each district already has the technological capacity to publish this guide on their respective website. Therefore, the only cost LEAs will incur is the cost of creating the guide itself, which is assumed to be significant and indeterminable.

Section 16-67.2-7 requires all school districts to provide funding for the professional development of teachers, allowing teachers to complete the Orton-Gillingham certification at the “Classroom Educator Level.” As mentioned previously, there is a significant cost and time commitment for teachers to complete this Orton-Gillingham certification, as well as supporting other professional development opportunities related to dyslexia. The Budget Office assumes such costs will be significant yet indeterminable. Districts or the State may have the opportunities to redirect financing from current professional development programs, however this assumption cannot be validated for all Rhode Island districts. Costs will be significantly higher if districts are required to support dyslexia professional development, including travel, on top of the current district offerings. A portion of such costs may be mitigated through district cooperation.

Section 16-67.2-10, requires that any student identified as having dyslexia automatically be diagnosed with dyscalculia and instructed in Singapore Math, no later than September 1, 2021 (FY 2022). Certification at the “Classroom Educator Level” is described by the AOGPE as a basic understanding of several elements of Orton-Gillingham instruction. These elements are phonics, reading

*Summary of Fiscal
Impact:*

fluency/comprehension, and vocabulary. This does not include math or the instruction of "Singapore Math," as required in this bill. This may require teachers to acquire additional certification or for school districts/the state to contract these services with a reputable vendor, both of which are financially inestimable but likely significant.

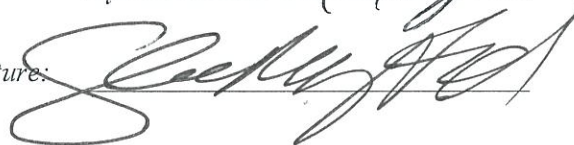
As stated/discussed above, this bill presents a significant yet indeterminant impact to the State's general revenue appropriations (FY 2020-2022), as well as a significant yet indeterminate impact to LEAs, but at a much larger magnitude. There is no anticipated impact on FY 2019 due to the bill's proposed implementation schedules. Due to a variety of factors, including; the hourly cost of screenings, the per-district/state cost for professional development materials and trainings, and the cost of interventions for students diagnosed with dyslexia, dyscalculia, and other related disorders, a fiscal impact cannot be determined. However, the relative magnitude regarding state general revenue expenditures will likely be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, and the cost to LEAs is likely to approach a multi-million-dollar figure, during the time/course of the bill's major implementation provisions.

See attached table for summary of impact by section.

Budget Office Signature:



Fiscal Advisor Signature:



RIGL Section	Source of Funds	Expenditure Impact FY 2019	Expenditure Impact FY 2020	Low-End Expenditure Impact FY 2021	High-End Expenditure Impact FY 2021	Comment/Calculations
16-67.2-1	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	No Estimated General Revenue Impact
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	No Estimated Impact on LEAs
16-67.2-2*	General Revenue	-	-	41,031	126,631	Estimates assume enrollments as of October 1, 2016, \$2.92 cost per booklet, 1.5 tests performed per-hour, and an hourly rate ranging between \$10 - \$40.
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	1,321,637	4,078,877	
16-67.2-3	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	No Estimated General Revenue Impact
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	No Estimated Impact on LEAs
16-67.2-4	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	\$100,000 control value for each individual district (34) for high-end estimate for professional development materials. Indeterminate fiscal note impact.
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	3,400,000	
16-67.2-5	General Revenue	-	-	-	8,500	Estimates assume 1 kindergarten teacher in every district (34) and 4 state teachers be certified prior to FY 2022 (required by bill).
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	63,250	
16-67.2-6	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	No estimated fiscal impact because this requirement commences FY 2022. The resource guide may be created in conjunction with Section 16-67.2-3.
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	
16-67.2-7	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	No Estimated General Revenue Impact
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	No Estimated Impact on LEAs
16-67.2-8	General Revenue	-	-	233,000	433,000	Estimates assume \$133,000 in personnel costs for a "Reading Specialist," and a range of best practice curriculum costs between \$100,000 and \$300,000.
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	
16-67.2-9	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	No Estimated General Revenue Impact
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	No Estimated Impact on LEAs
16-67.2-10	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	Indeterminate but significant impact. Will likely require influx of professional development and IEP assignments associated with dyscalculia remediation.
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	
16-67.2-11	General Revenue	-	-	-	-	No estimated fiscal impact because the creation/funding methodology for two dyslexia focused schools is not prescribed, and will be created after FY 2021.
	Local Funds (LEAs)	-	-	-	-	
Total	General Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 274,031	\$ 568,131	
	Local Funds (LEAs)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,321,637	\$ 7,542,127	

*Estimates only infer the anticipated cost of dyslexia screenings and do not include the cost of any interventions that may result.

