
SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5508

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hochstatter, Oke, Morton, Swecker, Finkbeiner, Horn, Stevens and Schow)

Read first time 03/10/97.

1 AN ACT Relating to reading accountability; amending RCW
2 28A.230.190; and adding a new chapter to Title 28A RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that a clear and
5 visible goal, assessments to determine the reading level at each
6 building, measurements of annual building improvement, and creating
7 accountability in each level of the educational system will result in
8 a significant increase in the number of children reading at or above
9 grade level.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act may be known and cited as the third
11 grade reading accountability act.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The definitions in this section apply
13 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

14 (1) "Actual percentage" means the head count enrollment of third
15 grade students reading at or above third grade level divided by the
16 head count enrollment of third grade students in the building on the
17 date the state-wide third grade reading assessment is administered.

1 (2) "Adjusted percentage" means the actual percentage minus those
2 students who were not in the district at least one-half of each of the
3 student's second and third grade years, and minus those students who
4 have been enrolled in a bilingual program for two or fewer years from
5 both the numerator and denominator.

6 (3) "At or above third grade level" means at or above the grade
7 level equivalent for the month that the third grade reading assessment
8 defined in subsection (8) of this section is administered.

9 (4) "Building baseline" means the building's actual percentage in
10 the spring of 1998.

11 (5) "Equal annual incremental improvement" is one-fourth of the
12 improvement necessary to progress from the building baseline to the
13 reading goal by the spring of 2002 and is calculated by taking the
14 state goal of ninety percent less the building baseline divided by
15 four.

16 (6) "Factored equal annual incremental improvement" means the state
17 goal of ninety percent less the building's adjusted percentage in the
18 spring of 1998 divided by four.

19 (7) "Reading goal" means ninety percent of a public elementary
20 school building's annual head count enrollment of third grade students
21 reading at or above grade level as measured by the state-wide third
22 grade reading assessment.

23 (8) "Third grade reading assessment" means the reading portion of
24 the third grade California test of basic skills or the reading subtest
25 of such other standardized achievement test given annually to all
26 students in grade three under RCW 28A.230.190.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The reading goal of chapter . . . , Laws of
28 1997 (this act) is: By the year 2002, and each year thereafter, ninety
29 percent or more of all Washington public school third graders reading
30 at or above grade level, as defined by the commission on student
31 learning, by the end of their third grade.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** To achieve the state reading goal:

33 (1) Each school district shall use classroom-based assessments to
34 evaluate the reading level of its kindergarten, first, and second
35 graders annually for purposes of intervention and remediation
36 commencing in the spring of 1998. Each school district shall assess
37 the reading level of its third graders in the spring of 1998 and each

1 year thereafter using the third grade reading assessment for the
2 primary purpose of system accountability and not primarily for the
3 purpose of remediation commencing at grade four;

4 (2) Each elementary school shall determine its building baseline,
5 which shall be its actual percentage of students reading at or above
6 third grade level as determined by the third grade reading assessment
7 administered in the spring of 1998; and

8 (3) Each public elementary school building is expected to make
9 equal annual incremental improvement from its baseline. Equal annual
10 incremental improvement is one-fourth of the reading improvement
11 necessary to progress from the building baseline in the spring of 1998
12 to the state reading goal of ninety percent in the spring of 2002 and
13 shall be calculated and measured on a building-by-building basis. The
14 percentage of required improvement will be different for different
15 public schools since it is based on the individual building baselines.
16 For financial accountability purposes only, the required improvement
17 shall not exceed twelve percent annually.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The seven levels of system accountability
19 necessary to achieve the reading goal shall be the parents, the state,
20 the professional associations, the principals, the teachers, the public
21 school buildings, and the school district.

22 (1) Parents are a child's first and most influential teacher.
23 Public school districts shall encourage and support parents to read
24 with their children at least twenty minutes a day from birth through
25 third grade.

26 (2) The superintendent of public instruction or the
27 superintendent's designee shall:

28 (a) Report annually to the senate and the house of representatives
29 education committees on the state-wide progress toward the reading
30 goal;

31 (b) Provide progress reports on the state-wide third grade reading
32 assessment scores to the public in clear, understandable terms on a
33 building, district, and state-wide basis, and by reference to fixed
34 standards at each grade level;

35 (c) Encourage buildings to develop a repertoire of instructional
36 approaches tailored to different student learning styles;

37 (d) Provide information to public schools and school districts
38 regarding organizational and instructional practices of representative

1 buildings that are making or exceeding the equal annual incremental
2 improvement toward the reading goal;

3 (e) Evaluate and make available a variety of suitable classroom-
4 based assessments required in section 5 of this act that school
5 districts may use to assess the reading level of their kindergarten,
6 first, second, and third graders annually; and

7 (f) Not adopt a specific instructional approach. The standard for
8 instruction in this area shall be what works.

