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Bill boosts dyslexia training among teachers statewide

SB 1003 requires one teacher trained in dyslexia at each K-5 school

SALEM – A bill that passed the Oregon Senate today will help give dyslexic kids all over the state a fair shot at a brighter future.

Senate Bill 1003 – which passed the Senate on a unanimous 30-0 vote – requires that at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year, at least one teacher in kindergarten through Grade 5 at every school has received training related to dyslexia. The Oregon Department of Education also would be required to develop and list training opportunities related to dyslexia.

“As a career educator and someone who has spent my life struggling with dyslexia, I know the effects it can have on a child’s education,” said Sen. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay), who introduced and carried the bill. “We must provide our kids with the resources they need to overcome barriers to learning. When a child struggles reading in the early years, it sets them down a difficult path for the rest of their educational careers. By identifying dyslexia early, we can give students the support they need to be successful. Every kid should have a fighting chance at a brighter future.”

Every kindergartener or first-grader will be screened for risk factors of dyslexia, as a requirement of the bill, and the Department of Education will identify cost-effective screening tests, as well as develop and provide guidance. The Department of Education would be required to submit a report to the Legislature on best practices for screening students and instructional supports related to dyslexia.

Federal regulations require school districts to identify students with disabilities. Students who struggle with reading fall under the Specific Learning Disability category, and the federal government defines dyslexia as one type of SLD.

Senate Bill 1003 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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