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ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6509

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State of Washington

55th Legislature

1998 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hochstatter, Benton, Zarelli, Rossi, Swecker, Deccio, Johnson, Oke, McCaslin, Stevens, Morton, Roach and Schow)

Read first time 02/10/98.

1 AN ACT Relating to training in reading instruction; adding new  
2 sections to chapter 28A.165 RCW; adding a new section to chapter  
3 28A.150 RCW; creating a new section; repealing RCW 28A.300.310,  
4 28A.300.320, 28A.300.330, and 28A.300.340; providing expiration dates;  
5 and declaring an emergency.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the ability to  
8 read fluently, accurately, and with comprehension is critical to  
9 success in school and in life. Research has found that reading  
10 instruction and curriculum in the early grades must consist of a  
11 comprehensive program that builds upon the firm foundational skills of  
12 phonemic awareness, decoding, and reading comprehension, to provide  
13 students with the skills necessary to engage in rich literature  
14 activities, and further develop thinking and application skills.

15 The legislature further finds that many primary grade teachers  
16 would benefit from additional professional development instruction in  
17 beginning reading skills and access to current information regarding  
18 scientifically proven instructional strategies that improve student  
19 achievement in reading. The legislature further finds that the use of

1 volunteers to provide individualized tutoring and mentoring to students  
2 will improve students' ability to read.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The superintendent of public instruction  
4 shall establish grant programs to provide training for teachers in  
5 reading instruction in accordance with subsection (1) of this section  
6 and in the use of tutors and mentors for reading instruction in  
7 accordance with subsection (2) of this section as follows:

8 (1) Elementary schools interested in providing professional  
9 development and the purchase of curriculum or related materials for  
10 certificated instructional staff that provide direct instructional  
11 services to students in kindergarten, first, and second grade may apply  
12 for reading instruction grants and receive funding from the office of  
13 the superintendent of public instruction.

14 (a) The reading instruction grant application shall be limited to:

15 (i) Verification that the school has developed a comprehensive  
16 school-wide reading improvement plan that includes, but is not limited  
17 to, a beginning reading-language arts program for use in kindergarten  
18 through second grade, the primary elements of which must:

19 (A) Provide numerous daily opportunities for teachers in  
20 kindergarten and first grade to read to students from a variety of  
21 printed materials including rich literature and expository text;

22 (B) Provide explicit and sequential instruction in phonemic  
23 awareness for all students in kindergarten and first grade and students  
24 with limited English proficiency;

25 (C) Provide explicit systematic decoding instruction and practice  
26 in using those skills in decodable text materials;

27 (D) Provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension skills  
28 and opportunities for students to apply them;

29 (E) Require diagnosis of a student's ability to decode in first and  
30 second grade;

31 (F) Provide explicit and systematic instruction in spelling and  
32 provide students in kindergarten and first grade with an opportunity to  
33 use student-invented spelling in all writing activities; and

34 (G) Provide students with structured assistance in learning to  
35 write with ample opportunities to engage in writing activities;

36 (ii) Verification that the intended professional development  
37 supports the efforts of the school's beginning reading-language arts

1 program required in (a)(i) of this subsection and includes primary  
2 emphasis on the following beginning reading skills:

3 (A) Phonemic awareness strategies;

4 (B) Explicit and systematic decoding instruction and how to assess  
5 a student's ability to decode;

6 (C) Explicit spelling and vocabulary instruction;

7 (D) Explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies; and

8 (E) Research findings on the skills needed by beginning and  
9 proficient readers, and how beginning reading skills are acquired;

10 (iii) Verification that grant funds expended in accordance with  
11 this section will not be used for staff development, intervention, or  
12 remediation programs; and

13 (iv) Verification that representatives of kindergarten, first, or  
14 second grade teachers and reading specialists from the school will be  
15 attending a leadership and accountability institute conducted by the  
16 office of the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with  
17 section 4 of this act.

