

**SENATE, No. 4061**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**220th LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 27, 2023

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Senator Burgess**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires school districts to implement reading intervention program for students in certain grades.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/27/2023)**

1 AN ACT concerning early literacy and supplementing chapter 35 of  
2 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. a. A school district shall offer a reading intervention program  
8 to students in grades kindergarten through grade three as part of the  
9 district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning  
10 Standards in English Language Arts.

11 b. The reading intervention program shall:

12 (1) provide explicit and systemic instruction in phonological  
13 awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as  
14 applicable;

15 (2) monitor the progress of a student's reading skills throughout  
16 the school year; and

17 (3) be adjusted throughout the year, if necessary, according to  
18 student needs.

19 c. The Department of Education shall provide a list of one or  
20 more reliable and valid reading assessment systems for school  
21 district use for the screening and monitoring of student progress  
22 toward grade level reading. The assessment shall be administered  
23 three times per year, and shall:

24 (1) measure phonological awareness, decoding, fluency,  
25 vocabulary, and comprehension; and

26 (2) identify students who have a reading deficiency, including  
27 identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia.

28 d. School districts shall adopt high-quality instructional materials  
29 grounded in scientifically based reading research to implement the  
30 program. The department shall provide school districts with age-  
31 appropriate materials designed to implement the provisions of this  
32 subsection.

33 e. A school district shall notify a parent or guardian of a student  
34 who exhibits a deficiency no later than 15 days after identification  
35 of the reading deficiency.

36

37 2. a. A school district shall annually provide information and  
38 training to a teacher who teaches in grades kindergarten through  
39 grade three to implement the reading intervention program required  
40 pursuant to section 1 of this act. The training shall include, at  
41 minimum, information on:

42 (1) the administration of the department approved assessment  
43 system pursuant to subsection c. of section 1 of this act;

44 (2) the science of reading, including explicit and systematic  
45 instruction in phonological awareness, decoding, fluency,  
46 vocabulary, comprehension, and building content knowledge; and

47 (3) scientifically-backed approaches to teaching students to read,  
48 including students with dyslexia.

1       b. A school district shall provide kindergarten through grade  
2 three teaching staff with ongoing coaching support to aid in the  
3 delivery of the reading intervention program. The support shall  
4 include, at minimum:

5       (1) on-site teacher training on evidence-based reading instruction  
6 and data-based decision making;

7       (2) example lessons;

8       (3) classroom observance during the delivery of the reading  
9 intervention program; and

10       (4) immediate feedback for improving reading instruction, if  
11 applicable.

12

13       3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to  
14 the first full school year following the date of enactment, except  
15 that the Commissioner of Education may take such anticipatory  
16 administrative action in advance thereof as shall be necessary for  
17 the implementation of the provisions of this act.

18

19

20

STATEMENT

21

22       This bill requires that a school district offer a reading  
23 intervention program to students in grades kindergarten through  
24 grade three. The reading intervention program is to: provide  
25 explicit and systemic instruction in phonological awareness,  
26 phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as applicable;  
27 monitor the reading progress of a student's reading skills  
28 throughout the school year; and be adjusted throughout the year, if  
29 necessary, according to student needs.

30       The Department of Education is required to provide a list of one  
31 or more reliable and valid reading assessment systems for school  
32 district use for the screening and monitoring of student progress  
33 toward grade level reading. The assessment is required to be  
34 administered three times per year, and is to measure phonological  
35 awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; and  
36 identify students who have a reading deficiency, including  
37 identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia.

38       The bill also requires that school districts adopt high-quality  
39 instructional materials grounded in scientifically based reading  
40 research to implement the program. The department is to provide  
41 school districts with age-appropriate materials designed to  
42 implement the program. A school district is required to notify a  
43 parent or guardian of a student who exhibits a deficiency in reading  
44 no later than 15 days after identification of the reading deficiency.

45       Also under the bill, a school district is required to annually  
46 provide information and training to a teaching staff member who  
47 teaches in grades kindergarten through grade three to implement the  
48 reading intervention program. The training is to include, at

## S4061 RUIZ

4

1 minimum, information on: the administration of the department  
2 approved assessment system; the science of reading, including  
3 explicit and systematic instruction in phonological awareness,  
4 decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and building  
5 content knowledge; and scientifically-backed approaches to  
6 teaching students to read, including students with dyslexia.

7 A school district is also to provide kindergarten through grade  
8 three teaching staff with ongoing coaching support to aid in the  
9 delivery of the reading intervention program. The support is to  
10 include: on-site teacher training on evidence-based reading  
11 instruction and data-based decision making; example lessons;  
12 classroom observance during the delivery of the reading  
13 intervention program; and immediate feedback for improving  
14 instruction, if applicable.