ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1295

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2026 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Pollet, Rude, Couture, Jacobsen, Ryu, Reed, Scott, Nance, Kloba, Eslick, and Simmons)

READ FIRST TIME 02/04/26.

AN ACT Relating to using evidence-based instructional practices in reading and writing literacy for public elementary students; amending RCW 28A.320.202, 28A.300.530, 28A.300.570, 28A.300.720, and 28A.320.260; adding new sections to chapter 28A.410 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.710 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.715 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.230 RCW; creating new sections; recodifying RCW 28A.320.202; repealing RCW 28A.410.285, 28A.415.350, 28A.415.360, and 28A.415.400; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1)(a) The legislature finds that learning to read and write is a core element of the state's statutory program of basic education and is the foundation for many other elements of the basic education program. The legislature recognizes that, during the 2023-24 school year, 37 percent of grade three students and 40 percent of grade four students were identified as reading below grade level.

(b) The legislature recognizes that, during the 2021-22 school year, the system established to screen students in grades kindergarten through grade two for risks associated with reading

difficulties, including dyslexia, identified over 20 percent of students as at risk and in need of additional supports.

(2)(a) The legislature finds that, in 2009, the United States department of education published a practice guide with evidence-based suggestions for implementing multitier interventions that are feasible and based on evidence from rigorous research. One of the recommendations is to use a curriculum that addresses the components of reading instruction (comprehension, fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary) and relates to students' needs and developmental levels. The legislature acknowledges that these components are often referred to as "structured literacy."

(b) Therefore, the legislature intends that these components be incorporated into foundational curricula and expectations for teaching reading and writing in Washington public schools.

(3)(a) The legislature understands recent research indicates that African American and Hispanic children who show signs of dyslexia are less likely than white children to be identified as dyslexic through school screening programs, even after controlling for income level. The legislature recognizes that the scientific literature on reading and cognition indicates that instruction using the principles of structured literacy will benefit almost all students, not only those with indicators of dyslexia.

(b) Therefore, the legislature intends to address this serious equity problem by ensuring that the next time any school district, charter school, or state-tribal education compact school revises its curriculum, it selects a curriculum that is evidence aligned to established interdisciplinary literacy research and evidence informed in its instructional design. In this way all students receive evidence-informed reading and writing instruction through a comprehensive literacy program.

(4)(a) The legislature recognizes that all elementary educators who support early literacy, reading literacy, and writing literacy need professional development on using such a comprehensive literacy program that is consistent with the literacy-related teacher endorsement standards.

(b) Therefore, the legislature intends to require that preservice and in-service elementary educators be trained to teach students to read and write using evidence-informed instructional practices in early literacy, reading literacy, and writing literacy.

Sec. 2. RCW 28A.320.202 and 2013 2nd sp.s. c 18 s 102 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) School districts are responsible for providing a comprehensive system of instruction and services in reading and early literacy to kindergarten through ((~~fourth~~)) grade four students that is based on the degree of student need for additional support. Reading and early literacy systems provided by school districts must include((~~:~~

~~(1) Annual use of~~)) the activities described in subsection (3)(e) and (f) of this section.

(2)(a) Beginning September 1, 2027, when a school district updates or purchases a curriculum related to early literacy, reading literacy, or writing literacy for use with any students in kindergarten through grade four, the new or updated curriculum must comply with (b) of this subsection (2).

(b) The literacy curriculum required by (a) of this subsection (2) must be: (i) Evidence aligned to established interdisciplinary literacy research; (ii) evidence informed in its instructional design; (iii) aligned with the state learning standard in English language arts, as the standard is adopted and periodically revised under RCW 28A.655.070; (iv) part of a comprehensive literacy program as described in subsection (3) of this section; and (v) consistent with the teacher endorsement standards for literacy-related competencies adopted by the Washington professional educator standards board under section 3 of this act.