18 (b) The training in reading instruction shall be provided by public  
19 or private nonsectarian contractors that provide training using the  
20 methods defined in this section. Priority for reading instruction  
21 grants shall be given to those schools in which less than one-quarter  
22 of all students tested on the fourth grade assessment in reading met  
23 the state-wide standard, or in schools where average performance on the  
24 reading component of the state-wide standardized test required in RCW  
25 28A.230.190 were in the bottom quartile for the previous three years.  
26 Priority shall then be given to those schools in which less than one-  
27 third of all students tested on the fourth grade assessment in reading  
28 met the state-wide standard, or in schools where average performance on  
29 the reading component of the state-wide standardized test required in  
30 RCW 28A.230.190 were in the bottom third for the previous three years.  
31 Priority shall then be given to schools in which one-half of all  
32 students tested on the fourth grade assessment in reading met the  
33 state-wide standard, or in schools where average performance on the  
34 reading component of the state-wide standardized test required in RCW  
35 28A.230.190 were in the bottom half for the previous three years.

36 (c) Reading instruction grants provided under this subsection (1)  
37 may be used to provide additional professional development materials  
38 for classroom volunteers providing assistance in kindergarten, first,

1 and second grades, interested in attending the professional development  
2 opportunity identified in this subsection (1).

3 (d) An elementary school receiving funding in accordance with this  
4 subsection (1) shall certify and provide documentation to the  
5 superintendent of public instruction that funds received were expended  
6 for professional development and related materials in accordance with  
7 this subsection (1).

8 (e) Schools or school districts that received funds under RCW  
9 28A.300.330 are not eligible to apply for reading instruction grants.

10 (f) The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter  
11 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

12 (i) "Phonemic awareness instruction" means teaching awareness of  
13 letter sounds, and segmenting and blending phonemes, syllables, and  
14 words in a sequential progression.

15 (ii) "Explicit systematic decoding instruction" means direct,  
16 sequential teaching of how to read words fluently and automatically  
17 that includes instruction in letter-sound correspondences, letter  
18 combinations, multisyllabic words, blending, and structural elements,  
19 and initially incorporates the use of decodable text. "Explicit  
20 systematic decoding instruction" does not include the use of context  
21 and syntax as word identification strategies in teaching beginning  
22 reading skills.

23 (iii) "Decodable text" means connected text containing a high  
24 percentage of words that provide practice on the letter-sound  
25 correspondences and letter combinations previously taught.

26 (iv) "Diagnosis of a student's ability to decode" means regularly  
27 assessing the student's mastery of word recognition, fluency and  
28 automaticity, and word analysis in order to plan future instructional  
29 activities.

30 (v) "Explicit and systematic instruction in spelling" means  
31 teaching a logical scope and sequence of word knowledge, orthographic  
32 patterns, syllabication, and frequently used words connected to the  
33 sequence used in reading and writing instruction.

34 (vi) "Vocabulary instruction" means teaching word meanings.

35 (vii) "Instruction in reading comprehension skills" means explicit,  
36 systematic teaching of vocabulary development, text structure, context,  
37 syntax, and syntactic patterns, including but not limited to,  
38 strategies for higher order thinking skills such as interpretation,  
39 summarization, prediction, clarification, and question generation.

1 (2) Elementary schools interested in providing teacher training in  
2 the use of tutors and mentors for reading instruction in grades  
3 kindergarten through fourth grade may apply for tutoring and mentoring  
4 grants for programs that are research based and of proven  
5 effectiveness. The programs must include the following elements:

6 (a) Teacher training in program planning, assessment, and  
7 diagnosis, and training of volunteers;

8 (b) A tutoring and mentoring program providing a minimum of two  
9 hours of individual instruction a week by a volunteer;

10 (c) Teacher training in recruiting and retaining tutors and mentors  
11 for reading instruction;

12 (d) A plan to assess student reading performance before entering  
13 the program and upon exit or at the end of the year as appropriate.  
14 The results must be compiled and reported to the superintendent of  
15 public instruction. The superintendent of public instruction shall  
16 provide a report to the legislature by December 1999 on the  
17 effectiveness of the various programs.

18 (3) By April 15th, the superintendent of public instruction shall  
19 notify all school districts that the grants under subsections (1) and  
20 (2) of this section are available. Funding provided for the grants  
21 must be available to schools no later than June 1, 1998. School  
22 districts may apply and become eligible for both grants.

