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HOUSE BILL NO. 419

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled January 11, 2022

A BILL to amend and reenact § 23.1-902.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to institutions of higher education; education preparation programs; coursework; audit.

Patrons—Delaney and Murphy

Referred to Committee on Education**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 23.1-902.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 23.1-902.1. Education preparation programs; coursework; audit.**

A. Each education preparation program offered by a public institution of higher education or private institution of higher education that provides training for any student seeking initial licensure by the Department of Education shall:

1. Include a program of coursework and require all such students to demonstrate mastery in science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction. Each such program of coursework and the student mastery required to be demonstrated therein shall be consistent with definitions and expectations established by the Board of Education and the Department of Education after consultation with a commission consisting of independent literacy experts and stakeholders with knowledge of science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction that has reviewed the requirements established in subdivision 6 of 8VAC20-23-130, subdivision 6 of 8VAC20-23-190, subdivision 2 a of 8VAC20-23-350, 8VAC20-23-510 through 8VAC20-23-580, and 8VAC20-23-660; and

2. For any such student seeking initial licensure by the Department of Education as a teacher with an endorsement in early childhood, elementary education, or special education or with an endorsement as a reading specialist, ensure that reading coursework and field practice opportunities are a significant focus of the education preparation program.

B. The Department of Education shall audit at least once every five years each education preparation program for compliance with the requirements set forth in subsection A.

C. Each education preparation program offered by a public institution of higher education or private institution of higher education that leads to a degree, concentration, or certificate for reading specialists shall include a program of coursework and other training in the identification of and the appropriate interventions, accommodations, and teaching techniques for students with dyslexia or a related disorder. Such program shall (i) include coursework in the constructs and pedagogy underlying remediation of reading, spelling, and writing and (ii) require reading specialists to demonstrate mastery of an evidence-based, structured literacy instructional approach that includes explicit, systematic, sequential, and cumulative instruction.

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HB419