


Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: October 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020

REFERENCE: Bill 23-150, Draft Committee Print as provided to the Office of Revenue Analysis on October 13, 2020

Conclusion

Funds are not sufficient in the fiscal year 2021 budget through fiscal year 2024 budget and financial plan to implement the proposed bill. The bill costs \$272,000 in fiscal year 2022 and \$9.28 million over the financial plan.

Background

The bill establishes several programs to help educators better identify and support students with reading disabilities. The bill requires the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to do the following beginning in school year 2022-2023:

- Provide kindergarten, first grade, and second grade educators with professional development on recognizing reading difficulties, screening for reading difficulties, and implementing instruction that meet the needs of students with reading difficulties;
- Provide reading difficulty awareness training to all educators in the District of Columbia;
- Compile a list of recommended screening instruments and protocols that a local education agency (LEA) or school may use to identify students who are at risk of reading difficulties; and

The Honorable Phil Mendelson

FIS: Bill 23-150, "Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020," Draft Committee Print as shared with the Office of Revenue Analysis on October 13, 2020

- Provide guidance on specialized, multi-tiered remediation and intervention instruction which is aligned to a science-based reading program.¹

The bill requires each public school and public charter school to do the following beginning in school year 2022-2023:

- Ensure that educators equal to the number of general education teachers working with students in kindergarten through second grade complete OSSE's professional development on reading difficulties; and
- Ensure all educators complete OSSE awareness training on reading difficulties.

The bill requires each LEA to do the following beginning in school year 2023-2024:

- Ensure that all students in kindergarten through second grade are screened for reading difficulties;
- Provide remediation and intervention instruction to students that explicitly address areas of need based on screening results;
- Provide written notification to parents or guardians that includes screening results, describes supplemental reading instruction that will be provided to a student, and requests a meeting to discuss student support; and
- Adopt a science-based reading program.

The District of Columbia Public School (DCPS) and DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) must submit a letter to the Council certifying that each school is compliant with the requirements in the bill on an annual basis beginning on October 30, 2023.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are not sufficient in the fiscal year 2021 budget through fiscal year 2024 budget and financial plan to implement the proposed bill. The bill costs \$272,000 in fiscal year 2022 and \$9.28 million over the financial plan

Bill 23-150 –Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020					
Total Cost					
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
OSSE	\$0	\$272,000	\$1,002,000	\$1,003,000	\$2,277,000
DCPS	\$0	\$0	\$1,250,000	\$2,710,000	\$3,960,000
Charter Sector	\$0	\$0	\$926,000	\$2,120,000	\$3,046,000
Total	\$0	\$272,000	\$3,178,000	\$5,833,000	\$9,283,000

¹ Science-based reading curriculum includes explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies.

Office of the State Superintendent of Education

OSSE requires additional funding to hire one full time employee in fiscal year 2022. The employee will be responsible for managing the rollout of the awareness training, overseeing the professional development contract, and reviewing screening and intervention tools.

A total of 7,720 teachers across both the public and charter school sectors will need to complete an online awareness training on reading difficulties beginning in fiscal year 2023. Awareness training will be completed annually through a one-hour online training module developed by a vendor. The cost of the awareness training module is \$150,000 in fiscal year 2022 and \$20,000 for ongoing maintenance starting in fiscal year 2023.

OSSE will also need funding in fiscal year 2023 to offer professional development to approximately 1,150 educators. Each educator will need to complete eight days of professional development on reading difficulties. A vendor will offer these trainings over a period of two-years. Each educator will need to complete four days of training in fiscal year 2023 and 2024. A vendor will also train 36 charter LEA employees and nine DCPS employees to serve as facilitators. Facilitators will provide professional development training to newly hired teachers after the conclusion of the vendor contract.

Bill 23-150 - Office of the State Superintendent of Education Total Costs					
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
Professional Development ^(a)	\$0	\$0	\$810,000	\$810,000	\$1,620,000
Facilitator Training ^(b)	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Awareness Training Platform ^(c)	\$0	\$150,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$190,000
Salary and Fringe ^(d)	\$0	\$122,000	\$122,000	\$123,000	\$367,000
Total	\$0	\$272,000	\$1,002,000	\$1,003,000	\$2,277,000

Table Notes:

- (a) Assumes two, four-day, professional development sessions for 650 DCPS educators and 500 public charter school educators.
- (b) Assumes two, four-day, professional development sessions for nine DCPS educators and 36 public charter school educators.
- (c) Assumes one-time cost in fiscal year 2021 to develop online training platform and ongoing maintenance and hosting costs.
- (d) One Grade-13, Step-5 full time employee. Assumes a fringe rate of 22.9 percent and fringe cost growth of 1.5 percent.

District of Columbia Public Schools

DCPS requires additional funding for administrative premium payments to teachers for time spent completing mandatory professional development training and awareness training. The current administrative premium rate is \$40 per hour per teacher. DCPS also requires additional funding to pay for the salary and fringe costs associated with hiring two full time employees. These employees

The Honorable Phil Mendelson

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will track and promote trainings, will coordinate the implementation of universal screenings in kindergarten through second grade, and will establish procedures for the implementation of interventions in fiscal year 2024. DCPS will also need one-time funding of \$30,000 in fiscal year 2024 to purchase a science-based reading curriculum. DCPS will also receive additional funding in fiscal year 2024 based on adjustments made to the weighting factors for kindergarten, first grade, and second grade in the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF).² The weighting adjustments are necessary to cover public charter school costs (see below). In total, DCPS requires \$1.25 million in fiscal year 2023 and \$3.96 million over the financial plan to implement the bill.