(3) Once a school district updates or purchases a curriculum as required by subsection (2) of this section, the school district must implement a comprehensive literacy program that uses evidence-informed instructional practices to promote the early literacy, reading literacy, and writing literacy of students in kindergarten through grade four. At a minimum, a comprehensive literacy program must:

(a) Include at least the following essential components: Language comprehension, including semantics, syntax, and knowledge building; reading and writing fluency; orthographic knowledge, including phonics and spelling; phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness; vocabulary; and oral language development and proficiency;

(b) Be diagnostic of and responsive to individual student needs, including by being multisensory, multimodal, high quality, and culturally relevant;

(c) Be aligned with the state learning standard in English language arts, as the standard is adopted and periodically revised under RCW 28A.655.070;

(d) Be consistent with the teacher endorsement standards for literacy-related competencies adopted by the Washington professional educator standards board under section 3 of this act;

(e) Use screening assessments and other tools to identify at-risk readers in kindergarten through ((~~fourth~~)) grade four, such as the Washington kindergarten inventory of developing skills, the Washington state early learning and development guidelines for birth through ((~~third~~)) grade three, literacy screenings for students in kindergarten through grade two under RCW 28A.320.260, the second grade reading assessment under RCW 28A.300.310, and locally used assessments and other tools; and

((~~(2) Research-based~~)) (f) Use research-based family involvement and engagement strategies, including strategies to help families and guardians assist in improving students' reading and early literacy skills at home.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.410 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The board shall adopt revised standards for teacher endorsements with literacy-related competencies. The revised standards must include those competencies necessary to participate in the delivery of a comprehensive literacy program under RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act), which, among other requirements, includes the essential components of language comprehension, phonological awareness, orthographic knowledge, fluency, vocabulary, and oral language development and proficiency.

(2) The board shall require board-approved teacher preparation programs that offer endorsements with literacy-related competencies to incorporate any revised board-adopted standards into their instructional content within two academic years after the end of the academic year in which the revised standards are adopted.

(3)(a) The board shall, within existing resources, convene advisory groups of the teacher preparation programs described in subsection (2) of this section. The purpose of the advisory groups is to develop, review, and share curricula, instructional materials, and open educational resources tailored to each literacy-related endorsement and designed to help teacher candidates graduate prepared

to participate in the delivery of a comprehensive literacy program under RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act).

(b) The public institutions of higher education approved to offer teacher endorsements with literacy-related competencies are encouraged to participate in the advisory groups under (a) of this subsection (3).

(4) The provisions of this section apply to endorsements with literacy-related competencies as determined by the board.

(5) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Board" means the Washington professional educator standards board; and

(b) "Endorsement with literacy-related competencies" has the same meaning as in section 4 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.410 RCW to read as follows:

(1)(a) Beginning with teacher certificate renewals occurring on or after September 1, 2030, a teacher who holds an endorsement with literacy-related competencies must complete continuing education in which at least 10 percent focuses on evidence-informed literacy instruction.

(b) Literacy-focused continuing education under (a) of this subsection (1) must include the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in the delivery of a comprehensive literacy program under RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act), and be aligned with the teacher endorsement standards for literacy-related competencies adopted by the Washington professional educator standards board under section 3 of this act.

(c) The requirements of this subsection (1) apply once per certificate renewal cycle, regardless of the number of endorsements with literacy-related competencies held by an individual teacher.

(2) Continuing education satisfies the requirements of subsection (1) of this section only if it is offered by an approved clock hour provider that is one of the following entities:

(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction;

(b) A school district;

(c) A charter school established under chapter 28A.710 RCW;

(d) A state-tribal education compact school subject to chapter 28A.715 RCW;

(e) An educational service district;

(f) A statewide organization representing public school educators; or

(g) Another organization approved by the Washington professional educator standards board.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "endorsement with literacy-related competencies" includes elementary education, English language arts, literacy, special education, and any other endorsement determined by the Washington professional educator standards board to include literacy-related competencies.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.710 RCW to read as follows:

RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act) and governs school operation and management under RCW 28A.710.040 and applies to charter schools established under this chapter.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.715 RCW to read as follows:

RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act) and governs school operation and management under RCW 28A.715.020 and applies to state-tribal education compact schools subject to this chapter.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) By December 1, 2032, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must submit a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature that includes the following information:

(a) The percentage of school districts, charter schools, and state-tribal education compact schools that have fully implemented a comprehensive literacy program, as described in RCW 28A.320.202(3) (as recodified by this act);

(b) A summary of changes in literacy screening assessment results, including results from screenings identified in RCW 28A.320.202(3)(e) (as recodified by this act) to the extent such changes are reasonably attributable to the implementation of comprehensive literacy programs;

(c) The most recent reading proficiency rates for students in grades three and four, as measured by statewide or other applicable assessments; and

(d) Recommendations for statutory changes to the comprehensive literacy program or related statutes to strengthen statewide implementation and to improve students' early literacy, reading literacy, and writing literacy outcomes.

