

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5803

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### C 125 L 15

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning the notification of parents when their children are below basic on the third grade statewide English language arts assessment.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Dammeier, McAuliffe and Keiser).

**Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education**  
**House Committee on Education**

**Background:** In 2013 the Legislature created a process for school districts to follow when a student in third grade scores below basic on the statewide English language arts (ELA) assessment. Below basic means level one in a four-level scoring system. The process requires a meeting with the student's parent or guardian, teacher, and the school's principal before the end of the school year to discuss appropriate grade placement and recommended strategies to improve the student's reading skills. For the student to be placed in the fourth grade, the strategies discussed must include a summer program or other options identified by the parents, teacher, and principal to prepare the student for fourth grade. School districts must obtain the parent's or guardian's consent regarding the grade placement and improvement strategy that must be implemented by the school district.

**Summary:** The process addressing third-grade students reading below grade level is changed. The meeting required with the student's parent or guardian, teacher, and the school's principal before the end of the school year is eliminated. Instead, prior to the return of the results of the statewide student assessment in ELA, elementary schools must require meetings between teachers and parents of students in third grade who are reading below grade level or who, based on formative or diagnostic assessments and other indicators, are likely to score in the below-basic level on the assessment. At the meeting, the teacher must inform the parents of the reading improvement strategies that are available for the student before fourth grade and the district's grade placement policy for the following year. Schools that have regularly scheduled parent teacher conferences may use those conferences to comply with the meeting requirement. For students to be placed in fourth grade, the strategies provided by the school district must include a summer program or other options to meet the needs of the student.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

If a third grade student scores below basic on the third grade statewide student assessment in ELA and no earlier meeting took place, then the principal must notify the student's parents or guardians of the following:

- the below-basic score;
- an explanation of the requirements on the school;
- the intensive improvement strategy options that are available;
- the school district's grade placement policy;
- contact information for a school district employee who can respond to questions and provide additional information; and
- a reasonable deadline for obtaining the parent's consent regarding the student's intensive improvement strategies that will be implemented and the student's grade placement.

If the school district does not receive a response from a parent by the deadline or a reasonable time thereafter, the principal must decide the student's grade placement for the following year and the improvement strategies, that will be implemented. If the principal and parent cannot agree on the appropriate grade placement and improvement strategies, then the parent's request will be honored.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	39	9
House	95	2

**Effective:** April 25, 2015