
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2036

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Talcott, McDermott, Shabro, Haigh, Anderson, Flannigan, Tom, Kenney, Kagi and Santos)

READ FIRST TIME 03/07/05.

1 AN ACT Relating to reading readiness; adding a new section to
2 chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that teaching a child
5 to read early and well will open doors of learning and wonder that will
6 benefit the child throughout life. As Graham Greene said, "There is
7 always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future
8 in." For the Kennewick school district, that quote captured the vision
9 of its community for all its students. "Every day some children, for
10 the first time in their whole lives, see the door crack open. Beyond
11 is a brilliant world. It is not the world they feel and smell and hear
12 and touch. It is a symbolic world which they can share with the best
13 storytellers, generals, athletes, and poets, with the best scientists,
14 mathematicians, and historians of the past three millennia."

15 The legislature finds that reading is also a gateway skill that
16 opens doors for children to learn other important subjects such as
17 math, science, literature, and social studies. It is a skill that is
18 relied upon for about eighty-five percent of all educational
19 instruction. The legislature finds that while about forty percent of

1 children learn to read easily, another forty percent need significantly
2 more help and the remaining twenty percent of children need intensive
3 and sustained assistance. Yet, research shows that if children do not
4 learn to read well by the third grade, they are at risk of becoming
5 academic failures and school dropouts.

6 The legislature finds that a child's early learning and literacy
7 skills are highly dependent on the positive involvement of parents and
8 other caring adults, especially before the children enroll in
9 kindergarten. Some children enter kindergarten as fluent readers while
10 others have the reading readiness skills of typical three year olds.
11 These variations lead to reading readiness gaps among students, gaps
12 that tend to persist as achievement gaps throughout the children's
13 educational careers. The legislature finds that parental or other
14 adult involvement in a child's life is essential and that parents and
15 other adults can help eliminate the reading readiness gap by reading to
16 their children for twenty minutes a day.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 The "ready to read" community assistance program is established in
20 the office of the superintendent of public instruction. The purpose of
21 the program is to encourage local public-private partnerships that
22 enhance preliteracy and reading readiness efforts and respect other
23 cultures. The responsibilities of the program shall include but need
24 not be limited to:

25 (1) The preparation and dissemination of one or more models to
26 stimulate community support for preliteracy foundations that provide
27 parents and other adults with research-based information, fun learning
28 activities, interactive materials, and simple ideas that they can
29 choose to use to maximize their children's early learning years;

30 (2) The stimulation of community efforts to introduce parents of
31 newborn children to the importance of reading to their children and
32 other preliteracy activities and to actively recruit other parents and
33 significant adults who represent the local community in all areas of
34 these efforts; and

35 (3) The stimulation of efforts to educate parents and guardians of

1 preschool age children about child development and literacy.

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