(2) Each school district, charter school, and state-tribal education compact school must submit to the office of the superintendent of public instruction, in the time and format specified by the office, any information reasonably necessary to complete the report required under subsection (1) of this section.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "fully implement" includes curriculum adoption, use as part of core instruction, and support through aligned professional development.

(4) This section expires August 1, 2033.

Sec. 8. RCW 28A.300.530 and 2009 c 546 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Within available resources, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with ((~~the school districts that participated in the Lorraine Wojahn dyslexia pilot program, and with an international~~)) appropriate experts, for example, the educational service districts and international and state-level nonprofit organizations dedicated to supporting efforts to provide appropriate identification of and instruction for individuals with dyslexia, shall((~~:~~

~~(a) Develop~~)) develop, and periodically update, an educator literacy training program to enhance the reading, writing, and spelling skills of ((~~students with dyslexia. The training program must provide research-based, multisensory literacy intervention professional development in the areas of dyslexia and intervention implementation. The program shall~~)) kindergarten through grade four students, including students who display indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia. The educator literacy training program must provide evidence-based professional development on the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in the delivery of a comprehensive literacy program under RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act).

(2) The educator literacy training program must be posted on the website of the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

(3) The educator literacy training program may be regionally delivered through the educational service districts. The educational

service districts may seek assistance from ((~~the international~~)) nonprofit organizations to deliver the educator literacy training((~~; and~~

~~(b) Develop a dyslexia handbook to be used as a reference for teachers and parents of students with dyslexia. The handbook shall be modeled after other state dyslexia handbooks, and shall include guidelines for school districts to follow as they identify and provide services for students with dyslexia. Additionally, the handbook shall provide school districts, and parents and guardians with information regarding the state's relevant statutes and their relation to federal special education laws. The handbook shall be posted on the website of the office of the superintendent of public instruction.~~

~~(2) Beginning September 1, 2009, and annually thereafter, each~~)) program.

(4)(a) By October 1, 2030, and by October 1st every even year thereafter, each educational service district shall report to the office of the superintendent of public instruction the number of individuals who ((~~participate~~)) participated in the educator literacy training ((~~developed and offered by the educational service district. The~~)) program during the prior two school years.

(b) In compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall report ((~~that information~~)) the information described in (a) of this subsection (4) to the legislative education committees by December 1, 2030, and by December 1st every even year thereafter.

Sec. 9. RCW 28A.300.570 and 2018 c 58 s 29 are each amended to read as follows:

In support of reading and early literacy, including comprehensive literacy programs under RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act), the office of the superintendent of public instruction is responsible for:

(1) Continuing to work collaboratively with state and regional partners such as the department of children, youth, and families and the educational service districts to establish early literacy benchmarks and standards and to implement the Washington state comprehensive literacy plan;

(2) Disseminating research and information to school districts about evidence-based programs and practices in reading readiness skills, early literacy, and reading instruction;

(3) ((~~Providing statewide models to support school districts that are implementing response to intervention initiatives, positive behavior intervention support systems, or other similar comprehensive models of data-based identification and early intervention; and~~

~~(4)~~)) Within available funds and in partnership with the educational service districts, providing technical assistance ((~~and professional development opportunities for school districts~~)) to public schools delivering a comprehensive literacy program under RCW 28A.320.202 (as recodified by this act); and

(4) Developing, and periodically updating, a dyslexia handbook to be used as a reference for teachers and parents of students who display indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia. The handbook must include guidelines for school districts to follow as they identify and provide services for students with dyslexia. Additionally, the handbook must provide school districts and parents with information regarding the state's relevant statutes and their relation to federal special education laws, as well as parental support resources. The handbook must be posted on the website of the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

Sec. 10. RCW 28A.300.720 and 2018 c 75 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) By June 1, 2021, the superintendent of public instruction must review the dyslexia advisory council's recommendations required under ((~~RCW 28A.300.710~~)) section 4, chapter 75, Laws of 2018 and make available to school districts:

(a) Best practices for school district implementation of screenings as required under RCW 28A.320.260, including trainings for school district staff conducting the screenings, for example, the educator literacy training program delivered under RCW 28A.300.530;

(b) Best practices for using a multitiered system((~~s~~)) of supports to provide interventions as required under RCW 28A.320.260, including trainings for school district staff in instructional methods specifically targeting students' areas of weakness;

(c) Sample educational information for parents and families related to dyslexia that includes a list of resources for parental

support, such as the dyslexia handbook developed under RCW 28A.300.570; and

(d) Best practices to address the needs of students above grade two who show indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia.

