

# SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/SB 94

SPONSOR: Appropriations Subcommittee on Education and Senator Miller

SUBJECT: Schools/Reading Instruction

DATE: February 26, 2002      REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Harkey</u>	<u>O'Farrell</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
2.	<u>Bryant</u>	<u>Hickam</u>	<u>AED</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
3.	_____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

## I. Summary:

The bill requires each public elementary school to develop and implement a reading program that includes daily reading and literacy in kindergarten through grade 4. The Department of Education must provide technical support to any public school that requests assistance to implement this requirement.

The Committee Substitute provides that a school district larger than 2500 students must select at least one school for training for the school's entire staff in reading development and literacy.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2002.

This bill creates an unnumbered section of the Florida Statutes.

## II. Present Situation:

The 1999 Legislature enacted ch. 99-398, L.O.F., an education accountability law, popularly known as "A+". The law sought to end social promotion and to set the expectation that all students will learn to read. Under s. 232.245, F.S., if a student does not meet expected levels of performance in reading, writing, science, and mathematics, the school must develop an academic improvement plan in cooperation with the student's parents. In grades 1, 2, and 3, a student who has significant problems in reading must be given intensive reading instruction. If the student's reading deficiency is not remedied by the end of fourth grade, and if the student scores below a specified level for achievement in reading, the student must be retained. Even though these requirements might imply that daily reading instruction would take place in the early grades of elementary school, there is no statutory requirement for such daily instruction.

In 2001, thirty-one percent of Florida's fourth grade students scored at performance Level I on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), a level that indicates little success with the Sunshine State Standards. Students must be able to read well in the early grades in order to succeed with the Sunshine State Standards.

To improve students' reading, the Department of Education has undertaken a reading initiative known as FLARE (Family Literacy and Reading Excellence). Over a 3-year period, the state has received \$26 million in federal funds to implement FLARE. In March 1999, the Commissioner of Education formed Florida's Reading and Family Literacy Partnership to provide leadership and statewide visibility for the reading initiative. The reading initiative informs teachers of important research findings, resources, and teaching strategies.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

The bill requires each public elementary school to develop and implement a reading program that includes daily reading and literacy in kindergarten through grade 4. The amount of daily time to be spent on reading and literacy activities will be locally determined. The Department of Education must provide technical support to any public school that requests assistance to implement this requirement.

The Committee Substitute provides that a school district larger than 2500 students must select at least one school for training for the school's entire staff in reading development and literacy. Should a large district fail to implement such a program, the district will lose 10% of its annual Teacher Training funds provided in the General Appropriations Act. The Secretary of Education is authorized to reallocate the funds held back to other reading programs.

### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

#### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

#### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

#### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

### **V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

#### **A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The Department of Education currently provides the technical assistance required by the bill. Larger school districts will have 10% of their teacher training funds, currently provided in the General Appropriations Act at-risk, should they not develop the intended reading development and literacy staff programs. These funds, however, would be available to other districts for reading instruction.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.

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