



# HOUSE BILL 149: Students W/ Dyslexia and Dyscalculia.

2017-2018 General Assembly

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<b>Committee:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	August 11, 2017
<b>Introduced by:</b>		<b>Prepared by:</b>	Drupti Chauhan
<b>Analysis of:</b>	S.L. 2017-127		Staff Attorney

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**OVERVIEW:** *S.L. 2017-127 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to: (1) define dyslexia as a part of its policies for specific learning disabilities; (2) ensure ongoing professional development opportunities for school personnel on the identification of and intervention for specific learning disabilities; and (3) provide information for parents and others on support for children with dyslexia.*

*The act also requires local boards of education to review diagnostic tools and screening instruments for specific learning disabilities and determine if additional diagnostic and screening tools are needed.*

*The act became effective July 20, 2017.*

**PRIOR LAW:** Both State (G.S. 115C-106.3) and federal law (20 U.S.C. § 1401) include "specific learning disabilities" as a type of disability that may qualify a child under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to receive a free appropriate public education.

State statute does not define "specific learning disabilities", but federal law defines a specific learning disability, in general, as a disorder in one "or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations," and includes dyslexia as a type of specific learning disability. 20 U.S.C. § 1401(30).

In July of 2016, the SBE adopted an addendum to the NC Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities which tracks the federal definition of specific learning disability. NC 1500-2.4(b)(11) defines specific learning disability as "a disability in one or more of the basic processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the impaired ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations." The definition also states that "[t]he disability substantially limits academic achievement so that the child does not learn at an adequate rate when provided sustained, high quality instruction and scientific research-based intervention. Alternate terms may include, but are not limited to, dyslexia and dyscalculia."

**BILL ANALYSIS:** This act does the following:

- Establishes the General Assembly's intent that all students with specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia and dyscalculia, receive necessary and appropriate screenings, assessments, and special education services.
- Requires by June 30, 2017, that the State Board of Education define dyslexia as part of its policies for specific learning disabilities.

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- Requires, prior to the start of the 2017-2018 school year, the SBE to ensure that ongoing professional development opportunities be made available to teachers and other school personnel on the identification of and intervention strategies for students with dyslexia, dyscalculia, or other specific learning disabilities.
- Requires, prior to the start of the 2017-2018 school year, the SBE to develop and make available information electronically to parents, educators and other concerned groups on data concerning characteristics of children with dyslexia, educational methodologies, screenings and what is available to support the work with children with dyslexia in the State.
- Requires, prior to the start of the 2017-2018 school year, local boards of education to review the diagnostic tools and screening instruments used for dyslexia, dyscalculia, or other specific learning disabilities to ensure that they are age-appropriate and effective, and determine if additional diagnostic and screening tools are needed.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This act became effective July 20, 2017.

*\*Kara McCraw, Counsel to Senate Education/Higher Education, significantly contributed to this summary.*