

READING INSTRUCTION

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House Bill 4537

Sponsor: Rep. David Robertson

Committee: Education

Complete to 9-19-05

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4537 AS INTRODUCED 3-22-05

House Bill 4537 would amend the Revised School Code to set specific requirements for reading instruction.

The bill specifies that not later than the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, the board of a school district, or the board of directors of a charter school, ensure that the reading instruction provided in every grade meets all of the following:

- ** Teaches from sound to print for students to access the English alphabet;
- ** Teaches phonemes only;
- ** Teaches from simple to complex, with the most common spelling of a sound first;
- ** Teaches blending and segmenting of words using a multi-sensory approach;
- ** Teaches the proper process of how to form each letter and has the student say the sound as he or she writes each letter;
- ** Teaches that letter strings of up to four letters can represent a sound;
- ** Teaches that all sounds can be spelled in a variety of ways;
- ** Teaches that the same spelling can represent different sounds;
- ** Provides explicit instruction for reading fluency including timed rereading of a passage until a designated goal, in words per minute is attained;
- ** Teaches how the English alphabet is used both in reading and spelling and teaches these two areas simultaneously for optimum gains;
- ** Assesses students' progress by analyzing their spelling error patterns in authentic writing pieces, including sentence, stories, and unedited classroom writing projects, in order to understand the students' independent level of accurate word reading; and

** On a yearly basis, administers standardized pre-testing and post-testing to measure student progress and identify areas of weakness needing further instruction.

The bill would require that the Department of Education, no later than December 31, 2005, select or develop and make available to school districts and charter schools a model reading curriculum that meets the requirements listed above.

Under the bill, school board members would be required to ensure that each teacher assigned to teach reading at any level in a school was trained in the techniques described above, before implementing the instruction.

Currently under the law, a teaching certificate is issued to a person who has met elementary or secondary reading credit requirements, as applicable to the grade level of the teacher's license. That provision would be retained, however it would be expanded to specify that the reading credit requirements would be fulfilled only if teachers could demonstrate they had received training in the reading instruction techniques described above, in their teacher preparation programs.

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Legislative Analyst: J. Hunault

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