

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS29387C1 / S1280

Early screening and identification of students with reading difficulties is essential in developing literacy intervention plans to help make sure every student is reading at grade level by the time they leave third grade. The importance of students reading and literacy proficiency has long been recognized by the Idaho legislature as a critical piece of Idaho's education system. In more recent years the added importance of identifying those student with characteristics of dyslexia and expanding dyslexia awareness has been identified as a pivotal piece in literacy intervention for student with characteristics of dyslexia. The purpose of the proposed legislation is to define dyslexia as used in Chapter 18, Title 33, and recognize the unique influence and challenges students with characteristics of dyslexia face in developing their reading and literacy skills. The proposed legislation, in alignment with existing provisions identified in the Idaho Literacy Achievement and Accountability Act (Chapter 18, Title 33), would require students in kindergarten through grade 5, when they first enroll in a school district or charter school, to be assessed for characteristics of dyslexia and those students that are identified may be administered a second, tier 2 screener, to help identify specific interventions for meeting the student's needs. The current statewide reading assessments have the capability of serving as the initial, tier 1 screener. Additional provisions would establish a list of evidence-based screening and intervention tools for school districts and charter schools to use and assure educators working with these students receive professional development and technical assistance in the best ways for serving these students. The technical assistance and professional development provisions align with those that already exist in Chapter 18, Title 33, and align with the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

FISCAL NOTE

The proposed amendments would be budget neutral. Any fiscal impact would be subject to appropriation if the legislature chose to expand any of the existing ongoing funding. Idaho's current statewide assessment system includes assessment that would be used as the tier 1 screener. The tier 2 screener would only be used for those students identified as needing it. Any future cost associated with the tier 2 screener would be limited to any appropriation or could be absorbed into the existing appropriation for Idaho's statewide assessments. The Public Schools' FY 2022 budget (HB 385 (2021)), includes an appropriation for \$10,850,000 to the public schools budget for "professional development that supports instructors and pupil services staff to increase student learning, mentoring, and collaboration." Currently, these funds are not targeted toward any specific type of professional development other than the intent language above. A portion of these ongoing funds could be targeted towards dyslexia for specific professional development.

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DISCLAIMER: This statement of purpose and fiscal note are a mere attachment to this bill and prepared by a proponent of the bill. It is neither intended as an expression of legislative intent nor intended for any use outside of the legislative process, including judicial review (Joint Rule 18).