

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 887 Reading Instruction
SPONSOR(S): Harrell
TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1306

| REFERENCE | ACTION | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF |
|--|-----------|---------|--|
| 1) PreK-12 Quality Subcommittee | 14 Y, 0 N | Brink | DavisGreene |
| 2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee | | | |
| 3) Education Committee | | | |

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Florida law provides for a multitude of programs, initiatives, and requirements to assist in implementing effective reading instruction and interventions for struggling readers, particularly in early grades. To further increase the quality of reading interventions, the bill:

- beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, requires teachers who provide reading interventions under a school district's K-12 comprehensive reading plan to be certified or endorsed in reading;
- requires the Florida Department of Education (DOE), as part of its review of certain certification and endorsement requirements, to consider awarding a reading endorsement to teachers who are certified by an internationally recognized reading intervention organization or who complete a program accredited by the organization; and
- requires school districts to provide teachers access to training for a reading endorsement consistent with the DOE's review of endorsement requirements.

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2018.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Educator Certification Coverage Areas and Endorsements

Present Situation

In order for a person to serve as an educator in a traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, or other publicly operated school, the person must hold a certificate issued by the Florida Department of Education (DOE).¹ Persons seeking employment at a public school as a school supervisor, school principal, teacher, library media specialist, school counselor, athletic coach, or in another instructional capacity must be certified.² The purpose of certification is to require school-based personnel to “possess the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to allow the opportunity for a high-quality education in the public schools.”³

Each educator certificate has subject area “coverage”--a designation on the certificate that indicates the field in which the educator has content knowledge (e.g., Mathematics, grades 6-12). An “endorsement” is a “rider” shown on an educator certificate that signifies the educator has knowledge of instructional strategies that target particular levels, stages of development, or circumstances (e.g., Reading Endorsement or Endorsement in English for Speakers of Other Languages).⁴

To add subject area coverage or an endorsement to a professional certificate or temporary certificate, an educator must submit an application and the required fee and complete requirements as specified in state board rule.

The specialization requirements for a K-12 reading certification are:

- a master’s or higher degree with a graduate major in reading; or
- a bachelor’s or higher degree with 30 semester hours in reading to include the following areas:
 - Six semester hours in foundations of reading instruction to include the elementary and secondary levels
 - Six semester hours in diagnosis of reading disabilities and techniques of corrective or remedial reading
 - Three semester hours in educational measurement
 - Three semester hours in literature for children or adolescents
 - Three semester hours in methods of teaching language arts at the elementary or secondary level
 - Three semester hours in administration and interpretation of instructional assessments with instructional strategies and materials based upon scientifically based reading research for the prevention and remediation of reading difficulties
 - Three semester hours in a supervised reading practicum to obtain practical experience in increasing the reading performance of a student(s) with the prescription and utilization

¹ Sections 1012.55(1) and 1002.33(12)(f), F.S.

² Sections 1002.33(12)(f) (charter school teachers) and 1012.55(1), F.S. District school boards and charter school governing boards are authorized to hire non-certificated individuals who possess expertise in a given field to serve in an instructional capacity. Rule 6A-1.0502, F.A.C.; ss. 1002.33(12)(f) and 1012.55(1)(c), F.S. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, and speech therapists are not required to be certified educators. Rule 6A-1.0502(10) and (11), F.A.C.

³ Section 1012.54, F.S.; see rule 6A-4.001(1), F.A.C.

