

## DYSLEXIA LAW PASSED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated group of legislators, spurred on by the advocacy of Decoding Dyslexia NH with the support of an equally dedicated cadre of individuals and organizations, **HB1644** was signed into law on June 16, 2016 by Governor Maggie Hassan.

### WHAT DOES IT DO?

RSA 200:59-62

- defines dyslexia
- requires public schools to screen students for dyslexia no later than November 30th of each school year beginning in kindergarten and first grade and to monitor student progress thereafter
- requires districts to provide evidence-based instruction and accommodations to students identified as at risk for dyslexia or related disorders beginning no later than January 1, 2018
- requires school districts to consider the results of independent evaluations prepared by a licensed reading or intervention specialist highly trained in dyslexia that have been obtained and submitted by the student's family

### HOW WILL THIS BE ACCOMPLISHED?

To assist school districts in meeting these obligations, the law creates a Reading Specialist position within the NH Department of Education. This Reading Specialist will be responsible for:

- providing school districts with the support and informational resources they require to assist students with dyslexia and their families
- developing a program to ensure all NH teachers and school administrators have access to materials on identifying dyslexia and related disorders and on effective evidence-based teaching approaches and accommodations for identified students
- working with the Council for Teacher Education to ensure that all teacher education programs provide explicit professional awareness of best practices for recognizing dyslexia and related disorders and of the evidence-based teaching approaches effective for these students.

The process begins with approval of the position by the NH Department of Administrative Services, following which the Department of Education can begin to recruit for the position. The initial posting of the position (5 days) will be limited to current employees within State government after which the position may be advertised to the general public. According to the Education Department, a number of individuals have expressed their interest, so it is hoped that there will be an excellent pool of candidates from which to hire.