ARI-FUNDED LOCAL READING SPECIALIST JOB DESCRIPTION

2019-2020

The Alabama Literacy Act 2019-523 requires that Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI)-funded local reading specialists will be assigned to provide intensive, targeted professional development in the science of reading for elementary teachers at one school. The role of the local reading specialist, as outlined in this job description, will be to function solely as a reading specialist, peer support, and coaching partner for teachers. It is the expectation that the reading specialist be a peer mentor for teachers and thereby reading specialists will not be employed to function as school administrators, assistant principals, full-time reading interventionists, instructional coaches for other content areas in grades above third, or classroom or substitute teachers. Doing so is a violation of the Alabama Literacy Act 2019-523.

It is a priority of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) that every student read on grade level, and the research is clear that a highly skilled teacher is the single most important factor in the reading achievement of students. The expectation of the local reading specialist is to work with the school principal to create a strategic plan for ensuring that all students are reading on grade-level by the end of Grade 3. Therefore, a proportional amount of the local reading specialist’s time will be allocated for coaching and mentoring teachers daily, for facilitating data analysis discussions, providing necessary professional learning in the science of reading, and supporting teachers by using data to differentiate instruction according to the needs of students.

PURPOSE: Impact student learning by providing coaching and mentoring to teachers in scientifically based reading instruction and intervention so that all students attain grade-level reading proficiency by Grade 3.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OF ARI-FUNDED LOCAL READING SPECIALIST:

An ARI-funded local reading specialist must possess the required Alabama Professional Educator Certificate for elementary and/or reading teachers. In addition, advanced coursework or professional development in the science of reading is required, such as multisensory language instruction, or comparable alternative training approved by the State Board of Education. Local reading specialists must have, at a minimum, two years of experience as a successful elementary or literacy teacher. Qualifications also include:

- Specialized knowledge in the science of learning to read and the science of early childhood education, quality reading instruction and intervention, dyslexia specific interventions, and data analysis.
- Excellent communication skills with outstanding presentation, interpersonal, and time management skills.
- Exceptional abilities to work with adult learners to improve their practices, through facilitation of targeted, intensive professional development and modeling effective reading instruction.
- Demonstrated professionalism as an on-going learner and teacher leader.
SELECTION: Districts should carefully consider selection of the ARI-funded school reading specialist(s) whose qualifications align tightly with the Alabama Literacy Act 2019-523 and are described in the ARI reading specialist job description. Only the most highly experienced and credentialed teachers should be considered for the position. This position requires no administrative experience; however, teacher leader experience, peer mentoring abilities, and the skill to facilitate adult learning are preferred qualities.

SUPERVISOR/SUPPORT: The district determines the supervision and base location(s) of the ARI-funded local reading specialist(s). The ARI will provide support to deepen the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the job description. In a joint commitment to the highest expectations of support to teachers, the district and the ALSDE-ARI state and regional staff will jointly assure the conditions of this contract by monitoring adherence to this job description.

EMPLOYMENT TERMS: A minimum of a nine-month contract is recommended in order to fulfill these job responsibilities. It is recommended that any addition to a nine-month contract be supplemental and not an extended month contract.

It is the expectation that the reading specialist be a peer mentor for teachers and thereby reading specialists will not be employed to function as school administrators or perform administrative functions, such as serving as an evaluator or assistant principal, full-time reading interventionist, instructional coach for other content areas in grades above third grade, assessment coordinator, or act as a classroom or substitute teacher. Doing so is a violation of the Alabama Literacy Act 2019-523.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: In order to ensure that all students are reading on or above grade level by Grade 3, the duties of the ARI-funded local reading specialist(s) will include all the following:

1. Adhering consistently to an LEA-/ARI-approved schedule that includes time in preplanned, daily support with teachers, professional learning communities, and daily intervention instruction with one group of struggling readers so that reading goals are achieved.
2. Collaborating with the principal to create a strategic plan for coaching to ensure all students read on grade level.
3. Facilitating schoolwide professional learning and study groups directly related to identified K-3 literacy needs.
5. Coaching and mentoring teachers daily.
6. Facilitating data analysis discussions and supporting teachers by using data to differentiate instruction according to the needs of students.
7. Fostering multiple areas of teacher professional learning, including exceptional student education and literacy content area knowledge.
8. Prioritizing time for the teachers, activities, and roles that will have the greatest impact on student reading achievement, such as demonstrating, modeling, and working to support literacy needs in classrooms.
9. Monitoring the reading progress of all students a minimum of three times per year and making recommendations for adjustment of instruction according to student specific need(s).
EXPECTATIONS FOR SUPPORT IN GRADES K-3