⁴ See Florida Department of Education, *Certificate Additions*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/additions/> (last visited Jan. 11, 2018).

of appropriate strategies and materials based upon scientifically based reading research to address the prevention, identification, and intervention of reading difficulties⁵

The specialization requirements for a reading endorsement are a bachelor's or higher degree with certification in an academic, degreed vocational, administrative, or specialty class coverage and 15 semester hours in reading coursework, based upon scientifically based reading research with a focus on both the prevention and remediation of reading difficulties, to include the following:

- Six semester hours in understanding reading as a process of student engagement in both fluent decoding of words and construction of meaning
- Three semester hours in the administration and interpretation of instructional assessments to include screening, diagnosis, and progress monitoring with purposes of prevention, identification, and remediation of reading difficulties
- Three semester hours in understanding how to prescribe, differentiate instruction, and utilize appropriate strategies and materials based upon scientifically based reading research in order to address the prevention, identification, and remediation of reading difficulties in order to increase reading performance
- Three semester hours in a supervised practicum to obtain practical experience in increasing the reading performance of a student(s) with the prescription and utilization of appropriate strategies and materials based upon scientifically based reading research to address the prevention, identification, and remediation of reading difficulties⁶

By July 1, 2018, and at least once every five years thereafter, the DOE must review specialization and coverage area requirements in the elementary, reading, and exceptional student educational areas. At the conclusion of each review, the DOE must recommend to the State Board of Education changes to the specialization and coverage area requirements based upon any instructional or intervention strategies identified by the DOE that are proven to improve student reading performance.⁷

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires the DOE's review of specialization and endorsement coverage areas to consider the award of an endorsement to an individual who holds a certificate issued by an internationally recognized organization that establishes standards for providing evidence-based interventions to struggling readers or who completes a postsecondary program that is accredited by such an organization. The bill specifies that any such certificate must require an individual who completes the certificate or accredited program to demonstrate competence in reading intervention strategies through clinical experience.

Research-Based Reading Allocation

Present Situation

The Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), which is used to provide equalized funding for all school districts across the state, includes a research-based reading allocation for districts to provide a K-12 comprehensive system of research-based reading instruction.⁸ The Legislature appropriates the allocation each year. In 2017, the Legislature appropriated \$130 million for the allocation for the 2017-18 school year.⁹ Among other things, funds from the allocation may be used to provide intensive interventions for students in kindergarten through grade 12 who have been identified as having a

⁵ Rule 6A-4.0291, F.A.C.

⁶ Rule 6A-4.0292, F.A.C.

⁷ Section 1012.586(1)(b), F.S., as amended by s. 12, ch. 2017-116, L.O.F.

⁸ See s. 1011.62(9)(d), F.S.; s. 6, ch. 2017-234, L.O.F. See also Florida Department of Education, *2017-18 Funding for Florida School Districts* (2017) at 18, available at www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7507/urlt/Fefpdist.pdf.

⁹ See s. 6, ch. 2017-234, L.O.F.

reading deficiency or who are reading below grade level as determined by the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment.¹⁰

In order to be eligible to receive funds from the allocation, a school district must annually submit a K-12 comprehensive reading plan for review and approval by the Just Read, Florida! Office within the DOE.¹¹ The plan is deemed approved unless the JRFO rejects the plan on or before June 1. The plan format must be developed with input from school district personnel and must allow courses in core, career, and alternative programs that deliver intensive reading remediation through integrated curricula by a teacher who is deemed “highly qualified to teach reading or working toward that status.”¹²

The DOE must release a school district’s allocation of appropriated funds no later than July 1 if its plan is deemed approved. The DOE may withhold funds if it determines that the reading allocation funds are not being used to implement the school district’s approved plan. The DOE must monitor implementation of each district’s plan, including through site visits and collecting data on expenditures and reading improvement results.¹³

The JRFO was established by the Legislature in 2006 to implement the Just Read, Florida! initiative, which aimed to help students become successful, independent readers.¹⁴ Among other things, the office must:

- work with the Lanning Center for Learning at the University of Florida to develop training for K-12 teachers, reading coaches, and school principals on effective content-area-specific reading strategies and the integration of content-rich curriculum from other core subject areas into reading instruction;
- develop and provide access to sequenced, content-rich curriculum programming, instructional practices, and resources that help elementary schools use state-adopted instructional materials to increase students’ background knowledge and literacy skills; and
- work with the Florida Center for Reading Research to identify scientifically researched and evidence-based reading instructional and intervention programs that incorporate explicit, systematic, and sequential approaches to teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and text comprehension and incorporate decodable or phonetic text instructional strategies.¹⁵

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires that, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, intensive reading interventions provided pursuant to a school district’s reading plan must be delivered by a teacher who is certified or endorsed in reading. The intensive interventions must incorporate the evidence-based intervention strategies identified by the JRFO.

