

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SHB 2909

C 273 L 96

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Improving reading literacy.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Johnson, Brumsickle, Cole, Talcott, Quall, Radcliff, McMahan, Hymes, Smith, Lambert, Thompson, Hatfield, Stevens, Boldt, Koster, McMorris, Elliot, Silver, Pelesky, Clements, Cooke, Benton, Carrell, Sheldon, Basich, Linville, Skinner, Robertson, Blanton, Huff, Hickel, Goldsmith, Campbell and Casada).

House Committee on Education
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Education

Background: The Subcommittee on Reading Literacy was established in the summer of 1995 with a threefold purpose: to gather information from throughout the state and country on successful methods of teaching reading; to receive input from parents, communities, and educators on the teaching and learning of reading; and to propose legislation by January 1996 on the teaching of reading.

The subcommittee held six meetings around the state between September 1995 and January 1996. The subcommittee discovered that a number of successful programs exist, using a variety of teaching methods. Teachers are asking for information on specific programs that are field-tested or proven effective for the teaching of reading, but there is no avenue for teachers to share information about their successful programs and methods. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction has information to send to teachers, but lacks adequate staff for consultation.

Summary: The Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, or its designee, is directed to develop and implement a process for identifying programs that have been proven to be effective in teaching elementary students to read. The initial identification of effective reading programs is to be prepared by December 31, 1996. The identification process is to be ongoing, to allow the review of additional programs after the initial identification of programs is complete.

The Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, or its designee, is to consult primary education teachers, statewide reading organizations, institutions of higher education, the Commission on Student Learning, legislators, parents, and other appropriate individuals and organizations when identifying effective reading programs. The following criteria are established for identifying effective reading programs:

whether the program helped students meet the state-level and classroom-based assessments for reading; whether the program achieved documented results for students on valid and reliable assessments; whether the program achieved documented results that have been replicated at other locations; whether the requirements for implementing the program are clear; whether the program is cost-effective and addresses differing student populations; and other appropriate criteria and considerations.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is directed to establish a grant program to provide incentives for teachers, schools, and school districts to use the identified and approved programs in grades kindergarten through four. Schools, school districts, and educational service districts may apply for the grants, which are to be used for in-service training and instructional material. Priority is given to schools and school districts with the lowest reading scores. The section of the bill containing the grant program is null and void if not funded in the budget.

The Center for the Improvement of Student Learning is directed to establish a training program in reading instruction and assessment for educators in the primary grades. The training program is to be designed to prepare educators to use the classroom-based assessments developed by the Commission on Student Learning to determine how children are reading, to select and implement appropriate instructional strategies and effective programs to improve reading instruction, and to involve parents in helping their children learn to read.

After effective programs have been identified, the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, is directed to provide information on these programs to elementary school teachers, principals, curriculum directors, superintendents, school board members, college and university reading instruction faculty, and others. The center is also directed to develop and implement strategies to improve reading instruction in the state, with a special emphasis on the instruction of reading in the primary grades. The strategies may include expanding and improving reading instruction in teacher preparation programs, expanding in-service training, the training of paraprofessionals and volunteers, improving classroom-based assessment of reading, and increasing statewide and regional technical assistance.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	95	0	
Senate	48	0	(Senate amended)
House	96	0	(House concurred)

Effective: March 29, 1996