
SENATE BILL 5508

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Senators Hochstatter, Oke, Morton, Swecker, Finkbeiner, Horn, Stevens and Schow

Read first time 01/29/97. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to reading accountability; amending RCW
2 28A.630.886; adding new sections to chapter 28A.150 RCW; adding a new
3 section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; creating new sections; and making an
4 appropriation.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that it is essential
7 for children in the public schools to read well early in elementary
8 school. The legislature further finds that a clear and visible goal,
9 assessments to determine the reading level at each building,
10 measurements of annual building improvement, and creating
11 accountability in each level of the educational system will result in
12 a significant increase in the number of children reading at or above
13 grade level.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act may be known and cited as the third
15 grade reading accountability act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The definitions in this section apply
2 throughout sections 3 through 11 of this act unless the context clearly
3 requires otherwise.

4 (1) "Actual percentage" means the head count enrollment of third
5 grade students reading at or above third grade level divided by the
6 head count enrollment of third grade students in the building on the
7 date the state-wide third grade reading assessment is administered.

8 (2) "Adjusted percentage" means the actual percentage minus those
9 students who were not in the district at least one-half of each of the
10 student's second and third grade years, and minus those students who
11 have been enrolled in a bilingual program for two or fewer years from
12 both the numerator and denominator.

13 (3) "At or above third grade level" means at or above a fixed
14 criterion-referenced standard in reading for a third grade student
15 established by the commission on student learning pursuant to RCW
16 28A.630.886.

17 (4) "Building baseline" means the building's actual percentage in
18 the spring of 1998.

19 (5) "Equal annual incremental improvement" is one-fourth of the
20 improvement necessary to progress from the building baseline to the
21 reading goal by the spring of 2002 and is calculated by taking the
22 state goal of ninety percent less the building baseline divided by
23 four.

24 (6) "Factored equal annual incremental improvement" means the state
25 goal of ninety percent less the building's adjusted percentage in the
26 spring of 1998 divided by four.

27 (7) "Reading goal" means ninety percent of a public elementary
28 school building's annual head count enrollment of third grade students
29 reading at or above grade level as measured by the state-wide third
30 grade reading assessment.

31 (8) "State-wide third grade reading assessment" means the
32 assessment developed by the commission on student learning that
33 measures reading level by grade and monthly increments.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The reading goal of chapter . . . , Laws of
35 1997 (this act) is to have, by the year 2002, and each year thereafter,
36 ninety percent or more of all Washington public school third graders
37 reading at or above grade level, as defined by the commission on
38 student learning, by the end of their third grade.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** To achieve the state reading goal:

2 (1) Each school district shall assess the reading level of its
3 third graders in the spring of 1998 and each year thereafter using the
4 state-wide third grade reading assessment developed by the commission
5 on student learning under RCW 28A.630.886;

6 (2) Each elementary school shall determine its building baseline,
7 which shall be its actual percentage of students reading at or above
8 third grade level as determined by the state-wide third grade reading
9 assessment administered in the spring of 1998; and

10 (3) Each public elementary school building is expected to make
11 equal annual incremental improvement from its baseline. Equal annual
12 incremental improvement is one-fourth of the reading improvement
13 necessary to progress from the building baseline in the spring of 1998
14 to the state reading goal of ninety percent in the spring of 2002 and
15 shall be calculated and measured on a building-by-building basis. The
16 percentage of required improvement will be different for different
17 public schools since it is based on the individual building baselines.
18 For financial accountability purposes only, the required improvement
19 shall not exceed twelve percent annually.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The seven levels of system accountability
21 necessary to achieve the reading goal shall be the parents, the state,
22 the professional associations, the principals, the teachers, the public
23 school buildings, and the school district.

24 (1) Parents are a child's first and most influential teacher.
25 Public school districts shall encourage and support parents to read
26 with their children at least twenty minutes a day from birth through
27 third grade.

28 (2) The superintendent of public instruction or the
29 superintendent's designee shall:

30 (a) Report annually to the senate and the house of representatives
31 education committees on the state-wide progress toward the reading
32 goal;

33 (b) Provide progress reports on the state-wide third grade reading
34 assessment scores to the public in clear, understandable terms on a
35 building, district, and state-wide basis, and by reference to fixed
36 standards at each grade level;

37 (c) Encourage buildings to develop a repertoire of instructional
38 approaches tailored to different student learning styles;

1 (d) Provide information to public schools and school districts
2 regarding organizational and instructional practices of representative
3 buildings that are making or exceeding the equal annual incremental
4 improvement toward the reading goal;

5 (e) Not adopt a specific instructional approach. The standard for
6 instruction in this area shall be what works.

7 (3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
8 coordinate the activities of relevant professional associations. It
9 shall:

10 (a) Meet and confer with each relevant professional association
11 regarding voluntary alignment of association resources to support the
12 achievement of the reading goal;

13 (b) Report annually to the senate and the house of representatives
14 education committees on the efforts of professional associations to
15 support the achievement of the reading goal; and

16 (c) Meet and confer with the commission on student learning to
17 assure consistent approaches.

18 (4) Each public elementary school principal has the primary
19 responsibility within the building for providing leadership in reaching
20 the reading goal. An increasing portion of each public elementary
21 school principal's annual evaluation should result from each school
22 district's professional appraisal of effective leadership in this area.

23 (5) Each third grade teacher shall annually report to the parent or
24 guardian the reading level of the parent's child as measured by the
25 state-wide reading assessment commencing June 1998 and each year
26 thereafter. The report shall reference grade level and monthly
27 increments.

