

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5664

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### C 393 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Improving teachers' skills with regard to children with learning differences.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Eide, Brandland, Regala, Thibaudeau, Stevens, Keiser, Kline and Rasmussen).

#### **Senate Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education** **House Committee on Education**

**Background:** Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability, which results in students having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia may experience difficulties in other language skills such as spelling, writing, and speaking. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can have an adverse affect on student academic performance.

Dysgraphia is a neurological disorder manifested in a difficulty with handwriting. There are several different kinds of dysgraphia. Some people with dysgraphia have handwriting that is often illegible and shows irregular and inconsistent letter formations. Others write legibly, but very slowly and/or very small. When these individuals revert to printing, as they often do, their writing is often a random mixture of upper- and lowercase letters. In all cases of dysgraphia, writing requires inordinate amounts of energy, stamina, and time.

The International Dyslexia Association has estimated that 15 to 20 percent of the population has a reading disability and that 85 percent of those with a reading disability have dyslexia. Under current state administrative rules, a student with dyslexia may qualify for special education services as a student with a specific learning disability. To qualify for special education services, the student's dyslexia must adversely affect the student's educational performance and cannot be addressed exclusively through general education environment with or without individual accommodations. The prevalence of dysgraphia is indeterminate due to general reports of under-diagnosis, mis-diagnosis, and co-existence with other learning disabilities. Some students with dysgraphia receive special education services when other disabilities exist. Other students may receive occupational therapy to address dysgraphia but usually in connection with other fine and gross motor skills difficulties.

**Summary:** For approved in-service, continuing education, or internship credits to be applied to movement along the state teacher salary schedule, the course content of such credits must include the knowledge of the use of research-based assessments and instructional strategies for students with dyslexia, dysgraphia, and language learning disabilities when mastery of state learning goal one is addressed, as applicable and appropriate for individual teachers.

#### **Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	0	
House	96	0	(House amended)
Senate	41	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 24, 2005