

HOUSE BILL NO. 197

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES LEDOUX, Thompson, Reinbold, Peggy Wilson

Introduced: 4/2/13

Referred: Education, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act requiring the establishment of a reading program in school districts for grades**
2 **kindergarten through three; providing for student retention in grade three; and**
3 **providing for a report on the reading program and on student retention."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
6 to read:

7 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Learn to Read - Read to Learn Act.

8 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.120 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

9 (h) By September 1 of each year, to the extent allowable under state and
10 federal privacy laws, a school district shall publish on the Internet and report to the
11 board information from the previous school year regarding

12 (1) overall student progress under each aspect of the program
13 established under AS 14.30.760;

14 (2) school board policies and procedures on student retention and

1 promotion;

2 (3) the number and percentage of students retained in grades three
3 through 10, by grade level;

4 (4) the total number and percentage of students promoted for good
5 cause, by each category, under AS 14.30.760(d);

6 (5) revisions, if any, to school board policies on student retention and
7 promotion from the previous school year.

8 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.30 is amended by adding a new section to read:

9 **Article 14. District Reading Program.**

10 **Sec. 14.30.760. District reading program.** (a) In addition to other state and
11 local programs established to address substantial reading deficiencies of students, each
12 school district shall establish a reading program for students in grades kindergarten
13 through three consistent with this section.

14 (b) A district reading program shall provide for

15 (1) assessments of students, including valid and reliable diagnostic
16 assessments to identify substantial reading deficiencies;

17 (2) participation in statewide assessments;

18 (3) elimination of social promotion of students to the next grade level
19 based on age or other nonacademic factors;

20 (4) retention of students in grade three who fail to meet the minimum
21 reading standards established by the department on mandatory statewide assessments,
22 except for good cause as provided under (d) of this section;

23 (5) to the extent feasible, an optional transitional grade for a student
24 retained in grade three under the program that combines intensive reading instruction
25 as described in (c)(1) of this section with grade four core subjects;

26 (6) as early as possible, regular written notifications of a parent or
27 guardian of a student in grades kindergarten through three who is identified as having
28 a substantial reading deficiency describing

29 (A) the nature of the reading deficiency;

30 (B) the current educational services provided to the student;

31 (C) supplemental instructional services and remedial support of

1 the reading deficiency proposed to be provided to the student;

2 (D) the requirement to retain the student in grade three if the
3 reading deficiency is not sufficiently remediated, except for good cause as
4 provided in (d) of this section;

5 (E) strategies for the parent or guardian to use to help the child
6 succeed that include provision for

7 (i) supplemental tutoring using research-based reading
8 strategies;

9 (ii) a home reading plan in the context of a parent or
10 guardian contract that includes participation in parent training
11 workshops and regular parent-guided reading at home;

12 (iii) an assigned mentor in reading;

13 (7) a monitoring plan established for each student who is identified as
14 having a substantial reading deficiency.

15 (c) For a student who is retained in grade three under the program established
16 in this section, a school district shall provide

17 (1) intensive interventions, during regular school hours, in reading
18 literacy designed to ameliorate the student's specific reading deficiency, including

19 (A) instructional strategies that are research-based and
20 employed daily for at least 90 minutes at the same time each day; the strategies
21 must include

22 (i) small group instruction;

23 (ii) reduced pupil-teacher ratios;

24 (iii) frequent monitoring for progress;

25 (iv) tutoring and mentoring;

26 (v) transitional classes for combined third and fourth
27 grade students;

28 (vi) opportunities in reading that incorporate grade four
29 core subjects to the extent feasible;

30 (vii) intensive language and vocabulary instruction that
31 may involve a speech and language therapist;

1 (B) participation by the student in a summer reading camp in
2 the district;

3 (C) appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the
4 student in progressing to the next grade level in reading;

5 (D) extended school days, weeks, or years;

6 (2) review of the student's progress in completing a monitoring plan
7 established for the student;

8 (3) assessment of the student's needs for additional services;

9 (4) instruction in developing a reading portfolio;

10 (5) an accelerated reading class for retained students with the lowest
11 scores on standards-based assessments in reading; the accelerated reading class shall
12 be designed to help each student achieve an improvement of at least two grade levels
13 in reading;

14 (6) annual progress reports submitted to the department;

15 (7) a home reading plan that involves the student's parent or guardian.

16 (d) A school district may exempt a student from mandatory retention under
17 (b)(4) of this section for good cause if the student requests the exemption, receives a
18 recommendation from the student's teacher and principal, and provides documentation
19 that demonstrates that the student

20 (1) has limited English proficiency after completing not more than two
21 years of instruction in a limited English proficiency program;

22 (2) has a disability and an individual education plan under
23 AS 14.30.278 that exempts the student from participation in statewide standards-based
24 assessments and meets other requirements established by law;

25 (3) has an individualized education program under AS 14.30.278 that
26 resulted in at least two years of intensive remediation in reading, was retained in at
27 least two grades in kindergarten through grade three, and is promoted using additional
28 resources that include specialized diagnostic information, altered instructional days,
29 and individualized reading strategies; or

30 (4) has received intensive remediation in reading for at least two years
31 that included an altered instructional day, specialized diagnostic testing, and research-

1 based strategies to improve reading skills and was retained in grades one and two.