1. **Engage** actively and cooperatively in ALL ARI trainings and support visits in order to comply with the *Alabama Literacy Act 2019-523* and meet agreed-upon personal outcomes and all state, district, and school established reading goals. Actively seek help, guidance, and support to increase **expertise in early reading and literacy** by continuing to grow in expertise in the science of reading, seeking professional learning opportunities in the science of reading and structured literacy, advanced degrees in reading and literacy, facilitating of ARI modules, examining developmentally appropriate practices for all readers in Grades K-3, and unpacking reading, speaking and listening, and writing standards as found in the Alabama English language arts course of study.

2. **Build** teacher expertise in instruction of students for all tiers of reading instruction in order to reach the goal of students performing at or above grade level in reading by the end of Grade 3.

3. **Motivate and encourage** teachers to set high expectations for student achievement and to reach the goal of all students reading on grade level by Grade 3 in order to build teacher efficacy related to reading outcomes.

4. **Plan** deliberately, regularly, and thoughtfully with school, district, and ALSDE-ARI staff and regional staff in order facilitate professional learning opportunities that will assist teachers in assessing student learning, targeting grade-level student reading instruction outcomes, fostering student engagement in learning, facilitating professional conversations, practicing new learning related to reading instruction, reflecting on professional practice, and identifying next steps in order to achieve state, district, and school reading goals of all students reading on grade level by Grade 3.

5. **Assist** school administrator(s) and teachers in analyzing and utilizing assessment data in all tiers of reading instruction and in making decisions that will increase the reading skills in students in Grades K-3 so that the goal of students performing at or above grade level in reading by Grade 3 is achieved.

6. **Assist** school administrator(s) and teachers in implementing, strengthening, supporting, and organizing reading instruction and reading intervention efforts with the expectation that all students will show annual growth and/or catch-up growth toward the goal of grade level reading.

7. **Work** collaboratively with other school literacy leaders [e.g., EL coach(es), librarian(s), parent liaison(s), counselor(s), instructional coach(es), administrative assistant(s) and other(s)] to support ALL literacy learners, bridge gaps, create early literacy parenting opportunities, and smooth transitions to entering school.

8. **Model** winsome human relations skills and exemplary work ethic by actively helping, mentoring, assisting, and coaching teachers; teaching struggling readers; participating as a fully functioning member of the school staff; and reflecting on personal coaching practices to evaluate impact on changing outcomes for K-3 students. Refer to the ARI coaching module and other state/national reading specialist standards to guide reflection, self-assessment, and next steps.

9. **Engage** in on-going personal practice (working with students) that demonstrates for others a commitment to professional goals for personal improvement of knowledge and skills necessary to perform the job of school reading specialist.

10. **Support** local and state reading/literacy efforts such as reading councils, reading associations, reading/literacy alliances, literacy outreach, professional educator organizations, and/or higher education collaboration in order to establish personal and professional goals for growth as a reading expert.
1 HB388
2 200613-3
3 By Representatives Collins and Baker
4 RFD: Education Policy
5 First Read: 09-APR-19
ENROLLED, An Act,

Relating to public education; to establish the Alabama Literacy Act; to implement steps to improve the reading proficiency of public school kindergarten to third grade students and ensure that those students are able to read at or above grade level by the end of the third grade by monitoring the progression of each student from one grade to another, in part, by his or her proficiency in reading.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the Alabama Literacy Act.

Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) ALPHABETIC PRINCIPLE. The ability to accurately apply knowledge of the relationship between letters and sounds during the acts of encoding and decoding.

(2) COMPREHENSION. The ability to read and process text and understand its meaning.

(3) DECODING. The act of applying knowledge of the alphabetic principle to correctly pronounce written words.

(4) DYSLEXIA. A specific learning challenge that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent, or both, word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities, which typically result from a
deficit in the phonological component of language that is
often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and
the provision of effective classroom instruction.

(5) ENCODING. The act and process of using knowledge
of the relationships between sounds and letters to spell and
write words.

(6) FLUENCY. The ability to read with accuracy,
appropriate rate, and proper expression.

(7) PHONEMIC AWARENESS. The ability to hear,
identify, and manipulate individual sounds. Phonemic awareness
is an auditory activity.

