

REFERENCE TITLE: literacy; dyslexia screening

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-fifth Legislature
First Regular Session
2021

SB 1403

Introduced by
Senators Boyer: Bowie

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 15-211 AND 15-704, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO
SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-211, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 15-211. K-3 reading program; dyslexia specialist; dyslexia
5 training; receipt and use of monies; additional
6 funding; report; program termination

7 A. The department of education shall administer a K-3 reading
8 program to improve the reading proficiency of pupils in kindergarten
9 programs and grades one, two and three in the public schools of this
10 state.

11 B. The department of education shall designate a dyslexia
12 specialist for the department to provide school districts and charter
13 schools with support and resources that are necessary to assist students
14 with dyslexia.

15 C. On or before July 1, ~~2021~~ 2022, each school district and charter
16 school shall ensure that at least one kindergarten through third grade
17 teacher in each school has received training related to dyslexia that
18 complies with the requirements prescribed in section 15-219.

19 D. Each school district and charter school shall submit to the
20 department of education a plan for improving the reading proficiency of
21 the school district's or the charter school's pupils in kindergarten
22 programs and grades one, two and three. The plan shall include baseline
23 data on the reading proficiency of the school district's or the charter
24 school's pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one, two and three and
25 a budget for spending monies from both the K-3 support level weight and
26 the K-3 reading support level weight established in section 15-943. Each
27 school district and charter school shall annually submit to the department
28 of education on or before October 1 an updated K-3 reading program plan
29 that includes data on program expenditures and results, except that a
30 school district or charter school that is assigned a letter grade of A or
31 B pursuant to section 15-241 shall submit this plan only in odd-numbered
32 years.

33 E. School districts and charter schools shall use monies generated
34 by the K-3 reading support level weight established in section 15-943 only
35 on instructional purposes based on the plan submitted pursuant to
36 subsection D of this section intended to improve reading proficiency for
37 pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one, two and three with
38 particular emphasis on pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one and
39 two.

40 F. Each school district and charter school that is assigned a
41 letter grade of C, D or F pursuant to section 15-241 or that has more than
42 ten percent of its pupils in grade three who do not demonstrate sufficient
43 reading skills as established by the state board of education according to
44 the reading portion of the statewide assessment shall receive monies
45 generated by the K-3 reading support level weight established in section
46 15-943 only after the K-3 reading program plan of the school district or

1 charter school has been submitted, reviewed and recommended for approval
2 by the department of education and approved by the state board. The state
3 board must give approval to a school district or charter school before any
4 portion of the monies generated by the K-3 reading support level weight
5 may be distributed to the school district or charter school pursuant to
6 this subsection.

7 G. Pupils in a charter school that is in its first year of
8 operation and that is sponsored by the state board of education, the state
9 board for charter schools, a university under the jurisdiction of the
10 Arizona board of regents, a community college district or a group of
11 community college districts are eligible for the K-3 reading support level
12 weight.

13 H. The department of education shall solicit gifts, grants and
14 donations from any lawful public or private source in order to provide
15 additional funding for the K-3 reading program.

16 I. The state board of education may establish rules and policies
17 for the K-3 reading program, including:

18 1. The proper use of monies in accordance with subsection E of this
19 section.

20 2. The distribution of monies by the department of education in
21 accordance with subsection D of this section.

22 3. The compliance of reading proficiency plans submitted pursuant
23 to subsection D of this section with section 15-704.

24 J. Pursuant to subsection I of this section, the department of
25 education shall develop program implementation guidance for school
26 districts and charter schools to assist schools in administering an
27 effective K-3 evidence-based reading program plan. This guidance shall
28 include identifying and recommending appropriate program expenditures,
29 providing technical oversight and assistance for annually updating reading
30 program plans, selecting and adopting evidence-based reading curricula and
31 providing and promoting teacher professional development that is based on
32 evidence-based reading research. The department shall prioritize supports
33 and interventions, including enrollment in reading trainings and
34 professional development, for school districts and charter schools that
35 have the highest percentage of pupils who do not demonstrate sufficient
36 reading skills as established by the state board of education. The
37 department shall deposit any monies received for offering reading
38 trainings or professional development, including coaching, in the
39 department of education professional development revolving fund
40 established by section 15-237.01.

41 K. On or before December 15, the department of education shall
42 submit an annual report on the K-3 reading program to the governor, the
43 president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives
44 and shall provide a copy of this annual report to the secretary of state,
45 the state board of education and the chairpersons of the education

1 committees of the senate and the house of representatives. The report
2 shall contain all of the following:

3 1. Information on the improvement of K-3 reading in this state,
4 including achievement data statewide and achievement data at the school
5 district and charter school level. The information pursuant to this
6 paragraph shall include data and information on continued proficiency on
7 the statewide assessment in subsequent grades.

8 2. A description of the activities of the department to support
9 school districts and charter schools in improving K-3 reading.

10 3. Specific findings on methods by which the department may
11 continue to improve support and assistance for school districts and
12 charter schools in the administration of K-3 reading program plans.

13 4. Information and data on K-3 reading program plans throughout
14 this state and the expenditure of K-3 reading monies by school districts
15 and charter schools.

