



Offered by City Councilor Annissa Essaibi-George
Flynn, Mejia, Wu, Campbell, Flaherty, Breadon, Bok, Arroyo, Edwards
O'Malley and Janey **CITY OF BOSTON**
IN CITY COUNCIL

**ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING DYSLEXIA
SERVICES IN BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS: On October 19, 2018, the State Legislature approved Chapter 272 of the Acts of 2018 on October 19, 2018, which required the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Early Education and Care to create guidelines for districts regarding screening procedures and protocols for students with dyslexia and other neurological learning disabilities; and

WHEREAS: DESE has not yet released new dyslexia guidelines, and MA General Law Part 1, Title 1 XII Chapter 71B Section 3 has always required the district to "identify the school age children residing therein who have a disability" including dyslexia.

WHEREAS: Boston has no published protocols in place that meet the requirements of MA General Law Part 1, Title 1 XII Chapter 71B Section 3, particularly for students with dyslexia to be identified early with screening.

WHEREAS: Boston Public Schools (BPS) teachers need more district support and training in order to be able to identify students with learning disabilities and be able to teach them effectively from Pre-K through 12th grade; and

WHEREAS: Advocates are clear that early testing and teacher training are critical components to identifying and supporting students with dyslexia; and

WHEREAS: Early testing is needed in order to reach students before their self-confidence and reading skills plummet; and

WHEREAS: Most testing is available through private evaluators who do not always accept the BPS evaluation rate, causing parents to pay for the testing out of pocket; and

WHEREAS: The International Dyslexia Association has accredited a handful of teacher training programs in Massachusetts and there are differing approaches to teaching students with dyslexia, including Orton-Gillingham and the Wilson Certification; and

WHEREAS: Furthermore, BPS needs to examine it's protocols so that students are not excluded from evaluation due to language barriers or family background, **THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the quality of dyslexia services in the Boston Public Schools as well as the necessary steps to ensure BPS is able to provide sufficient testing and teacher training to support students with dyslexia.

Filed On: June 5, 2020