(8) PHONICS. The relationships between the letters
of written language and the individual sounds of spoken
language including syllable types, morphology of Greek and
Latin roots, and multisyllabic words.

(9) PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS. The general
understanding of the sound structure of words and sentences.

(10) VOCABULARY. The body of written or oral
language known to an individual.

Section 3. (a) The State Superintendent of Education
shall convene a standing task force, within three months after
the effective date of this act, to provide recommendations for
comprehensive core reading and reading intervention programs,
a state continuum of teacher development for approved science
of reading pursuant to subsection (e) of Section 6, and an
annual list of vetted and approved assessments which are valid
and reliable reading screening, formative, and diagnostic
assessment systems for selection and use by local education
agencies. The task force shall meet in regular session at
least twice a year. All appointing authorities shall
coordinate their appointments so that diversity of gender,
race, and geographical areas is reflective of the makeup of
this state. The membership of the task force shall include all
of the following appointees, each of whom shall have at least
three years of experience with scientifically based reading
instruction:

(1) Two public K-12 teachers appointed by the
Executive Director of the Alabama Education Association.

(2) One public K-12 special education teacher
appointed by the State Superintendent of Education.

(3) One ThreeCertified Academic Dyslexia Therapist,
who has been so certified for a minimum of three years,
appointed by the Alabama branch of the International Dyslexia
Association.

(4) Two public school principals appointed by the
Executive Director of the Council for Leaders in Alabama
Schools.

(5) One local superintendent of education appointed
by the Executive Director of the School Superintendents of
Alabama.
(6) One local board of education member appointed by the Alabama Association of School Boards.

(7) One Regional Education Lab member appointed by the State Superintendent of Education.

(8) One early childhood educator appointed by the Secretary of the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education.

(9) One dean of a college of education appointed by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

(b) Each approved assessment system shall do all of the following:

(1) Provide screening and diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress.

(2) Measure, at a minimum, phonological awareness, the alphabetic principle, decoding, encoding, accuracy, vocabulary, and comprehension.

(3) Identify students who have a reading deficiency, including identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia.

(c) In determining which assessment systems to approve for use by local education agencies, the task force, at a minimum, shall also consider all of the following factors:
(1) The time required to conduct the assessments, with the intention of minimizing the impact on instructional time.

(2) The level of integration of assessment results with instructional support for teachers and students.

(3) The timeliness in reporting assessment results to teachers, administrators, and parents.

Section 4. (a) Funds appropriated by the Legislature in support of the Alabama Reading Initiative shall be allocated to support the following:

(1) Local education agencies to support local reading specialists.

(2) The Alabama Summer Achievement Program.

(3) Regional literacy specialists.

(4) Preservice and inservice teacher professional learning activities for elementary school teachers in reading.

(5) Curricula to support student interventions.

(6) State administration.

(b) Funds dedicated to the Alabama Reading Initiative shall be expended on local and regional reading specialists, professional learning activities, and administrative activities that support all of the following activities for kindergarten through third grade students in public K-12 schools; continued funding shall be contingent on
measurable performance growth, as determined by the task force established under subsection (a) of Section 3:

(1) Administration and analysis of reading screening, formative, and diagnostic assessments to guide instruction.

(2) Scientifically based reading instruction, multisensory language instruction, including oral language development, phonological awareness, phonics instruction that includes decoding and encoding, fluency, writing, vocabulary, and comprehension, and the Alabama course of study, English Language Arts.

(3) Explicit and systematic instruction with more detailed explanations, more extensive opportunities for guided practice, and more opportunities for error correction and feedback.

(4) Differentiated reading instruction and intensive intervention based on student need, including students exhibiting the characteristics of dyslexia.

(c) Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialists shall provide support to local education agencies through a gradual release model, whereby the regional reading specialist shall support a struggling school until that school has improved core instruction to the extent that it is no longer among the lowest five percent of elementary schools in reading proficiency, as determined by annual results of the
state summative assessment for federal and statewide accountability.

(1) Regional literacy specialists shall provide intensive support for elementary schools that are among the lowest performing five percent of elementary schools. Each school among the lowest five percent performing elementary schools shall be assigned a regional literacy specialist who shall serve as a resource for professional development throughout the school to improve literacy instruction and student achievement. A regional literacy specialist who is assigned to a school shall primarily serve only that school.

