1 State of Arkansas

2 94th General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2023   SENATE BILL 412

4

5 By: Senator Irvin

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7 ## For An Act To Be Entitled

8   AN ACT TO CREATE THE READING ENRICHMENT AND ACADEMIC

9   DELIVERABLES ("READ") PROGRAM ACT; AND FOR OTHER

10   PURPOSES.

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13 ## Subtitle

14   TO CREATE THE READING ENRICHMENT AND

15   ACADEMIC DELIVERABLES ("READ") PROGRAM

16   ACT.

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

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21   SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 10, Subchapter 1, is amended

22 to add an additional section to read as follows:

23   6-10-137. Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables ("READ")

24 Program Act.

25   (a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Reading

26 Enrichment and Academic Deliverables ("READ") Program Act".

27   (b) There is created the Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables

28 ("READ") Program.

29   (c) A public school student is eligible for the program if the public

30 school student:

31   (1) Is enrolled in prekindergarten in the Arkansas Better Chance

32 for School Success Program under § 6-45-101 et seq., and does not score

33 satisfactorily on a literacy component of the assessment required under § 6-

34 45-110;

35   (2) Is in kindergarten through grade three (K-3) and does not

36 meet the relevant grade-level reading standard as determined by a literacy

1 screener administered by the public school in which the student is enrolled;

2   (3) Is in grades four (4) or five (5) and receives a score on

3 the reading portion of the most recent statewide student assessment that

4 indicates the public school student is reading below his or her grade level;

5 or

6   (4) Has an eligibility status that is unknown according to

7 measures provided under subdivision (c)(1)-(3) of this section due to a lack

8 of availability of literacy screener or statewide student assessment results

9 for the public school student, but has been recommended by one (1) or more

10 teachers in whose class he or she is assigned due to his or her demonstrated

11 reading difficulties.

12 (d)(1) The Department of Education shall administer and provide for

13 the implementation of the program created by this section.

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

15   (A)(i) Require public school districts to establish a

16 schedule for eligible students to receive books from the public schools

17 within the public school district.

18   (ii) The schedule required under subdivision

19 (d)(2)(A)(i) of this section may constitute the distribution of three (3)

20 books one (1) time every three (3) months;

21   (B) Publish on its website information regarding the

22 program;

23   (C) Develop online support materials that may assist

24 parents, legal guardians, and persons standing in loco parentis to children

25 in developing their child's literacy skills;

26   (D)(i) Develop a list of high-quality, age-appropriate

27 books and other reading materials that encompass diverse subjects and genres

28 for each grade level that shall be mailed to students eligible to participate

29 in the program.

30   (ii) The department shall exclude any books that are

31 harmful to minors as defined by § 5-68-501;

32   (E) Support the local implementation of the program by

33 providing marketing materials to public schools and public school districts

34 to assist with public awareness campaigns; and

35   (F) Annually report by October 13 on its website the

36 number of students participating in the program from each public school or

1 public school district;

2   (e) An otherwise eligible student shall be excluded from participating

3 in the program upon the written request of his or her parent, legal guardian,

4 or person standing in loco parentis to the eligible student.

5   (f)(1) The provisions of this section shall be implemented only upon

6 the availability of funds.

7   (2) The department may make adjustments to the program as

8 necessary based on the availability of funds.

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