(2) By February 15, 2022, the superintendent of public instruction must review the dyslexia advisory council's updated report required under ((~~RCW 28A.300.710~~)) section 4, chapter 75, Laws of 2018 and revise the best practices and sample educational information made available to school districts required under subsection (1) of this section.

((~~(3) By November 1, 2022, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the superintendent of public instruction must report to the house of representatives and senate education committees with the following information from the 2021-22 school year:~~

~~(a) The number of students: (i) Screened pursuant to RCW 28A.320.260; (ii) with indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia identified under RCW 28A.300.700; and (iii) provided interventions pursuant to RCW 28A.320.260;~~

~~(b) Descriptions from school districts of the types of interventions used in accordance with RCW 28A.320.260 and rates of student progress, when available; and~~

~~(c) Descriptions from school districts of the issues districts had related to implementing the provisions of RCW 28A.320.260.~~))

Sec. 11. RCW 28A.320.260 and 2018 c 75 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Beginning in the 2021-22 school year, and as provided in this section, each school district must use a multitiered system((~~s~~)) of supports to provide interventions to students in kindergarten through ((~~second~~)) grade two who display indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia. In order to provide school districts with the opportunity to intervene before a student's performance falls significantly below grade level, school districts must screen students in kindergarten through ((~~second~~)) grade two for indications of, or areas associated with, dyslexia as provided in this section.

(2)(a) School districts must use screening tools and resources that exemplify best practices, as described under RCW 28A.300.700.

(b) School districts may use the screening tools and resources identified by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with RCW 28A.300.700.

(3)(a) If a student shows indications of below grade level literacy development or indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia, the school district must provide interventions using an evidence-based multitiered system((~~s~~)) of supports, consistent with the ((~~recommendations of the dyslexia advisory council under RCW 28A.300.710~~)) best practices made available by the superintendent of public instruction under RCW 28A.300.720, and as required under this subsection (3).

(b) The interventions must be evidence-based multisensory structured literacy interventions and must be provided by an educator trained in instructional methods specifically targeting students' areas of weakness.

(c) Whenever possible, a school district must begin by providing student supports in the general education classroom. If screening tools and resources indicate that, after receiving the initial tier of student support, a student requires interventions, the school district may provide the interventions in either the general education classroom or a learning assistance program setting. If after receiving interventions, further screening tools and resources indicate that a student continues to have indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia, the school district must recommend to the student's parents and family that the student be evaluated for dyslexia or a specific learning disability.

(4) For a student who shows indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia, each school district must notify the student's parents and family of the identified indicators and areas of weakness, as well as the plan for using a multitiered system((~~s~~)) of supports to provide supports and interventions. The initial notice must also include ((~~information relating to dyslexia and resources for parental support~~)) the dyslexia handbook developed by the superintendent of public instruction under RCW 28A.300.570. The school district must regularly update the student's parents and family of the student's progress.

(5) School districts may use state funds provided under chapter 28A.165 RCW to meet the requirements of this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** RCW 28A.320.202 is recodified as a section in chapter 28A.230 RCW.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** The following acts or parts of acts are each repealed:

(1) RCW 28A.410.285 (Teacher preparation programs) and 2019 c 295 s 203;

(2) RCW 28A.415.350 (Professional development learning opportunities—Partnerships) and 2009 c 539 s 4 & 2007 c 402 s 7;

(3) RCW 28A.415.360 (Learning improvement days—Eligibility—Reports) and 2019 c 252 s 117, 2009 c 548 s 403, & 2007 c 402 s 9; and

(4) RCW 28A.415.400 (Reading instruction and early literacy—Professional development) and 2013 2nd sp.s. c 18 s 103.

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