(2) Elementary schools that are not among the lowest five percent performing schools shall receive limited literacy support from an Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialist, who shall be assigned to multiple schools. All other regional literacy specialists shall be assigned to serve multiple elementary schools and shall provide ongoing professional development for teachers in analyzing students' reading data to impact instruction, administering and analyzing instructional assessments, differentiating instruction and intensive intervention, and monitoring the reading progress of all students a minimum of three times per year, and make instruction adjustment recommendations according to student specific need. Distance and need shall be considered by local superintendents of education when
selecting the schools where a regional literacy specialist shall serve. There shall be two levels of limited literacy support provided by a regional literacy specialist. The local superintendent of education of a local education agency subject to this subdivision shall determine the level of limited support that each regional literacy specialist shall provide.

a. Limited support 1. An Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialist shall make monthly onsite visits to the school and shall monitor the reading progress of all students a minimum of three times per year and adjust instruction according to student specific need.

b. Limited support 2. An Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialist shall make quarterly onsite visits to the school and shall monitor the reading progress of all students a minimum of three times per year and make instruction adjustment recommendations according to student specific need.

(3) An Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialist shall have all of the following minimum qualifications:

a. The required Alabama Professional Educator Certificate.

b. A bachelor's degree and advanced coursework or professional development in the science of reading,
multisensory language instruction, such as Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling, or a comparable alternative training approved by the State Board of Education.

c. A minimum of four years of experience as a successful elementary or literacy teacher.

d. A knowledge of scientifically based reading research, special expertise in quality reading instruction and intervention, dyslexia specific interventions, and data analysis.

e. A strong knowledge base in the science of learning to read and the science of early childhood education.

f. Excellent communication skills with outstanding presentation, interpersonal, and time management skills.

(d) An Alabama Reading Initiative local reading specialist shall be assigned to provide intensive, targeted professional development for elementary school teachers at one school.

(1) An Alabama Reading Initiative local reading specialist shall have all of the following minimum qualifications:

a. The required Alabama Professional Educator Certificate.

b. A bachelor's degree and advanced coursework or professional development in the science of reading, such as
multisensory language instruction, or comparable alternative training approved by the State Board of Education.

   c. A minimum of two years of experience as a successful elementary or literacy teacher.

   d. A knowledge of scientifically based reading research, special expertise in quality reading instruction and intervention, dyslexia specific interventions, and data analysis.

   e. A strong knowledge base in the science of learning to read and the science of early childhood education.

   f. Excellent communication skills with outstanding presentation, interpersonal, and time management skills.

(2) The duties and responsibilities of an Alabama Reading Initiative local reading specialist shall include all of the following:

   a. Collaborating with the principal to create a strategic plan for coaching.

   b. Facilitating schoolwide professional development and study groups.

   c. Modeling effective reading instructional strategies for teachers.

   d. Coaching and mentoring teachers daily.

   e. Facilitating data analysis discussions and support teachers by using data to differentiate instruction according to the needs of students.
f. Fostering multiple areas of teacher professional learning, including exceptional student education and content area knowledge.

g. Prioritizing time for those teachers, activities, and roles that will have the greatest impact on student reading achievement, such as coaching and mentoring in classrooms.

h. Monitoring the reading progress of all students a minimum of three times per year and making recommendations for adjustment of instruction according to student specific need.

i. An Alabama Reading Initiative local reading specialist may not perform administrative functions such as serving as an evaluator, substitute teacher, assessment coordinator, or school administrator.

(e) The State Superintendent of Education and local education agencies shall monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialist and local reading specialist model, and the State Superintendent of Education and each local education agency being served by a regional literacy specialist or a local reading specialist shall maintain communication among the district, school administration, and the Alabama Reading Initiative state administration staff throughout the academic year.
(1) The State Superintendent of Education, or his or her designee, shall certify that each Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialist or local reading specialist satisfies the minimum qualifications provided by this act before coaches are hired with funds appropriated by the Legislature to support the Alabama Reading Initiative.

(2) The State Superintendent of Education shall develop an evidence-based accountability reporting system for the Alabama Reading Initiative that shall measure student growth and proficiency towards teacher professional learning goals and student performance on state approved formative and summative assessments.

(3) The State Superintendent of Education shall submit a report to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Chairs of the House Ways and Means Education Committee, Senate Finance and Taxation Education Committee, House Education Policy Committee, and Senate Education Policy Committee, no later than December 31, annually, on the status of teacher professional learning, student growth and proficiency against grade level standards in K-3 reading.

