

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**Measure: SB 612 – A**Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2015 Regular Session
Legislative Fiscal Office***Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed
Versions are Considered Official***

Prepared by: Krista McDowell
Reviewed by: Doug Wilson
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Measure Description:

Requires ODE to develop a plan to screen students for risk factors for dyslexia and to ensure specified staff members receive training related to dyslexia.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Department of Education, School Districts, Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, Educational Investment Board

Local Government Mandate:

This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Analysis:

The bill directs the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to designate a dyslexia specialist to provide school districts with support and resources that are necessary to assist students with dyslexia and their families. ODE is also directed work with experts on dyslexia to develop a plan related to screening for risk factors of dyslexia, and related to notifications sent by school districts to parents of students at risk for dyslexia. ODE is directed to submit a report on the plan to the interim legislative committees on education no later than September 15, 2016. Beginning in the 2017-18, school year districts are required to ensure that at least on one kindergarten through grade five teacher, in each kindergarten through grade five school, has received training, specified by the bill, related to dyslexia. ODE and the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) are directed to annually develop a list of dyslexia training opportunities that satisfy the requirements of the legislation. School districts that do not comply with the dyslexia training requirements may secure a waiver from ODE, or be considered nonstandard and the Superintendent of Public Instruction may withhold portions of State School Fund moneys otherwise allocated to the school district. The bill also adds dyslexia training, to school districts for kindergarten through grade five teachers, to the list of entities allowed to be funded under the Network of Quality Teaching and Learning (NQTL).

ODE anticipates the need for an Education Program Specialist 2 to fulfill the role of dyslexia specialist and to help school districts comply with dyslexia teacher training beginning July 1, 2017. The position is also anticipated to work with experts on dyslexia to help develop the dyslexia screening and notification plan. The work associated with developing the plan will end September 15, 2016 and remaining tasks for this position during in the 2015-17 biennium will be to provide support and resources. Therefore, the Legislative Fiscal Office recommends establishing this position permanently as a part-time 0.50 FTE. Should additional legislation be introduced to implement the plan, then the position equivalence may be evaluated at that time. Costs associated with the position as well as services and supplies related to the plan development are estimated at \$138,116 General Fund (GF) in the 2015-17 biennium. After plan development is completed costs for the half-time position are estimated at \$131,136 GF in the 2017-19 biennium.

Costs associated with dyslexia training for teachers are likely to vary significantly based on the type (i.e. online, in-person class, or conference) and length of time for the training. School districts estimate that \$500,000 per biennium may support the training for at least one teacher in kindergarten through grade five schools. Costing factors related to training include the following:

1. Salary reimbursement for time spent training and/or substitute teacher reimbursement.
2. Mileage reimbursement for travel to the training.
3. Fees associated with training, certification, and learning materials reimbursement.
4. Lost opportunity costs, if time spent for dyslexia training, results in less grading or other professional development time for teachers.
5. Labor costs associated with tracking & maintaining training records in each school district

Expenses incurred by ODE and TSPC related to rulemaking are anticipated to be minimal and absorbable within the existing parameters of the agencies budgets. Including dyslexia related training to the list of allowable projects to be funded under the NQTL is estimated to have a minimal fiscal expense to ODE; however the Legislative Fiscal Office notes that adding additional funding obligations to the NQTL without actually increasing funding, may result in decreased funding for all eligible NQTL programs. Final decisions on which NQTL programs are funded and how much to spend on each program will take place in the Ways and Means budget deliberations for ODE. Furthermore, if dyslexia training costs are not funded from NQTL or any other sources, school districts are still obligated, and therefore incur costs, to ensure teacher training.