

BILL SUMMARY
2nd Session of the 60th Legislature

Bill No.:	HB4420
Version:	FULLPCS1
Request Number:	16873
Author:	Mr. Speaker
Date:	3/4/2026
Impact:	Please see previous summary of this measure

Research Analysis

The proposed committee substitute for HB 4420 modifies various aspects of the Strong Readers Act. The measure requires third grade students to score above the below basic level on the statewide reading test, earn an acceptable score on an alternative assessment, or qualify for a good-cause exemption in order to be promoted to the fourth grade.

Good cause exemptions are limited to the following:

- Students with disabilities whose IEPs indicate that participation in the statewide student assessment is not appropriate;
- English Language Learners with fewer than two years of instruction in an English-learner program;
- Students with IEPs showing they received intensive intervention for more than two years but still demonstrate a deficiency, or were previously retained for one year; and
- Students who received intensive intervention for two or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency and were previously retained for a total of two years.

The measure lists the process for requesting a good cause exemption and allows a parent to retain their child despite being approved for an exemption. Students promoted to the fourth grade with a good-cause exemption must continue to receive intense reading intervention until their deficiency is remedied.

Students who are retained must also receive intense reading intervention from a teacher demonstrating competency in evidence-based reading intervention. The measure lists specifics of the intervention and requires such students to be offered one of the following:

- The option of a transitional setting where they can make gains against fourth-grade performance standards while continuing to address their reading deficiency;
- Before or after-school supplemental training; or
- Summer academy support.

Further, if a first or second grade student has not met certain benchmarks on their reading screening, the school's Reading Proficiency Team must discuss retention. Such retention would be optional, and based upon recommendations from at least five members of the Team. If the student is not retained, the family must be provided with a summer tutoring program. If retention is suggested for the first or second grade student, they may be re-screened prior to the next grade if certain conditions are met. The Reading Team may use the additional screening results to re-determine if retention is necessary.

Any time a student in K-3 is identified with a reading deficiency, a parent must be notified within 7 days. When such a child receives a reading intervention plan to address their deficiencies, the parents must be updated on the child's progress once a month. In addition to any services listed in the student's intervention plan, schools must provide them with the option of attending at least one of the following:

- A summer reading academy;
- Before or after-school supplemental tutoring, and
- A transitional instructional setting where they can make gains against current-grade performance standards, while continuing to address their reading deficiency.

Any required, additional in-school reading instruction may not take the place of other core curriculum classes. Schools may not provide reading intervention solely through digital technology. Rather, a majority of it must come from a teacher or reading specialist

The measure also updates state law regarding literacy coaches. The measure increases the number of regional literacy coaches the Department of Education must employ from five to 20. The Department must also have one reading specialist, or a contracted reading specialist, for each elementary school. The SDE is also required, in conjunction with colleges and universities, to develop summer academies to help teachers obtain an early literacy microcredential. Access to these academies is prioritized for districts that do not currently employ or contract with a reading specialist.

Schools performing the worst on the end-of-year reading assessment or reading screener will be given priority access to the reading coaches employed by the State Department of Education. The measure also updates requirements for literacy coaches and requires them to pass Oklahoma's Foundations of Reading test. The State Department of Education may hire retired teachers as literacy coaches.

Lastly, the measure creates a "Strong Readers Revolving Fund" which is subject to donations. Donors must designate a school, district, or region to receive their funds.

Prepared By: Emily Byrne

Fiscal Analysis

The measure is currently under review and impact information will be completed.

Prepared By: House Fiscal Staff

Other Considerations

None.