23 (4) Teachers participating in the grant programs will receive a  
24 stipend from the grant.

25 (5) This section expires July 30, 2005.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) By July 31, 1998, each educational  
27 service district shall establish a reading resource center within the  
28 district.

29 (2) Schools accessing funds in accordance with section 2 of this  
30 act may request and the center may assist schools and school districts  
31 within its service area in matching local needs with reading programs,  
32 providing professional development opportunities, and facilitating  
33 discussions among teachers to promote best practices for beginning  
34 reading instruction, all in accordance with section 2 of this act.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) Before September 30, 1998, the office of  
36 the superintendent of public instruction, in cooperation with  
37 educational service districts, shall conduct leadership and

1 accountability institutes designed to provide teachers, administrators,  
2 and school board members with information and tools to improve  
3 beginning reading instructional programs and practices in their  
4 schools. School district board of directors of each school district,  
5 school administrators, and teachers identified by the school district  
6 board of directors as having demonstrated leadership in reading  
7 instruction in the school district or from schools receiving funds in  
8 accordance with section 2 of this act shall be invited to attend the  
9 institutes. The institutes shall provide professional development and  
10 supporting materials to: Evaluate reading curriculum and reading  
11 instructional weaknesses in schools to determine whether the school has  
12 a comprehensive reading program; for elementary schools, ensure that  
13 the primary, but not sole, element is a beginning reading component  
14 that includes, but is not limited to, explicit instruction in phonemic  
15 awareness, explicit systematic instruction in decoding skills,  
16 diagnosis of a student's ability to decode, explicit and systematic  
17 instruction in spelling, vocabulary instruction, and explicit  
18 instruction in reading comprehension skills; conduct research on how  
19 children learn to read, including those with limited English  
20 proficiency, learning disabilities, or who are economically  
21 disadvantaged; diagnose reading deficiencies; and monitor the movement  
22 of students from beginning or deficient reading skills to independent  
23 reading of rich literature and expository text.

24 (2) School districts sending teams to the institutes must make a  
25 commitment to provide sufficient time to team members before and during  
26 the next school year to support implementation of strategies learned  
27 while at the institute.

28 (3) This section expires December 31, 1998.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.150  
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 Starting in the 1998-99 school year, school districts must  
32 administer a standardized, nationally norm-referenced test to measure  
33 second grade reading skills of second grade students. The state-wide  
34 second grade reading test, in addition to reporting in other formats,  
35 shall report student reading levels in terms of grade level and monthly  
36 increments. The purpose of the second grade reading test is to provide  
37 information to parents, teachers, and school administrators on the

1 level of acquisition of reading skills of each student at the beginning  
2 of second grade.

3 Each school must have the test results available by the winter  
4 parent-teacher conference. Schools must notify parents about the  
5 second grade reading test during the conferences, inform the parents of  
6 their students' performance on the test, identify actions the school  
7 intends to take to improve the child's reading skills, and provide  
8 parents with strategies to help the parents improve their child's  
9 score.

10 Each school shall annually report to its community the number and  
11 the actual percentage of second grade students reading at or above  
12 second grade level and the distribution and range of all reading scores  
13 by grade and monthly increments on the state-wide second grade reading  
14 assessment required under this section.

15 Each district shall report to the superintendent of public  
16 instruction annually beginning March 1999 the number and the actual  
17 percentage of second grade students reading at or above second grade  
18 level on the state-wide second grade reading assessment required under  
19 this section.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act may be known and cited as the  
21 successful readers act.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act are each  
23 added to chapter 28A.165 RCW.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The following acts or parts of acts are each  
25 repealed:

- 26 (1) RCW 28A.300.310 and 1997 c 262 s 2;
- 27 (2) RCW 28A.300.320 and 1997 c 262 s 3;
- 28 (3) RCW 28A.300.330 and 1997 c 262 s 4; and
- 29 (4) RCW 28A.300.340 and 1997 c 262 s 7.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
31 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the  
32 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect  
33 immediately.

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