

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 47th Legislature (2000)

SENATE BILL 1545

By: Williamson

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; creating the Reading Accountability Act; stating legislative findings; defining certain terms; stating certain goal; stating means to be used to reach certain goal; requiring certain reports; requiring State Department of Education to coordinate certain activities; prohibiting certain construction of act; and providing for codification.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.508F of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

Sections 1 through 5 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the "Reading Accountability Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.508G of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The Legislature finds that it is essential for children in the public schools to read early and well in elementary school. The Legislature further finds that a clear and visible goal, assessments to determine the reading level at each building, annual measurements of elementary school reading improvement, and creating accountability in each level of the educational system will result in a significant increase in the number of children reading at or above grade level.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.508H of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

As used in this act, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

1. "Actual percentage" means the head count enrollment of third-grade students reading at or above third-grade level divided by the head count enrollment of third-grade students in the building on the date the third-grade reading assessment is administered;
2. "Adjusted percentage" means the actual percentage minus those students who were not in the district at least one-half of each of the student's second- and third-grade years, and minus those students who have been enrolled in a bilingual program for two (2) or fewer years from both the numerator and denominator;
3. "At or above third-grade level" means at or above the grade-level equivalent standard established for the test;
4. "Building baseline" means the building's actual percentage in the spring of 2002;
5. "Equal annual incremental improvement" means one-fourth of the improvement necessary to progress from the building baseline to the reading goal by the spring of 2006 and equals the state goal of ninety percent (90%), less the building baseline divided by four;
6. "Factored equal annual increment improvement" is calculated as follows: The state goal of ninety percent (90%) less the building's adjusted percentage in the spring of 2001 divided by four;
7. "Reading goal" means 90 percent (90%) of a public elementary school building's annual head count enrollment of third-grade students reading at or above grade level as measured in grade-level equivalence by the third-grade reading assessment; and
8. "Third-grade reading assessment" means the reading portion of the third-grade test given annually to all students in grade three pursuant to Section 1210.508 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.508I of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The reading goal of this act is the following: By the year 2006 and each year thereafter, ninety percent (90%) or more of all public school third graders will read at or above grade level by the end of their third grade year.

To achieve the state reading goal:

1. Each school district shall use classroom-based assessments to evaluate the reading level of its kindergarten, first, and second graders annually for purposes of intervention and remediation, commencing in the spring of 2002;

2. Each school district shall assess the reading level of its third graders in the spring of 2002 and each year thereafter, using the third-grade assessment for the primary purpose of system accountability and not primarily for the purpose of remediation, commencing at grade four;

3. Each elementary school shall determine its building baseline which shall be its actual percentage of students reading at or above third-grade level as determined by the third-grade reading assessment administered in the spring of 2002; and

4. Each public elementary school building is expected to make equal annual incremental improvement from its baseline. Equal annual improvement is one-fourth of the reading improvement necessary to progress from the building baseline in the spring of 2002 to the state reading goal of ninety percent (90%) in the spring of 2006, and shall be calculated and measured on a building by building basis.

SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.508J of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The levels of system accountability and reporting necessary to achieve the reading goal shall include the state, the professional associations, the principals, the teachers, the public school buildings, the school districts, and the parents.

B. The State Department of Education shall:

1. Report annually to the education committees of the State Senate and House of Representatives on the statewide progress toward the reading goal;

2. Provide progress reports on the third-grade reading assessment scores to the public in clear, understandable terms on a building, district, and statewide basis, and disclose the number of third graders reading at each grade-level equivalent across the grade range from kindergarten through eighth grade;

3. Encourage buildings to develop a repertoire of instructional approaches tailored to different student learning styles;

4. Provide information to public schools and school districts regarding organizational and instructional practices of representative buildings that are making or exceeding the equal annual incremental improvement toward the reading goal; and

5. Not adopt a specific instructional approach. The standard for evaluating an elementary school on a district's reading instruction will be whether it results in annual and incremental growth.

C. The Department shall invite the relevant professional associations to:

1. Meet and confer with each relevant professional association regarding voluntary alignment of association resources to support the achievement of the reading goal; and

2. Report annually, to the education committees of the State Senate and House of Representatives on the efforts of professional association resources to support the achievement of the reading goal.

D. Each public elementary school principal shall have the primary responsibility within the building for providing leadership in reaching the reading goal.

E. Each third-grade teacher shall report annually to the parent or guardian on the reading level of the student as measured by the third-grade reading assessment, commencing June 2002 and each year thereafter, in grade-level equivalents.

F. Each public elementary school shall report annually to its community the number, the actual percentage, and the adjusted percentage of third-grade students reading at or above third-grade level and the distribution and range of all reading scores in grade-level equivalents increments, on the third-grade reading assessment required under Section 4 of this act.

G. Each district shall report annually to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction beginning October 2001, the number, the actual percentage and adjusted percentage of third-grade students reading at or above grade level on the third-grade reading assessment required under Section 4 of this act.

H. Public school districts shall provide encouragement and support for parents to read with their children at least twenty (20) minutes a day from birth through third grade.

I. Nothing in this act shall be construed to provide a cause of legal action for damages or specific performance.

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