Section 5. (a) To ensure that public school students are able to read at or above grade level by the end of third grade, each local education agency shall offer a comprehensive
core reading program to all students based on the science of
reading which develops foundational reading skills. In addition, no
school district may use any curriculum for public K-3 students
that does not have instructional time included.

In addition, no school district may apply for or
receive any grant to be used for any public school K-3 student
curriculum that does not have instructional time included.

(b) Based on the results of the reading assessment
in Section 3, each K-3 student who exhibits a reading
deficiency, or the characteristics of dyslexia, shall be
provided an appropriate reading intervention program to
address his or her specific deficiencies. Additionally,
students shall be evaluated after every grading period and, if
a student is determined to have a reading deficiency, the
school shall provide the student with additional tutorial
support. The State Superintendent of Education shall provide a
list of vetted and approved comprehensive reading and
intervention programs with the advice of the task force
established under subsection (a) of Section 3. The
intervention program shall be provided in addition to the
comprehensive core reading instruction that is provided to all
students in the general education classroom. Dyslexia specific
intervention, as defined by rule of the State Board of
Education, shall be provided to students who have the
HB388

characteristics of dyslexia and all struggling readers. The reading intervention program shall do all of the following:

(1) Provide explicit, direct instruction that is systematic, sequential, and cumulative in language development, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as applicable.

(2) Provide daily targeted small group reading interventions based on student need in phonological awareness, phonics including decoding and encoding, sight words, vocabulary, or comprehension.

(3) Be implemented during regular school hours.

(c) The parent or legal guardian of any K-3 student who exhibits a consistent deficiency in letter naming fluency, letter sound fluency, nonsense word reading, sight words, oral reading accuracy, vocabulary, or comprehension at any time during the school year shall be notified in writing no later than 15 school days after the identification. The written notification shall include all of the following:

(1) A statement that the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading or exhibits the characteristics of dyslexia, and that a reading improvement plan shall be developed by the teacher, principal, other pertinent school personnel, and the parent or legal guardian.

(2) A description of the current services that are provided to the student.
(3) A description of the proposed evidence-based reading interventions and supplemental instructional services and supports that shall be proposed for discussion while establishing the student's reading improvement plan as provided in subsection (d).

(4) Notification that the parent or legal guardian shall be informed in writing at least monthly of the progress of the student towards grade level reading.

(5) Strategies and resources for the parent or legal guardian to use at home to help the student succeed in reading.

(6) A statement that if the reading deficiency of the student is not addressed by the end of third grade, the student will not be promoted to fourth grade unless a good cause exemption is satisfied.

(7) A statement that while the statewide reading assessment is the initial determinant for promotion, the assessment is not the sole determiner at the end of third grade. Additionally, students shall be provided with a test-based student portfolio option and an alternative reading assessment option to demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to fourth grade.

(d) Any K-3 student who exhibits a reading deficiency at any time, as provided in subsection (b), shall
receive an individual reading improvement plan no later than
30 days after the identification of the reading deficiency.
   (1) The reading improvement plan shall be created by
the teacher, principal, other pertinent school personnel, and
the parent or legal guardian of the student, and shall
describe the evidence-based reading intervention services,
including dyslexia specific intervention services, that the
student shall receive to improve the reading deficit.
   (2) Each identified student shall receive intensive
reading intervention until the student no longer has a
deficiency in reading, as determined by a State Board of
Education approved reading assessment.
   (3) Funds allocated to procuring curricula for
student interventions pursuant to subdivision (5) of
subsection (a) of Section 4 shall be divided, based on a per
pupil allocation determined by the number of students of each
local education agency who are not proficient on a state
approved reading assessment during the prior academic year,
and distributed by the State Superintendent of Education.
   (e) Each local education agency shall provide summer
reading camps to all K-3 students identified with a reading
deficiency as described in subsection (b).
   (1) Summer reading camps shall be staffed with
highly effective teachers of reading as demonstrated by
student reading performance data, completion of multisensory
structured language education, and teacher performance evaluations.

(2) The highly effective teacher of reading shall provide direct, explicit, and systematic reading intervention services and supports to improve any identified area of reading deficiency.

(3) Summer reading camps, at a minimum, shall include 70 hours of time in scientifically based reading instruction and intervention.

(4) A State Board of Education approved reading assessment system shall be administered at the beginning and end of the summer reading camp to measure student progress.

