

HOUSE BILL NO. 274

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

Introduced: 1/18/24

Referred: Education, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to screening reading deficiencies and providing reading intervention**
2 **services to public school students enrolled in grades kindergarten through three."**

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

4 *** Section 1.** AS 14.30.760(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) To implement the district reading intervention services established under
6 AS 14.30.765, the department shall

7 (1) adopt a statewide screening tool to administer to students in grades
8 kindergarten through three to identify students with reading deficiencies, including
9 students with characteristics of dyslexia; the screening tool must evaluate

10 (A) phonemic awareness, letter naming fluency, letter sound
11 fluency, and letter word sound fluency of students in kindergarten;

12 (B) letter word sound fluency and oral reading fluency of
13 students in grade one;

14 (C) vocabulary and oral reading fluency of students in grades

1 two and three;

2 (2) support teachers of grades kindergarten through three by

3 (A) administering the statewide screening tool three times each
4 school year, once in the fall, once in the winter, and once in the spring, to all
5 students in grades kindergarten through three [, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF
6 STUDENTS WHO DEMONSTRATE SUFFICIENT READING SKILLS ON
7 THE FIRST SCREENING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR];

8 (B) providing methods to monitor student progress;

9 (C) providing targeted instruction based on student needs as
10 determined by the results of the screening tool; and

11 (D) providing additional assistance as determined by the
12 department;

13 (3) provide training to school district staff related to using the results
14 of the statewide screening tool and understanding evidence-based reading
15 interventions, including explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness,
16 phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, oral language skills, and reading
17 comprehension;

18 (4) require that districts identify the early education programs attended
19 by students and report to the department the average score on each performance
20 screening tool by students in grades kindergarten through three who

21 (A) attended a state-approved early education program;

22 (B) attended a head start program;

23 (C) attended a private early education program;

24 (D) did not attend an early education program;

25 (5) establish a process that allows the commissioner to waive, upon
26 request, use of the statewide screening tool required under this subsection by a school
27 district if the school district has adopted an evidence-based reading screening tool and
28 the screening tool is approved by the department;

29 (6) review, approve, and assist districts developing alternative
30 standardized reading screening tools in any language for use by school districts.

31 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.30.765(f) is amended to read:

1 (f) If it is determined, based on a statewide screening administered in the
2 spring, that a student in grade three has a reading deficiency, and the student does not
3 demonstrate sufficient reading skills to progress to grade four under (e) of this section,
4 the student's teacher and other pertinent district staff shall notify and attempt to meet
5 with the student's parent or guardian to explain that the student is not prepared to
6 progress to grade four. School staff shall work with the parent or guardian to schedule
7 a date, time, and place for the meeting, to be held **after the spring screening**
8 **assessment and** not later than **15** [45] days before the end of the school year.
9 Following that meeting, the parent or guardian may decide that the student will not
10 progress to grade four or decide to progress the student to grade four by signing a
11 waiver developed by the department acknowledging that the student is not prepared
12 and agreeing that the student will participate in an additional 20 hours of individual
13 reading improvement plan intervention services during the summer before the student
14 enters grade four. If no parent or guardian attends the meeting or if the parent or
15 guardian does not determine whether the student will progress to the next grade, the
16 superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall, after considering the student's
17 best interests and whether the student has previously not progressed to the next grade,
18 determine whether the student will progress to grade four.