

HCS SS#2 SCS SB 949 -- READING INTERVENTION

SPONSOR: Emery

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Rules - Administrative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 5.

This bill modifies provisions relating to reading intervention in schools.

BRAILLE INSTRUCTION

This bill requires a student to receive instruction in Braille reading and writing as part of his or her individualized education plan (IEP) unless the IEP team determines that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the child (Section 167.225, RSMo).

This provision is similar to SB 681 (2018).

READING SUCCESS PLANS

The bill requires school districts and charter schools to establish a reading success plan for certain students in Kindergarten to third grade, as specified in the bill. The plan shall be provided to those students who exhibit a reading deficiency, are identified as being at risk for dyslexia, or have a formal diagnosis of dyslexia.

A student who exhibits a reading deficiency shall receive an individual reading success plan no later than 30 days after the identification of the reading deficiency for students in first through third grade and by January 31 for Kindergarten students. The student's parent or legal guardian shall be notified no later than 15 days after the identification of the reading deficiency. Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, students who are not reading at grade level by the end of the second grade shall receive intensive reading intervention.

Each school district and charter school shall review student reading success plans and shall provide services as specified in the bill. Each school district and charter school shall also establish an intensive acceleration class for any student not reading proficient or above on the third grade assessment.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall compile certain information relating to student reading proficiency, along with state-level summary information each year. The information shall be reported to the State Board of Education, the public, the

Governor, and the Joint Committee on Education by October 1 each year (Section 167.450).

Certain provisions relating to reading intervention plans are repealed in the bill (Sections 167.268 and 167.645).

These provisions are similar to HB 1417 (2018).

There is a delayed effective date for certain provisions.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill requires home reading plans and strategies and ensures progress mentoring, among other things. The language is modeled after Mississippi provisions and is aimed at increasing the reading proficiency of elementary students. In addition, a great majority of children with IEPs are dyslexic. Structured literacy could be the answer to a lot of questions when it comes to teaching dyslexic children to read.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Emery; Jennifer Edwards, Decoding Dyslexia; Noel Leif, Springfield Center for Dyslexia and Learning; Missouri Education Reform Council; and Excellence in Education in Action.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that there are concerns about the cost of implementing the provisions of the bill as well as giving the State Board of Education broad and unlimited power. In addition, if 40% of the students are not proficient in reading we need to look at changing the core instruction and general education guidelines. There are also questions about whether or not Mississippi students are currently more or less proficient than Missouri students.

Testifying against the bill were Janet Tilley, Missouri School Board Association; Steven Beldin, MO-CASE; Springfield Public Schools; Missouri National Education Association; School Administrators Coalition; Cynthia Owens, Phd, and Brooke Gantt, Nixa Public Schools; Karen J Scott, Linda Fugate, and Craig Carson, Ozark R-VI Schools; Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City; and the Missouri State Teachers Association.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that there may be conflicts with regulations regarding IEPs and other legislation regarding dyslexic students.

Testifying on the bill were Scott Crooks, Special School District; Matthew Burns; and Erica Lembke, Dyslexia Task Force Member.