

HB 921 -- LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DYSLEXIA

SPONSOR: Burlison

This bill establishes the Legislative Task Force on Dyslexia and modifies the laws relating to dyslexia identification and programming. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to employ a dyslexia therapist, licensed psychometrist, licensed speech-language pathologist, certified academic language therapist, or certified training specialist with a minimum of three years of field experience in screening, identifying, and treating dyslexia and related disorders to serve as the department's dyslexia specialist by July 1, 2016;

(2) Requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure that the dyslexia specialist has completed specified training;

(3) Provides qualifications the dyslexia specialist must possess and responsibilities he or she will have, including assistance to the department with developing and administering specified programs for school districts no later than the 2016-17 school year;

(4) Establishes the Legislative Task Force on Dyslexia and requires the joint committee on education to provide technical and administrative support as required by the task force to fulfill its duties;

(5) Requires the task force to meet at least quarterly and to advise and make recommendations to the Governor, General Assembly, and relevant state agencies regarding matters concerning individuals with dyslexia including education and other adult and adolescent services. The meetings may be held via telephone or video conference;

(6) Requires the task force to consist of 17 members that will serve without compensation. Two members must be from the House of Representatives and appointed by the Speaker of the House, the remaining membership is specified in the bill;

(7) Requires the task force to make recommendations for a statewide system for identification, intervention, and delivery of supports for students with dyslexia including the development of resource materials and professional development activities, which must be included in a report to the Governor and legislature and must include findings and proposed legislation. The report must be made available no longer than 12 months from the task force's first

meeting; and

(8) Specifies what should be included in the recommendations and resource materials developed by the task force.

The task force authorized under these provisions will expire on August 31, 2017.