28 (6) Each public elementary school shall annually report to its
29 community the number, the actual percentage, and the adjusted
30 percentage of third grade students reading at or above third grade
31 level and the distribution and range of all reading scores by grade and
32 monthly increments on the state-wide third grade reading assessment
33 required under section 5 of this act.

34 (7) Each district shall report to the superintendent of public
35 instruction annually beginning October 1998 the number, the actual
36 percentage, and the adjusted percentage of third grade students reading
37 at or above third grade level on the state-wide third grade reading
38 assessment required under section 5 of this act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Consistent with chapter 28A.630 RCW,
2 districts shall receive rewards for achievement, assistance for
3 deficiency, and sanctions for consistent nonachievement of factored
4 equal annual incremental improvement. Financial rewards and sanctions
5 under this section are intended to engage the districts and may not be
6 linked to either the principal or the elementary school building.

7 (1) Beginning in the 1999-2000 school year, each school district
8 shall annually receive an additional two thousand dollars for each
9 elementary building achieving the lesser of factored equal annual
10 incremental improvement or twelve percent per year.

11 (2) Beginning in the 1999-2000 school year, each school district
12 shall annually receive an additional one thousand dollars for each
13 elementary building achieving the lesser of one-half of factored equal
14 annual incremental improvement or six percent per year.

15 (3) Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, each school district
16 shall annually receive one thousand dollars less for each elementary
17 building failing to achieve the lesser of one-half of factored equal
18 annual incremental improvement or six percent per year.

19 (4) Payments under subsection (1) or (2) of this section are due if
20 a building qualifies either on an annual basis or on a cumulative year
21 basis. Reductions under subsection (3) of this section shall not occur
22 if a building achieves the lesser of one-half of factored equal annual
23 incremental improvement or six percent per year measured either on an
24 annual basis or on a cumulative year basis. Payment under subsection
25 (1) of this section shall continue to school districts with buildings
26 that achieve and continue to maintain the reading goal.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The superintendent of public instruction
28 shall adopt rules to prorate the amount paid or withheld under section
29 7 of this act for elementary buildings with a third grade full-time
30 equivalent enrollment of fewer than seventy-five students.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** The accuracy of the actual percentage and
32 the adjusted percentage of third grade students reading at or above
33 grade level reported to the community and to the superintendent of
34 public instruction shall be reviewed by the state auditor in each
35 school district's state audit.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 Notwithstanding other provisions of law, the commission on student
4 learning shall recommend additional standards and processes for
5 accountability for school districts and public elementary school
6 principals, teachers, and buildings providing reward for achievement,
7 assistance for deficiency, and sanctions for consistent nonachievement
8 of equal annual incremental improvement. The recommendations shall be
9 reported to the superintendent of public instruction and the
10 legislature by June 1998.

11 **Sec. 11.** RCW 28A.630.886 and 1995 c 303 s 2 are each amended to
12 read as follows:

13 (1) The elementary grades assessment developed by the commission on
14 student learning under RCW 28A.630.885(3)(b)(i) shall require that all
15 public school students are assessed for reading literacy skills in the
16 third grade no later than ((March 31st)) in the spring of 1998 and each
17 year thereafter. The state-wide third grade reading assessment, in
18 addition to reporting in other formats, shall report student reading
19 level in terms of grade level and monthly increments.

20 (2) ~~((The reading assessment in subsection (1) of this section~~
21 ~~shall be available for use by elementary schools no later than the~~
22 ~~1996-97 school year. Elementary schools are encouraged to begin~~
23 ~~implementation of the assessment in the 1996-97 and 1997-98 school~~
24 ~~years))~~ The commission on student learning shall define the standard
25 "at or above third grade level" for third grade reading in relationship
26 to the state-wide third grade reading assessment at a skill level
27 consistent with subsequent achievement of the commission's fourth grade
28 standards, and as measured in the spring of a student's third grade
29 year. The commission on student learning shall approve such other
30 standards relating to reading as may be necessary.

31 (3) Notwithstanding the assessment implementation dates in RCW
32 28A.630.885, the reading assessment in subsection (1) of this section
33 shall be implemented state-wide to all public school third-grade
34 students in the ((1998-99 school year)) spring of 1998 and be
35 administered the spring of each year thereafter.

36 (4) The information provided by the reading assessment shall be
37 used by educators as a tool to evaluate instructional practices and to
38 initiate appropriate educational support for students who have not

1 mastered the essential academic learning requirements for reading for
2 kindergarten through third grade. The primary purpose of the third
3 grade reading test is for feedback for the kindergarten through third
4 grade reading process and not for remediation commencing in the fourth
5 grade. The type of support to be provided to students shall be
6 determined by school districts. School districts shall periodically
7 reassess students who have not mastered the essential academic learning
8 requirements for reading, and shall continue to provide appropriate
9 reading support for students who have not mastered these essential
10 academic learning requirements. The results of the reading assessment
11 shall ((not)) be used for ((~~school or school district~~)) adult and
12 system accountability purposes pursuant to sections 6 and 7 of this
13 act.

14 NEW SECTION. Sec. 12. This act does not provide a cause of legal
15 action for damages or specific performance.

16 NEW SECTION. Sec. 13. Sections 3 through 9 and 12 of this act are
17 each added to chapter 28A.150 RCW.

18 NEW SECTION. Sec. 14. The sum of five million dollars, or as much
19 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending
20 June 30, 1998, from the general fund to the superintendent of public
21 instruction for the purposes of this act.

22 NEW SECTION. Sec. 15. If any provision of this act or its
23 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
24 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
25 persons or circumstances is not affected.

--- END ---