

LD0563196

## HOUSE BILL NO. 653

Offered January 24, 1994

A BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-217 of the Code of Virginia, relating to education of visually impaired children.

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Patron—Darner

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Referred to Committee on Education

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 22.1-217 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 22.1-217. (Effective July 1, 1994) Visually impaired children.

A. Special education for visually impaired children provided by a school division shall be established, maintained and operated jointly by the school board and the Virginia Board for the Visually Handicapped subject to the regulations of the Board of Education. ~~Consideration shall be given to including~~ Braille instruction *shall be included* in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), whenever appropriate. *When developing the IEP for visually handicapped students, the presumption shall be that proficiency in Braille reading and writing is essential for such student to achieve satisfactory educational progress. However, exclusive use of Braille shall not be required if other special education services are appropriate to the student's educational needs, and the provision of other appropriate services shall not preclude Braille instruction.*

B. The Virginia Board for the Visually Handicapped shall prepare and ~~place in operation~~ deliver a program of special education services in addition to the special education provided in the public school system designed to meet the educational needs of visually impaired children between the ages of birth and twenty-one and may prepare and ~~place in operation~~ deliver such programs for such individuals of other ages. In the development of such a program, the Virginia Board for the Visually Handicapped shall cooperate with the Board of Education and the school boards of the several school divisions.

C. As used in this section:

"Program" means a modified program which provides special materials or services and may include the employment of itinerant teachers or resource room teachers for the visually impaired.

1. "Visually impaired" shall be defined by the Board of Education and the Virginia Board for the Visually Handicapped.

2. "Program" means a modified program which provides special materials or services and may include the employment of itinerant teachers or resource room teachers for the visually impaired.

INTRODUCED

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