Professional Development

Present Situation

Florida law requires a number of entities, including the DOE, public postsecondary educational institutions, public school districts, public schools, state education foundations, consortia, and professional organizations, to work collaboratively to develop a coordinated system of professional development. The purpose of the system is to increase student achievement, enhance classroom

¹⁰ See s. 1011.62(9)(c)7., F.S. Section 1008.22, F.S. establishes requirements related to statewide, standardized assessments.

¹¹ Section 1011.62(9)(d)1., F.S.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Section 8, ch. 2006-74, L.O.F. The initiative was established by Governor Jeb Bush in 2001. See Exec. Order No. 01-260 (2001).

¹⁵ See s. 1001.215(3), (4), and (8), F.S. Reading intervention includes evidence-based strategies frequently used to remediate reading deficiencies and includes, but is not limited to, individual instruction, multisensory approaches, tutoring, mentoring, or the use of technology that targets specific reading skills and abilities. Section 1001.215(8), F.S.

instructional strategies that promote rigor and relevance throughout the curriculum, and prepare students for continuing education and the workforce.¹⁶

Each school district is required to develop a professional development system in consultation with teachers, teacher-educators of Florida College System institutions and state universities, business and community representatives, and local education foundations, consortia, and professional organizations.¹⁷

Currently, each school district's system must provide training to reading coaches, classroom teachers, and school administrators in effective methods of identifying characteristics of conditions such as dyslexia and other causes of diminished phonological processing skills; incorporating instructional techniques into the general education setting which are proven to improve reading performance for all students; and using predictive and other data to make instructional decisions based on individual student needs.¹⁸ The training must help teachers integrate phonemic awareness; phonics, word study, and spelling; reading fluency; vocabulary, including academic vocabulary; and text comprehension strategies into an explicit, systematic, and sequential approach to reading instruction, including multisensory intervention strategies.¹⁹ Each district must provide all elementary grades instructional personnel access to training sufficient to meet certain certification renewal requirements.²⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires each district school board professional development system to provide all elementary grades instructional personnel access to training sufficient to earn a reading endorsement consistent with any changes made as a result of the DOE's review of certification subject area and endorsement requirements.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 1011.62, F.S.; requiring K-12 comprehensive reading plans to provide for intensive reading interventions that are delivered by teachers who meet certain criteria beginning with a specified school year; providing requirements for such interventions.

Section 2. Amends s. 1012.586, F.S.; requiring the Department of Education to consider the award of endorsements for a teaching certificate to individuals who hold specified certifications or who complete specified programs that meet certain criteria in a specified review.

Section 3. Amends s. 1012.98, F.S.; requiring school districts to provide access to training sufficient to earn an endorsement in reading.

Section 4. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2018.

¹⁶ Section 1012.98(1), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 1012.98(4)(b), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1012.98(4)(b)11., F.S.

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ *Id.* Section 1012.585(3)(f), F.S., requires that an applicant for renewal of a professional certificate in any area of certification identified by State Board of Education rule that includes reading instruction or intervention for any students in kindergarten through grade 6, with a beginning validity date of July 1, 2020, or thereafter, must earn a minimum of 2 college credits or the equivalent inservice points in the use of explicit, systematic, and sequential approaches to reading instruction, developing phonemic awareness, and implementing multisensory intervention strategies. Such training must be provided by teacher preparation programs or approved school district professional development systems.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

None.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.