

# SENATE BILL 126

F1  
SB 575/20 – EHE

(PRE-FILED)

1lr1195  
CF HB 237

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By: **Senators Hester and Zucker**

Requested: October 28, 2020

Introduced and read first time: January 13, 2021

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Department of Education – Early Literacy and Dyslexia Practices –**  
3 **Guidance and Assistance**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Department of Education to establish a stakeholder  
5 advisory group to develop a certain reading and dyslexia handbook; requiring the  
6 stakeholder advisory group to include certain members; specifying the contents of  
7 the handbook; requiring that the handbook be consistent with certain resources;  
8 requiring the Department and the stakeholder advisory group to make a completed  
9 handbook available to the public on or before a certain date; requiring the  
10 Department to update the handbook with a certain frequency; requiring the  
11 completed handbook and the updated handbooks to be published on certain websites  
12 and disseminated in a certain manner on or before certain dates; requiring the  
13 Department and the stakeholder advisory group to develop tools and materials that  
14 address certain needs; requiring the Department to develop certain professional  
15 learning opportunities and technical assistance and publish the information on  
16 certain websites; requiring the Department to designate a certain dyslexia liaison on  
17 or before a certain date; and generally relating to early literacy and dyslexia  
18 practices.

19 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
20 Article – Education  
21 Section 1–101(f) and 4–136(e) and (g)  
22 Annotated Code of Maryland  
23 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

24 BY adding to  
25 Article – Education  
26 Section 8–420  
27 Annotated Code of Maryland  
28 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
2 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

3 **Article – Education**

4 1–101.

5 (f) “Department” means the State Department of Education.

6 4–136.

7 (e) Each county board shall provide resources on the county board’s website that  
8 include:

9 (1) Reading screening instruments used in the county; and

10 (2) A checklist of early warning signs of reading difficulty and dyslexia by  
11 age.

12 (g) (1) On or before June 1, 2020, and once every 4 years thereafter, the  
13 Department, in consultation with parents, teachers, and other interested stakeholders,  
14 shall develop and update resources for use by a county board.

15 (2) Resources developed under this subsection shall be available on the  
16 Department’s website.

17 **8–420.**

18 **(A) (1) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2021, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL**  
19 **ESTABLISH A STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP TO DEVELOP A READING AND**  
20 **DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK TO GUIDE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION**  
21 **OF BEST PRACTICES FOR EARLY LITERACY AND DYSLEXIA.**

22 **(2) THE STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP SHALL INCLUDE THE**  
23 **FOLLOWING MEMBERS:**

24 **(I) THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT, OR THE STATE**  
25 **SUPERINTENDENT’S DESIGNEE;**

26 **(II) TWO MEMBERS OF THE DYSLEXIA ADVOCACY COMMUNITY**  
27 **DESIGNATED BY THE STATE LEADERSHIP TEAM OF DECODING DYSLEXIA**  
28 **MARYLAND;**

29 **(III) ONE ADULT WITH DYSLEXIA DESIGNATED BY THE STATE**  
30 **LEADERSHIP TEAM OF DECODING DYSLEXIA MARYLAND;**

1 (IV) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL ELEMENTARY SPEECH–LANGUAGE  
2 PATHOLOGIST SPECIALIZING IN REMEDIATION OF DYSLEXIA AND READING  
3 DIFFICULTIES APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT;

4 (V) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL ELEMENTARY SPECIAL EDUCATOR  
5 SPECIALIZING IN REMEDIATION OF DYSLEXIA AND READING DIFFICULTIES  
6 APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT;

7 (VI) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATOR  
8 SPECIALIZING IN REMEDIATION OF DYSLEXIA AND READING DIFFICULTIES  
9 APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT;

10 (VII) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBLE FOR  
11 READING SCREENING, CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND INTERVENTIONS IN A  
12 LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT;

13 (VIII) TWO INDIVIDUALS WITH EXPERTISE IN READING  
14 SCREENING AND DYSLEXIA ASSESSMENT, ONE EACH DESIGNATED BY THE  
15 PRESIDENT OF THE MARYLAND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION AND THE  
16 PRESIDENT OF THE MARYLAND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION;

17 (IX) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATOR SPECIALIZING IN  
18 ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT;

19 (X) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATOR  
20 APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT;

21 (XI) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL EARLY ELEMENTARY GENERAL  
22 EDUCATION TEACHER APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT;

23 (XII) ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL SECONDARY GENERAL EDUCATION  
24 TEACHER APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT; AND

25 (XIII) ONE FACULTY MEMBER FROM AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER  
26 EDUCATION WITH EXPERTISE IN THE NEUROBIOLOGY OF READING AND DYSLEXIA  
27 APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT.