9 (3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
10 coordinate the activities of relevant professional associations. It
11 shall:

12 (a) Meet and confer with each relevant professional association
13 regarding voluntary alignment of association resources to support the
14 achievement of the reading goal;

15 (b) Report annually to the senate and the house of representatives
16 education committees on the efforts of professional associations to
17 support the achievement of the reading goal; and

18 (c) Meet and confer with the commission on student learning to
19 assure consistent approaches.

20 (4) Each public elementary school principal has the primary
21 responsibility within the building for providing leadership in reaching
22 the reading goal. An increasing portion of each public elementary
23 school principal's annual evaluation should result from each school
24 district's professional appraisal of effective leadership in this area.

25 (5) Each third grade teacher shall annually report to the parent or
26 guardian the reading level of the parent's child as measured by the
27 reading assessment commencing June 1998 and each year thereafter. The
28 report shall reference grade level and monthly increments.

29 (6) Each public elementary school shall annually report to its
30 community the number, the actual percentage, and the adjusted
31 percentage of third grade students reading at or above third grade
32 level and the distribution and range of all reading scores by grade and
33 monthly increments on the third grade reading assessment required under
34 section 5 of this act.

35 (7) Each district shall report to the superintendent of public
36 instruction annually beginning October 1998 the number, the actual
37 percentage, and the adjusted percentage of third grade students reading
38 at or above third grade level on the third grade reading assessment
39 required under section 5 of this act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Consistent with chapter 28A.630 RCW,
2 districts shall receive rewards for achievement of factored equal
3 annual incremental improvement. Financial rewards under this section
4 are intended to engage the districts and shall not be linked to either
5 the principal or the elementary school building.

6 (1) Beginning in the 1999-2000 school year, each school district
7 shall annually receive an additional four thousand dollars for each
8 elementary building achieving the lesser of factored equal annual
9 incremental improvement or twelve percent per year.

10 (2) Beginning in the 1999-2000 school year, each school district
11 shall annually receive an additional two thousand dollars for each
12 elementary building achieving the lesser of one-half of factored equal
13 annual incremental improvement or six percent per year.

14 (3) Payments under subsection (1) or (2) of this section are due if
15 a building qualifies either on an annual basis or on a cumulative year
16 basis. Payment under subsection (1) of this section shall continue to
17 school districts with buildings that achieve and continue to maintain
18 the reading goal.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The superintendent of public instruction
20 shall adopt rules to prorate the amount paid under section 7 of this
21 act for elementary buildings with a third grade full-time equivalent
22 enrollment of fewer than seventy-five students.

23 **Sec. 9.** RCW 28A.230.190 and 1990 c 101 s 6 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) Every school district is encouraged to test pupils in grade two
26 by an assessment device designed or selected by the school district.
27 This test shall be used to help teachers in identifying those pupils in
28 need of assistance in the skills of reading, writing, mathematics, and
29 language arts. The test results are not to be compiled by the
30 superintendent of public instruction, but are only to be used by the
31 local school district.

32 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall prepare and
33 conduct with the assistance of school districts, a standardized norm-
34 referenced achievement test to be given annually to all students in
35 grade three. The test shall only assess students' skills in reading.
36 Results of the test shall be available before May 15th of each year to
37 all local school districts and to parents of the students tested.

1 (3) The superintendent of public instruction shall prepare and
2 conduct, with the assistance of school districts, a standardized
3 achievement test to be given annually to all pupils in grade four. The
4 test shall assess students' skill in reading, mathematics, and language
5 arts and shall focus upon appropriate input variables. Results of such
6 tests shall be compiled by the superintendent of public instruction,
7 who shall make those results available annually to the legislature, to
8 all local school districts and subsequently to parents of those
9 children tested. The results shall allow parents to ascertain the
10 achievement levels and input variables of their children as compared
11 with the other students within the district, the state and, if
12 applicable, the nation.

13 (~~(3)~~) (4) The superintendent of public instruction shall report
14 annually to the legislature on the achievement levels of students in
15 grade four.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** This chapter does not provide a cause of
17 legal action for damages or specific performance.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** Sections 1 through 8 and 10 of this act
19 constitute a new chapter in Title 28A RCW.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** If any provision of this act or its
21 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
22 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
23 persons or circumstances is not affected.

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