Bill 23-150 – District of Columbia Public Schools Total Costs					
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
Professional Development Administrative Premium ^(a)	\$0	\$0	\$832,000	\$832,000	\$1,664,000
Awareness Training Administrative Premium ^(b)	\$0	\$0	\$168,000	\$168,000	\$336,000
Science-based Curriculum	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000
Salary and Fringe ^(c)	\$0	\$0	\$250,000	\$251,000	\$501,000
Additional funding based on UPSFF ^(d)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,429,000	\$1,429,000
Total	\$0	\$0	\$1,250,000	\$2,710,000	\$3,960,000

Table Notes:

- (a) Assumes all educators trained at DCPS are teachers. Assumes 32 hours (64 total) of professional development on reading difficulties for 650 teachers in fiscal years 2023 and 2024 at a cost of \$40 per hour.
- (b) Assumes one hour of awareness training on an annual basis for 4,200 teachers at a cost of \$40 per hour.
- (c) One Grade-14, Step 5 employee and one Grade-16, Step 5 employee. Assumes a fringe rate of 16.1 percent and fringe cost growth of 1.5 percent.
- (d) Per the UPSFF ratio used to calculate the fiscal year 2021 budget.

Public Charter School Sector

Each charter LEA with kindergarten, first grade, or second grade requires additional resources to implement the bill. Charter LEAs will have an increase in administrative workload depending on the number of students that are found to need interventions for reading disabilities as a result of the universal screening process. LEAs will need to establish procedures for interventions, request and schedule meetings with parents or guardians, provide notice to parents or guardians, and ensure each intervention is completed beginning in fiscal year 2024. Smaller LEAs may be able to absorb this administrative work while larger LEAs will need to hire additional staff.

To approximate how many staff members will need to be hired across the charter school sector, the Office of Revenue Analysis (ORA) assumed that LEAs would need to hire on administrative employee

² The fiscal year 2021 budget sets the base level funding for the UPSFF at \$11,310. Base level funding is multiplied by the weighting for each grade level or add-on services to determine the per student funding at that level or for those services.

The Honorable Phil Mendelson

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for every 165 students requiring a reading intervention. Using this ratio, ORA estimates that 12 full time employees will need to be hired across the charter sector. Funding for these positions will be dispersed to LEAs proportionally based on the number of students enrolled in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade via the UPSFF. The UPSFF weighting factors for kindergarten, first grade, and second grade may need to be adjusted to fund these additional positions.

In total, the 12 administrative positions will cost \$1.14 million in fiscal year 2024. Charter schools will also need to hire substitute teachers to cover classes while teachers conduct parent or guardian meetings. The cost of hiring these substitutes will be \$30,000 on an annual basis beginning in fiscal year 2024. Additionally, charter LEAs must purchase screening tools to comply with the requirements in the bill. This screening tool will cost \$47,000 in fiscal year 2023 and have ongoing licensing costs of \$17,000 starting in fiscal year 2024. Lastly, the DC PCSB will need to hire one full time employee to monitor compliance with training and screening requirements. Charter schools will absorb the bill's new professional development requirements within the expectations of their teachers' work, without additional compensation.

Public charter schools will also receive additional funding in fiscal year 2023 based on adjustment made to the UPSFF weighting factors for kindergarten, first grade, and second grade to support increased costs at DCPS. In total, the bill will cost the charter sector \$926,000 in fiscal year 2023 and \$3.05 million over the financial plan to implement.

Bill 23-150 – Public Charter School Sector Total Costs					
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
Charter School LEA Salary and Fringe ^(a)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,140,000	\$1,140,000
Substitute Teachers During Intervention Meetings ^(b)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000
Universal Screening Tool License and Training ^(c)	\$0	\$0	\$47,000	\$17,000	\$64,000
Science-based Curriculum ^(d)		\$0	\$0	\$810,000	\$810,000
PCSB Salary and Fringe ^(e)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$123,000	\$123,000
Additional funding based on UPSFF ^(f)	\$0	\$0	\$878,000	\$0	\$878,000
Total	\$0	\$0	\$926,000	\$2,120,000	\$3,046,000

Table Notes:

- (a) Assumes salary and fringe cost of \$95,000 for 12 administrative positions.
- (b) Assumes substitute teacher pay of \$120 per full day.
- (c) Assumes \$75 per K-2 teacher license and \$1 per test administered. Assumes 20 percent teacher turnover starting in fiscal year 2024 requiring new license.
- (d) Assumes \$30,000 for 27 LEAs. Assumes nine already have satisfactory curriculum.
- (e) Assumes salary equivalent to a Grade-13, Step 5 employee. Assumes a fringe rate of 22.9 percent and fringe cost growth of 1.5 percent.
- (f) Per the UPSFF ratio used to calculate the fiscal year 2021 budget.