28 (B) (1) THE READING AND DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK SHALL INCLUDE:

29 (I) EVIDENCE–BASED BEST PRACTICES AND PROCESSES AND  
30 PROCEDURES FOR COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION USING A  
31 MULTI–TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS IN READING FOR PREKINDERGARTEN  
32 THROUGH GRADE 12;

1 (II) DEFINITIONS OF READING DIFFICULTIES, DYSLEXIA, AND  
2 DYSGRAPHIA;

3 (III) INDICATORS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF READING  
4 DIFFICULTIES, DYSLEXIA, AND DYSGRAPHIA BY DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL AND AGE;

5 (IV) EVIDENCE-BASED PROCEDURES FOR SCREENING  
6 STUDENTS IN PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12 FOR RISKS OF READING  
7 DIFFICULTIES, INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS;

8 (V) EVIDENCE-BASED PROCEDURES TO EVALUATE AND  
9 IDENTIFY STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA, INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS;

10 (VI) SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTIONS  
11 FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES IN READING OR  
12 DYSLEXIA UNDER THE FEDERAL INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT  
13 THAT INCLUDE THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF EVIDENCE-BASED  
14 INSTRUCTION FOR DYSLEXIA;

15 (VII) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS, INCLUDING  
16 ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY; AND

17 (VIII) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR METHODS OF PARENT  
18 ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION.

19 (2) THE READING AND DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK SHALL BE CONSISTENT  
20 WITH THE RESOURCES DEVELOPED AND UPDATED UNDER § 4-136(G) OF THIS  
21 ARTICLE.

22 (C) (1) ON OR BEFORE JUNE 1, 2022, THE DEPARTMENT AND THE  
23 STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP SHALL MAKE A COMPLETED READING AND  
24 DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

25 (2) THE COMPLETED READING AND DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK SHALL BE:

26 (I) PUBLISHED ON THE WEBSITES OF THE DEPARTMENT AND  
27 EACH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM; AND

28 (II) DISSEMINATED THROUGH:

29 1. THE DEPARTMENT'S AND EACH LOCAL SCHOOL  
30 SYSTEM'S SOCIAL MEDIA SITES, PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CHANNELS,  
31 NEWSLETTERS, EARLY LITERACY NETWORKS, AND SPECIAL EDUCATION CITIZENS'

1 ADVISORY COMMITTEES;

2 2. THE PARENTS' PLACE OF MARYLAND; AND

3 3. OTHER FORMAL OR INFORMAL COMMUNICATION  
4 CHANNELS FOR EDUCATORS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND PARENTS.

5 (3) (I) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL UPDATE THE READING AND  
6 DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK EVERY 3 YEARS.

7 (II) ON OR BEFORE JUNE 1, 2025, AND JUNE 1 EVERY 3 YEARS  
8 THEREAFTER, AN UPDATED READING AND DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK SHALL BE  
9 PUBLISHED AND DISSEMINATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
10 PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

11 (D) THE DEPARTMENT AND THE STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP SHALL  
12 DEVELOP TOOLS AND MATERIALS THAT ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF AT-RISK AND  
13 STRUGGLING READERS AND STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA, INCLUDING:

14 (1) VALID, RELIABLE, AND PREDICTIVE READING SCREENING  
15 MEASURES THAT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF § 4-136 OF THIS ARTICLE FOR  
16 STUDENTS IN PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12;

17 (2) INFORMAL DIAGNOSTIC READING MEASURES AND ASSESSMENTS;  
18 AND

19 (3) SUPPLEMENTAL READING AND WRITING COMPONENT  
20 CHECKLISTS OR RUBRICS THAT ARE ALIGNED TO THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON  
21 READING DIFFICULTIES, DYSLEXIA, AND RELATED DISABILITIES THAT MEET THE  
22 REQUIREMENTS OF THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT OF 2015, THE MARYLAND  
23 COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY PLAN, THE MARYLAND COLLEGE AND  
24 CAREER-READY STANDARDS, AND § 4-136 OF THIS ARTICLE.

25 (E) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL LEARNING  
26 OPPORTUNITIES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON THE CONTENT OF THE READING  
27 AND DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK.

28 (2) THE INFORMATION DEVELOPED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS  
29 SUBSECTION SHALL BE PUBLISHED ON THE WEBSITES OF THE DEPARTMENT AND  
30 EACH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM.

31 (F) (1) ON OR BEFORE JUNE 1, 2022, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL  
32 DESIGNATE A DYSLEXIA LIAISON TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL  
33 SCHOOL SYSTEMS ON DYSLEXIA AND READING AS DESCRIBED IN THE READING AND

1 **DYSLEXIA HANDBOOK.**

2 **(2) THE DYSLEXIA LIAISON MUST:**

3 **(I) HAVE EXPERIENCE REMEDIATING STUDENTS WITH**  
4 **DYSLEXIA;**

5 **(II) HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS;**  
6 **AND**

7 **(III) 1. BE CERTIFIED BY THE INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA**  
8 **ASSOCIATION AND THE CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION AS A**  
9 **STRUCTURED LITERACY DYSLEXIA INTERVENTIONIST; OR**

10 **2. WITHIN 18 MONTHS OF BEING DESIGNATED AS THE**  
11 **DYSLEXIA LIAISON UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, BECOME**  
12 **CERTIFIED BY THE INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION AND THE CENTER FOR**  
13 **EFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION AS A STRUCTURED LITERACY DYSLEXIA**  
14 **INTERVENTIONIST.**

15 **(3) (I) THE DEPARTMENT MAY DESIGNATE AS DYSLEXIA LIAISON**  
16 **AN INDIVIDUAL IN A POSITION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT THAT EXISTED ON JUNE**  
17 **30, 2021.**

18 **(II) AN INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS**  
19 **PARAGRAPH SHALL PERFORM THE DUTIES REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION IN**  
20 **ADDITION TO ANY OTHER ASSIGNED DUTIES.**

21 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July**  
22 **1, 2021.**