(5) Summer reading camps may be held in conjunction with existing summer programs in the school district or in partnership with community-based summer programs, designated as effective by the State Superintendent of Education and the task force established under subsection (a) of Section 3.

(f) The Alabama Summer Achievement Program is established and shall be available to all K-3 students in public elementary schools that are among the lowest performing five percent of elementary schools.

(1) The program shall be administered and funded by the allocation provided in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of Section 4.
(2) Funds allocated to the program in excess of the amount needed to fully fund summer programs in public elementary schools that are among the lowest five percent performing schools shall be divided, based on a per pupil allocation, and distributed by the State Superintendent of Education, to support high quality summer camps at elementary schools that are not among the lowest five percent performing elementary schools. The State Superintendent of Education shall award the funds to each local education agency based on the number of students who scored deficient, as determined by the task force established under subsection (a) of Section 3, on a state approved reading assessment used to determine reading proficiency during the administration of the assessment during the preceding academic year.

(3) The State Superintendent of Education shall provide guidelines for the administration of the Alabama Summer Achievement Program, and shall oversee all of the following:

a. The administration of the Alabama Summer Achievement Program in the lowest five percent performing elementary schools.

b. The response to instruction process in the lowest five percent performing elementary schools.

c. The Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialists and local reading specialists.
d. All other aspects of implementation of this act including, but not limited to, collaboration among State Department of Education staff and the task force established under subsection (a) of Section 3 to improve the reading proficiency of public K-3 students and implementation of rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

e. The implementation of rules adopted by the State Board of Education pertaining to dyslexia.

f. Collaboration with the Alabama Reading Initiative state staff and the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education for appropriate professional learning approved by the State Department of Education.

g. The development of guidelines for identifying the characteristics of dyslexia.

(g) Any incoming third grade student identified with a reading deficiency shall be provided more intensified reading interventions to improve his or her specific reading deficiency. Reading intervention services shall include effective instructional strategies to accelerate student progress. Each local education agency shall conduct a review of student reading improvement plans for all incoming third grade students identified with a reading deficiency. The review shall address additional supports and services, as described in this section, necessary to improve any identified area of reading deficiency. The local education agency shall
provide all of the following services for third grade students identified with a reading deficiency, and those services may be funded with funds received through the allocation provided in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of Section 4:

(1) An effective or highly effective teacher of reading as demonstrated by student reading performance data and teacher performance evaluations.

(2) Reading intervention services and supports to improve any identified area of reading deficiency including, but not limited to, all of the following:

   a. Additional instructional time devoted to scientifically based and evidence based reading instruction and intervention.

   b. The use of evidence based reading strategies or programs, or both, that have been vetted and approved by the State Superintendent of Education and the task force established under subsection (a) of Section 3, that have demonstrated proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year.

   c. Daily targeted small group reading intervention based on student need.

   d. Explicit and systematic instruction with more detailed explanations, more extensive opportunities for guided practice, and more opportunities for error correction and feedback.
e. Frequent monitoring of the progress of the reading skills of each student throughout the school year and adjusting instruction according to student need.

(3) Before school or after school, or both, supplemental evidence-based reading intervention delivered by a teacher or tutor with specialized reading training.

(4) A read at home plan, including participation in parent training workshops or regular parent guided home reading activities.

(h) Commencing with the 2021-2022 school year, third grade students shall demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to fourth grade. Students shall be provided all of the following options to demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to fourth grade, and the State Superintendent of Education shall provide guidelines for the implementation of this subsection:

(1) Scoring above the lowest achievement level, as determined by rule of the State Board of Education, on a board approved assessment in reading as provided in Section 3.

(2) Earning an acceptable score on an alternative standardized reading assessment as determined and approved by the State Superintendent of Education.

(3) Demonstrating mastery of all third grade minimum essential state reading standards as evidenced by a student reading portfolio. The State Superintendent of
Education and the task force established under subsection (a) of Section 3 shall establish criteria for the minimum essential standards and the student reading portfolios and a definition of what constitutes mastery of all third grade state reading standards.

(i) If a student does not demonstrate sufficient reading skills on one of the three options listed in subsection (h) and does not qualify for a good cause exemption, the student may not be promoted to fourth grade.

