

By: Senator(s) Burton

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2375

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE EACH STUDENT ENROLLED IN THE 4TH GRADE TO
2 BE ASSESSED FOR THE ACQUISITION OF READING SKILLS, AND TO REQUIRE
3 A PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION FOR THOSE FOUND NOT TO BE READING AT THE
4 APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVEL; TO PRESCRIBE THE COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN,
5 TO PROVIDE FOR SCHOOL READING ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES, TO PROVIDE
6 FOR TUTORING AND TO PROVIDE THAT COPIES OF THE ASSESSMENT SHALL BE
7 MADE PART OF THE PERMANENT RECORD OF EACH STUDENT; AND FOR RELATED
8 PURPOSES. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF
9 MISSISSIPPI:

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11 SECTION 1. The purpose of this act is to ensure that each
12 child attains the necessary reading skills by completion of the
13 Fourth Grade which will enable that student to continue
14 development of reading skills and to succeed throughout school and
15 life.

16 SECTION 2. (1) Beginning with the 1999-2000 school year,
17 each student enrolled in Fourth Grade of the public schools of
18 this state shall be assessed by multiple on-going assessments for
19 the acquisition of reading skills for the grade level in which
20 that student is enrolled. Before the close of the current school
21 year, any student, except for students who are on an
22 individualized education program or have limited English
23 proficiency, found not to be reading at the appropriate grade
24 level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which will
25 include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the
26 student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills.

27 The plan shall include, but not be limited to:

28 (a) Sufficient additional in-school instructional time
29 for the development of reading and comprehension skills of the
30 student;

31 (b) If necessary, tutorial instruction after regular
32 school hours, on Saturdays and during summer; and

33 (c) Utilization of teaching methodologies, including
34 phonics and other methodologies in wide practice, as is determined
35 appropriate by the reading assessment committee.

36 The student shall be reassessed at the conclusion of the
37 program of instruction. The program of instruction shall continue
38 until the student is determined to be reading at or above grade
39 level. The student may continue to progress to the next grade
40 level while the tutorial reading instruction continues.

41 (2) Each school site shall establish a committee composed of
42 educators, which if possible shall include a certified reading
43 specialist, to determine the reading assessment plan for each
44 student for whom one is necessary. A parent or guardian of the
45 student shall be included in the development of the reading
46 assessment plan for that student. Every school district shall
47 adopt and annually update a district plan which includes a plan
48 for each site and which outlines how each school site will comply
49 with the provisions of this act.

50 (3) For any Fourth Grade student not reading at that grade
51 level as determined by multiple assessments including a nationally
52 recognized reading assessment given mid-year, a new reading
53 assessment plan shall be developed as specified in this section
54 and implemented. In addition to other requirements of this act,
55 the plan shall include specialized tutoring and may include a
56 recommendation as to whether the student should be retained in the
57 Fourth Grade at the close of that year.

58 (4) Copies of the results of the assessment administered
59 pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall be made a part of
60 the permanent record of each student until the student is reading
61 on grade level so that the results of the next grade level
62 assessment can be measured against the previous grade level
63 results.

64 SECTION 3. Pursuant to appropriation by the Legislature
65 specifically for such purpose, the State Department of Education
66 shall provide in-service training, computer software and certified
67 reading instructor personnel for training local school district
68 certificated personnel to assist students and otherwise implement
69 the provisions of this act.

70 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from
71 and after July 1, 1999.