

**SENATE . . . . . No. 312**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Barbara L'Italien***

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to address the special education needs of children with dyslexia.

PETITION OF:

| NAME:                        | DISTRICT/ADDRESS:                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Barbara L'Italien</i>     | <i>Second Essex and Middlesex</i>    |
| <i>Chris Walsh</i>           | <i>6th Middlesex</i>                 |
| <i>James B. Eldridge</i>     | <i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>       |
| <i>James E. Timilty</i>      | <i>Bristol and Norfolk</i>           |
| <i>Brian A. Joyce</i>        | <i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i> |
| <i>Joan B. Lovely</i>        | <i>Second Essex</i>                  |
| <i>Marcos A. Devers</i>      | <i>16th Essex</i>                    |
| <i>Kay Khan</i>              | <i>11th Middlesex</i>                |
| <i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i> | <i>20th Middlesex</i>                |

**SENATE . . . . . No. 312**

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By Mrs. L'Italien, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 312) of Barbara L'Italien, Chris Walsh, James B. Eldridge, James E. Timilty and other members of the General Court for legislation to address the special education needs of children with dyslexia. Education.

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court  
(2015-2016)**  
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An Act to address the special education needs of children with dyslexia.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1: Section 38G of Chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012  
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting, in line 266 after the word “disabilities,” the  
3 following words:-

4 including dyslexia,

5 SECTION 2: Section 38G1/2 of said Chapter 71, as appearing in the 2012 Official  
6 Addition, as amended by Chapter 226 of the Acts of 2014, is hereby amended by inserting before  
7 the definition of “Transition services” the following definition:-

8 “Dyslexia” shall have the same meaning as the most recent definition by the International  
9 Dyslexia Association.

10 SECTION 2: Section 38G1/2 of said Chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further  
11 amended by adding the following paragraph:-

12           The board shall provide an endorsement in dyslexia which shall include both coursework  
13 and field experience for licensed general and special education teachers to acquire the  
14 competencies necessary to use the science of reading and evidenced based approaches to  
15 instructing and remediating students with Dyslexia, develop appropriate IEP programs, enable  
16 students with dyslexia to effectively access grade-level curriculum, and consult and collaborate  
17 with other educators in order to meet the unique and complex educational needs of students with  
18 dyslexia. All content taught as part of this specialization shall be consistent with the  
19 requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., for  
20 evidence based practices. The requirements for the endorsement in dyslexia, as promulgated by  
21 the board, may also be used to satisfy course requirements necessary to obtain a professional  
22 license. The board shall promulgate regulations specifying the subject matter knowledge, skills  
23 and competencies required for such endorsement, including requirements to incorporate renewal  
24 of the endorsement as part of the individual professional development plan required pursuant to  
25 section 38G. Said regulations shall also specify components necessary for preparation programs  
26 offering an endorsement in dyslexia, which shall be included in the department’s process for  
27 approving preparation programs.

28           SECTION 3: Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012  
29 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting in paragraph 6 the following words:

30           A school district shall refer for evaluation, using evidenced-based testing methodologies,  
31 any student aged 6 or older, who is at-risk for dyslexia.

32           SECTION 4: Section 3 of said Chapter 71B is hereby further amended by inserting in  
33 paragraph 8 (at the end – line 137) the following words:

34           Whenever an evaluation indicates that a child has dyslexia, as defined by the most recent  
35 definition of the International Dyslexia Association, the Individualized Education Program (IEP)  
36 team, as defined by regulations of the department, shall consider and specifically address the  
37 following: access to evidence-based, sequenced, explicit multisensory reading instruction; access  
38 to assistive technology; access to teachers and teaching assistants who have obtained the dyslexia  
39 endorsement pursuant to Section 38G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the General Laws; and effective access  
40 to grade-level curriculum.