(j) A local education agency may only exempt students from mandatory retention, as provided in subsection (i), for good cause. A student who is promoted to fourth grade with a good cause exemption shall continue to receive intensive reading intervention that includes specific reading strategies prescribed in the individual reading improvement plan of the student until the deficiency is improved. The local education agency shall assist schools and teachers with the implementation of reading strategies that research has shown to be successful in improving reading among students with reading difficulties. Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

(1) Students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with state law.
(2) Students identified as English language learners who have had less than two years of instruction in English as a second language.

(3) Students with disabilities who participate in the statewide English language arts reading assessment and who have an Individual Education Plan or a Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received intensive reading intervention for more than two years and who still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade.

(4) Students who have received intensive reading intervention for two or more years and who still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade for a total of two years.

(k) No student shall be retained more than twice in kindergarten through third grade.

(1) A request to exempt a student from the mandatory retention requirement using one of the good cause exemptions listed in subsection (j) shall be made consistent with the following:

(1) Documentation shall be submitted to the school principal from the teacher of the student that indicates that the promotion of the student is appropriate. Documentation
shall include a statement identifying which good cause
exemption is requested, as well as the existing reading
improvement plan or Individual Education Plan of the student,
as applicable.

(2) The school principal shall review the
recommendation of the teacher, determine if the student meets
one of the good cause exemptions, and shall make his or her
determination in writing to the local superintendent of
education. The local superintendent of education, in writing,
shall approve or reject the recommendation of the school
principal.

(3) The local education agency shall assist schools
under its jurisdiction in providing written notification to
the parent of any student who is retained in third grade for
not achieving the reading level required for promotion. Notice
shall clearly state the reasons why the student is not
eligible for a good cause exemption and shall include a
description of the proposed interventions and supports that
shall be provided to the student to improve any identified
area of reading deficiency during the retained year.

(4) There shall be established at each school, as
applicable, an intensive acceleration for any student retained
in third grade. In addition to the criteria established in
subdivisions (1) to (4), inclusive, of subsection (g), the
intensive acceleration shall be taught by a highly effective
teacher of reading who has received training in the science of
reading and multisensory language instruction, as demonstrated
by student reading performance data and teacher performance
evaluations; shall have a reduced teacher-student ratio; and
shall provide explicit and systematic reading instruction and
intervention for the majority of student contact time each
day.

(m) Annually, on or before September 30, each local
education agency shall report in writing to the State
Superintendent of Education the following information on the
previous school year:

(1) By grade, the number and percentage of all K-3
students identified with a reading deficiency on a State
Department of Education approved reading assessment.

(2) By grade, the number and percentage of students
screened for dyslexia characteristics, the number and
percentage of students identified as demonstrating the
characteristics of dyslexia and receiving dyslexia specific
intervention, and the name of the dyslexia specific
intervention being provided.

(3) By grade, the number and percentage of all K-3
students performing on grade level or above on a State Board
of Education approved reading assessment.
(4) The total number and percentage of students starting third grade with a reading deficiency, which shall include the specific area of reading deficiency.

(5) The total number and percentage of third grade students who started third grade with a reading deficiency but completed third grade on grade level as determined by the third grade state standardized assessment in reading.

(6) By grade, the total number and percentage of eligible K-3 students who attended the Alabama Summer Achievement Program or other mandatory summer reading camp.

(7) By grade, pre and post Alabama Summer Achievement Program reading assessment scores and other mandatory summer camp data.

(8) By grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in grades K-3.

(9) The total number and percentage of students in third grade who demonstrated sufficient reading skills for promotion on the alternative reading assessment.

(10) The total number and percentage of students in third grade who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause specified in subsection (j).

(11) In succeeding years, the performance of students promoted with a good cause on the state standardized assessment in reading.
(12) By school, the number of teachers who are participating in or have completed professional development in the science of reading and who hold advanced certifications in those areas.

(13) By school, the number of teachers who have completed training in dyslexia awareness, multisensory strategies, and satisfy the definition of a dyslexia interventionist as defined by rule of the State Board of Education.

(n) The State Superintendent of Education shall establish a uniform format for local school systems to use in reporting the information required by subsection (m). The format shall be developed with input from local education agencies and shall be provided to each local education agency no later than 90 days before the annual due date. Annually, on or before December 1, the State Superintendent of Education shall compile the information received from the local education agencies into state level summary information and report the information to the State Board of Education, the public, the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Chairs of the House Ways and Means Education Committee and Senate Finance and Taxation Education Committee.
(1) The State Superintendent of Education and the task force established under subsection (a) of Section 3 shall establish annual reading growth and proficiency targets based on the information required to be reported to the superintendent in subsection (m).

