

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 50th Legislature (2006)

SENATE BILL 1931

By: Johnson (Constance)

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 1210.508C, as last amended by Section 3, Chapter 431, O.S.L. 2005 (70 O.S. Supp. 2005, Section 1210.508C), which relates to the Reading Sufficiency Act; clarifying statutory language; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2001, Section 1210.508C, as last amended by Section 3, Chapter 431, O.S.L. 2005 (70 O.S. Supp. 2005, Section 1210.508C), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1210.508C A. 1. Each student enrolled in kindergarten in a public school in this state shall be screened for reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, letter recognition, and oral language skills as identified in the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) adopted by the State Board of Education. A screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education shall be utilized for the purposes of this section.

2. For those kindergarten children at risk for reading difficulties, teachers shall emphasize reading skills as identified in the PASS, monitor progress throughout the year and measure year-end reading progress.

3. Classroom assistants, which may include parents, grandparents, or other volunteers, shall be provided in kindergarten classes to assist with the screening of students if a teacher aide is not already employed to assist in a kindergarten classroom.

B. 1. Each student enrolled in first, second and third grade of the public schools of this state shall be assessed at the

beginning of each school year using a screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education for the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

2. Any student who is assessed and found not to be reading at the appropriate grade level shall be provided a program of reading instruction designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level reading skills. If a student is found not to be reading at the appropriate grade level and teachers, in collaboration with others, are concerned that undiagnosed health problems may affect the ability of the student to read, the school district may make a recommendation to the parents or legal guardians for medical evaluation without being liable for cost of the evaluation or any associated costs.

3. Throughout the year progress monitoring shall continue, and diagnostic assessment, if determined appropriate, shall be provided. Year-end reading skills shall be measured to determine reading success.

C. The State Board of Education shall approve no more than three screening instruments for use at the beginning of the school year, for monitoring of progress, and for measurement of reading skills at the end of the school year as required in subsections A and B of this section; provided, one of the screening instruments shall be recommended by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation. The State Board shall also determine other comparable reading assessments for diagnostic purposes and for periodic and post assessments to be used for students at risk of reading failure. The State Board shall ensure that any assessments approved are in alignment with the PASS.

D. The program of reading instruction required in subsection B of this section shall align with the PASS and may include, but is not limited to:

1. Sufficient additional in-school instructional time for the acquisition of phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension;

2. If necessary, tutorial instruction after regular school hours, on Saturdays and during summer; however, such instruction may not be counted toward the one-hundred-eighty-day school year required in Section 1-109 of this title; and

3. Assessments identified for diagnostic purposes and periodic monitoring to measure the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as identified in the student's program of reading instruction.

E. The program of reading instruction shall continue until the student is determined by the results of approved reading assessments to be reading on grade level.

F. 1. Every school district shall adopt, implement, and annually update a district reading sufficiency plan which has had input from school administrators, teachers, and parents and if possible a reading specialist, and which shall be submitted to and approved by the State Board of Education as a part of each district's Comprehensive Local Education Plan. The district reading sufficiency plan shall include a plan for each site which includes an analysis of the data provided by the Oklahoma School Testing Program and other reading assessments utilized as required in this section, and which outlines how each school site will comply with the provisions of the Reading Sufficiency Act.

2. Each school site shall establish a committee, composed of educators, which if possible shall include a certified reading specialist, to develop the required programs of reading instruction. A parent or guardian of the student shall be included in the development of the program of reading instruction for that student.

3. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules for the implementation and evaluation of the provisions of the Reading Sufficiency Act. The evaluation shall include, but not be limited to, an analysis of the data required in subsection H of this section.

G. For any third-grade student found not to be reading at grade level as determined by reading assessments administered pursuant to this section, a new program of reading instruction shall be developed and implemented as specified in this section. If possible, a fourth-grade teacher shall be involved in the development of the program of reading instruction. In addition to other requirements of the Reading Sufficiency Act, the plan may include specialized tutoring and may include a recommendation as to whether the student should be retained in the third grade at the close of that year. The parent or guardian of the student shall be included in the retention consideration.

H. On or before December 1 of each year, the State Department of Education shall issue to the Governor and members of the Senate and House of Representatives Education Committees a Reading Report Card for the state and each school district and elementary site which shall include, but is not limited to, trend data detailing three (3) years of data, disaggregated by student subgroups to include economically disadvantaged, major racial or ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English language learners, as appropriate for the following:

1. The number and percentage of students in kindergarten through third grade determined to be at risk for reading difficulties compared to the total number of students enrolled in each grade;

2. The number and percentage of students in kindergarten who continue to be at risk for reading difficulties as determined by the year-end measurement of reading progress;

3. The number and percentage of students in first through third grade who have successfully completed their program of reading instruction and are reading on grade level as determined by the results of approved reading assessments;

4. The number and percentage of students scoring at each performance level on the third-grade criterion-referenced test in reading;

5. The amount of funds for reading remediation received by each district;

6. An evaluation and narrative interpretation of the report data analyzing the impact of the Reading Sufficiency Act on students' ability to read at grade level; and

7. Any recommendations for improvements or amendments to the Reading Sufficiency Act.

The State Department of Education may contract with an independent entity for the reporting and analysis requirements of this subsection.

I. Copies of the results of the assessments administered shall be made a part of the permanent record of each student.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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