16 5. Data reported pursuant to section 15-701, subsection A,
17 paragraph 2, subdivision (d).

18 L. The program established by this section ends on July 1, 2022
19 pursuant to section 41-3102.

20 Sec. 2. Section 15-704, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
21 read:

22 15-704. Reading proficiency; dyslexia screening plan;
23 definitions

24 A. Each school district or charter school that provides instruction
25 in kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall select and
26 administer screening, ongoing diagnostic and classroom-based instructional
27 reading assessments, including a motivational assessment, as defined by
28 the state board of education, to monitor student progress. Each school
29 shall use the diagnostic information to plan evidence-based appropriate
30 and effective instruction and intervention.

31 B. On or before July 1, ~~2020~~ 2022, the department of education
32 shall develop a dyslexia screening plan that meets all of the following
33 requirements:

34 1. Ensures that within forty-five calendar days after the beginning
35 of each school year or within forty-five calendar days after a student
36 enrollment occurs after the first day of school, every student who is
37 enrolled in a kindergarten program or grade one in a public school in this
38 state is screened for indicators of dyslexia.

39 2. Provides guidance for notifications sent by public schools to
40 parents of students who are identified as having indicators of dyslexia
41 based on a screening for indicators.

42 3. Is developed collaboratively with the dyslexia specialist for
43 the department designated pursuant to section 15-211, and other experts on
44 dyslexia, including representatives in this state of an international
45 organization on dyslexia.

1 4. Ensures that screening for indicators of dyslexia includes the
2 following:

- 3 (a) Phonological and phonemic awareness.
- 4 (b) Rapid naming skills.
- 5 (c) Correspondence between sounds and letters.
- 6 (d) Nonsense word ~~repetition~~ FLUENCY.
- 7 (e) Sound symbol recognition.

8 C. The screening for indicators of dyslexia may be integrated with
9 reading proficiency screenings as prescribed in this section.

10 D. Each school district or charter school that provides instruction
11 for pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall
12 conduct a curriculum evaluation and adopt an evidence-based reading
13 curriculum that includes the essential components of reading instruction.
14 All school districts and charter schools that offer instruction in
15 kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall provide ongoing
16 teacher training based on evidence-based reading research.

17 E. Each school district or charter school that provides instruction
18 in kindergarten programs and grades one through three shall devote
19 reasonable amounts of time to explicit evidence-based instruction and
20 independent reading in grades one through three.

21 F. A pupil in grade three who does not demonstrate proficiency on
22 the reading standards measured by the statewide assessment administered
23 pursuant to section 15-741 shall be provided core reading instruction and
24 intensive, evidence-based reading instruction as defined by the state
25 board of education until the pupil meets these standards.

26 G. The governing board of each school district and the governing
27 body of each charter school shall determine the percentage of pupils at
28 each school in grade three who do not demonstrate proficiency on the
29 reading standards prescribed by the state board of education and measured
30 by the statewide assessment administered pursuant to section 15-741. If
31 more than twenty percent of students in grade three at either the
32 individual school level or at the school district level do not demonstrate
33 proficiency on the standards, the governing board or governing body shall
34 conduct a review of its reading program that includes curriculum and
35 professional development in light of current, evidence-based reading
36 research.

37 H. Based on the review required in subsection G of this section,
38 the governing board or governing body and the school principal of each
39 school that does not demonstrate proficiency on the reading standards, in
40 conjunction with school council members, if applicable, shall develop
41 methods of best practices for teaching reading based on essential
42 components of reading instruction and supported by evidence-based reading
43 research. These methods shall be adopted at a public meeting and shall be
44 implemented the following academic year.

1 I. Subsections G and H of this section shall be coordinated with
2 efforts to develop and implement an improvement plan if required pursuant
3 to section 15-241.02.

4 J. For the purposes of this section:

5 1. "Essential components of reading instruction" means explicit and
6 systematic instruction in the following:

7 (a) Phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness.

8 (b) Phonics encoding and decoding.

9 (c) Vocabulary development.

10 (d) Reading fluency as demonstrated by automatic reading of text.

11 (e) Reading comprehension of written text.

12 (f) Written and oral expression, including spelling and
13 handwriting.

14 2. "Evidence-based reading research" means research that
15 demonstrates either:

16 (a) A statistically significant effect on improving student
17 outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on either:

18 (i) Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and
19 well-implemented experimental study.

20 (ii) Moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and
21 well-implemented quasi-experimental study.

22 (iii) Promising evidence from at least one well-designed and
23 well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for
24 selection bias.

25 (b) A rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive
26 evaluation that an activity, strategy or intervention is likely to improve
27 student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and that includes ongoing
28 efforts to examine the effects of these activities, strategies or
29 interventions.

30 3. "Reading" means a complex system of deriving meaning from
31 written text that requires all of the following:

32 (a) The skills and knowledge to understand how phonemes or speech
33 sounds are connected to written text.

34 (b) The ability to decode unfamiliar words.

35 (c) The ability to read fluently.

36 (d) Sufficient background information and vocabulary to foster
37 reading comprehension.

38 (e) The development of appropriate active strategies to construct
39 meaning from written text.

40 (f) The development and maintenance of a motivation to read.