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# **UPDATE: Educator Training to Enhance Skills of Students with Dyslexia**

**2013–2014**

Authorizing legislation: [Individuals with dyslexia — Identification and instruction — Handbook — Reports](#)

(<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.530>)

**Teaching and Learning**

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## **Executive Summary**

It is estimated that 10 to 20 percent of the population has dyslexia, a language-based disorder that affects a person's ability to read and write. Districts, schools, teachers, and other educators need support to identify students with dyslexia and provide students with appropriate research- and evidence-based support to improve their ability to read. Students who receive appropriate interventions make steady and quantifiable academic gains in literacy, which allows them to access core coursework in all content areas.

In 2005, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) received funding from the state Legislature to work closely with school districts, the nine regional Educational Service Districts (ESDs), and the Washington Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (WABIDA) to develop resources for families and educators focused on the identification and support of students with dyslexia. While the funding to support this work ended in 2010, the Dyslexia Handbook and the variety of professional learning resources are still widely available. In addition, each of the ESDs has, to varying degrees, integrated key content related to this topic into existing reading/language arts professional learning they provide, as necessary.

## **Background**

Substitute Senate Bill 6016 (SSB 6016) from the 2009 legislative session directed OSPI to work with the state's nine regional Educational Service Districts (ESDs) to provide training on the topic of dyslexia and to develop a state dyslexia resource guide.

From 2005 through 2009, the Legislature provided funding (\$1,265,000) for grants to help schools implement research-based intervention for students with dyslexia. Participating schools were required to have a three-tiered structure for reading instruction in place, provide professional development training to teachers, assess students, and collect and maintain data on student progress in reading and spelling.

Students receiving support through the dyslexia pilot projects made substantial and steady academic gains in reading and spelling. The Legislature sustained this work and expanded statewide support to teachers by providing resources for developing and delivering information and training, including a resource guide to improve the skills of students with dyslexia.

The original state appropriation to support SSB 6016 was \$145,000 per year. The 2010 final supplemental budget, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6444, allocated \$75,000 to support the continuation of SSB 6016 during the 2010–11 year; however, these funds were reduced to \$37,000 in the December 2010 Supplemental Budget. No funding to support professional development training for teachers of students with dyslexia has been received since that time.

## **Update Status**

Substitute Senate Bill 6016 requires the ESDs to report their professional development offerings and activities that focus on dyslexia to OSPI. In fall 2014, the ESDs reported the following summary of their activities associated with dyslexia support:

- All nine ESDs advertised for dyslexia trainings and some promotion for events sponsored by the Washington Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (WABIDA) annual conference, but none reported any requests specifically for dyslexia professional development during the 2013-2014 school year.
- Although districts have not requested specific training on the topic of dyslexia, many ESDs have integrated key content and strategies on this topic into existing professional learning and technical assistance support they provide school districts. In addition, the Washington State Dyslexia Resource Guide and other professional learning resources developed through the initial funding for this project are available on the OSPI and WABIDA websites. Further, OSPI and the ESDs maintain a list of trainers equipped to offer professional development to Washington educators as a fee-for-service training.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

OSPI and ESD literacy staff continue to regularly connect stakeholders with the appropriate resources on this topic as questions arise. Most often, this includes guidance to access WABIDA resources for dyslexia and OSPI's Special Education department for questions or concerns that arise from parents about student identification.

In spring 2014, OSPI convened a workgroup of literacy professionals from the K-12 and higher education levels with expertise in supporting students with dyslexia. The workgroup considered possible outreach for parents and support for teachers of children and began the revision of the Washington State Dyslexia Resource Guide. This group will reconvene in spring 2015 to review the updated version of the Resource Guide prior to its publication and dissemination (<http://www.k12.wa.us/ELA/DyslexiaGuide.aspx>). The revised Guide's anticipated completion date is May 2015.

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