

2 State of Arkansas
3 94th General Assembly
4 Regular Session, 2023

A Bill

SENATE BILL 412

5
6 By: Senator Irvin

7 Filed with: Senate Committee on Education
8 pursuant to A.C.A. §10-3-217.

9 For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT TO CREATE THE READING ENRICHMENT AND ACADEMIC
11 DELIVERABLES ("READ") PROGRAM ACT; AND FOR OTHER
12 PURPOSES.

13 Subtitle

14 TO CREATE THE READING ENRICHMENT AND
15 ACADEMIC DELIVERABLES ("READ") PROGRAM
16 ACT.

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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

22
23 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 10, Subchapter 1, is amended
24 to add an additional section to read as follows:

25 6-10-137. Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables ("READ")
26 Program Act.

27 (a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Reading
28 Enrichment and Academic Deliverables ("READ") Program Act".

29 (b) There is created the Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables
30 ("READ") Program.

31 (c) A public school student is eligible for the program if the public
32 school student:

33 (1) Is enrolled in prekindergarten in the Arkansas Better Chance
34 for School Success Program under § 6-45-101 et seq., and does not score
35 satisfactorily on a literacy component of the assessment required under § 6-
36 45-110;

1 (2) Is in kindergarten through grade three (K-3) and does not
2 meet the relevant grade-level reading standard as determined by a literacy
3 screener administered by the public school in which the student is enrolled;

4 (3) Is in grades four (4) or five (5) and receives a score on
5 the reading portion of the most recent statewide student assessment that
6 indicates the public school student is reading below his or her grade level;
7 or

8 (4) Has an eligibility status that is unknown according to
9 measures provided under subdivision (c)(1)-(3) of this section due to a lack
10 of availability of literacy screener or statewide student assessment results
11 for the public school student, but has been recommended by one (1) or more
12 teachers in whose class he or she is assigned due to his or her demonstrated
13 reading difficulties.

14 (d)(1) The Department of Education shall administer and provide for
15 the implementation of the program created by this section.

16 (2) In administering the program, the department shall:

17 (A)(i) Require public school districts to establish a
18 schedule for eligible students to receive books from the public schools
19 within the public school district.

20 (ii) The schedule required under subdivision
21 (d)(2)(A)(i) of this section may constitute the distribution of three (3)
22 books one (1) time every three (3) months;

23 (B) Publish on its website information regarding the
24 program;

25 (C) Develop online support materials that may assist
26 parents, legal guardians, and persons standing in loco parentis to children
27 in developing their child's literacy skills;

28 (D)(i) Develop a list of high-quality, age-appropriate
29 books and other reading materials that encompass diverse subjects and genres
30 for each grade level that shall be mailed to students eligible to participate
31 in the program.

32 (ii) The department shall exclude any books that are
33 harmful to minors as defined by § 5-68-501;

34 (E) Support the local implementation of the program by
35 providing marketing materials to public schools and public school districts
36 to assist with public awareness campaigns; and

1 (F) Annually report by October 13 on its website the
2 number of students participating in the program from each public school or
3 public school district;

4 (e) An otherwise eligible student shall be excluded from participating
5 in the program upon the written request of his or her parent, legal guardian,
6 or person standing in loco parentis to the eligible student.

7 (f)(1) The provisions of this section shall be implemented only upon
8 the availability of funds.

9 (2) The department may make adjustments to the program as
10 necessary based on the availability of funds.

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13 Referred requested by the Arkansas Senate

14 Prepared by: TNL/SJA

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