(2) Of the funds allocated to the Alabama Reading Initiative pursuant to subdivision (6) of subsection (a) of Section 4 for state administration, the State Superintendent of Education may allocate such sums as he or she deems appropriate to establish an Alabama Reading Initiative Incentive Program that shall distribute monetary incentives to schools based on a formula, approved by the State Superintendent of Education with the Alabama Committee on Grade Level Reading created in Section 7, that shall factor the size and geography of the school, reading growth and proficiency, and the composition of student subgroups.

Section 6. (a) The State Superintendent of Education shall develop, and the State Board of Education shall approve, a dyslexia therapist certification endorsement on or before December 31, 2019.

(1) K-12 and Early Childhood teachers who have completed an International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council endorsed training course and have received a passing score on the Academic Language Therapy Association's Certified Academic Language Therapy assessment, or the
International Dyslexia Association's Knowledge and Practice
Examination of Effective Reading Instruction, and who hold a
valid Professional Educator Certificate shall be eligible for
a dyslexia therapist endorsement.

(2) Teacher preparation programs at public colleges
and universities in the state shall offer dyslexia therapy
teacher preparation courses that are approved by the
International Multisensory Structured Language Education
Council or the International Dyslexia Association.
Multi-institutional consortia or affiliations to assure access
to these courses is acceptable.

(3) Subject to appropriations from the Legislature,
the State Superintendent of Education and the Alabama
Commission on Higher Education shall develop and approve a
dyslexia therapist endorsement incentive, which shall be
available to teachers who attain the dyslexia therapist
endorsement, with direct student contact. The State
Superintendent of Education shall construct parameters for
earning the dyslexia therapist endorsement incentive.

(b) All teacher preparation programs authorized to
prepare students for state licensure shall seek accreditation
by the council or association for the accreditation of
educator preparation on or before December 31, 2020.

(c) The State Department of Education shall provide
to public and private universities, on an annual basis, the
information required for those institutions to comply with
council for the accreditation of educator preparation standard
four requirements for accreditation. The Alabama Commission on
Higher Education shall convene the public university deans of
education to facilitate the development of a format for the
data needed for accreditation compliance, and work with the
State Superintendent of Education to establish effective and
timely reporting processes.

(d) As a requirement of initial licensure, beginning
with the 2020-2021 school year, candidates for initial
elementary certification shall receive a passing score, as
determined by the State Board of Education, which shall base
its determination on the national score average during the
preceding academic year, on the Foundations of Reading a
foundational reading assessment for entry level teachers of
reading. Beginning with the graduating class of 2021, teachers
seeking an initial elementary certification who have passed
the EdTPA and Foundations of Reading Assessment may no longer
be required to pass the Praxis 5204 Teaching Reading
assessment. Elementary certification who have passed the EdTPA
and a foundational reading assessment may no longer be
required to pass an additional reading assessment.

(e) Beginning with the 2020-2021 academic year,
public teacher preparation programs leading to the attainment
of an initial elementary teaching certification shall require
no less than nine credit hours of reading or literacy coursework, or both, based on the science of learning to read, including multisensory strategies in foundation reading skills. The nine credit hours of reading or literacy coursework shall be incorporated within the current credit hours currently approved for the degree program and not require additional credit hours for graduation.

(f) The standing task force created by Section 3, state public teacher preparation programs, and regional professional development inservice centers shall work together in establishing a state continuum of teacher development for approved science of reading that will reflect levels of literacy teacher development from preservice, reading specialist, to instructional leadership. The State Superintendent of Education and the regional inservice centers shall provide preservice and inservice elementary teachers with all of the following professional learning activities:

1. Mentoring and shadowing with master teachers selected by Alabama Reading Initiative regional literacy specialists and local reading specialists.

2. Job embedded, classroom-based coaching in the teaching of reading for the first five years of a teacher's career.

3. Curricula and resources in all of the following reading content areas:
HB388

1 a. Oral language development.
2 b. Phonemic awareness.
3 c. Phonics.
4 d. Fluency.
5 e. Vocabulary.
6 f. Writing.
7 g. Comprehension.
8
9 Section 7. (a) The State Superintendent of Education shall establish the Alabama Committee on Grade Level Reading. The committee shall consist of three members appointed from each State Board of Education district. The Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall each appoint one member from each district. The appointing authorities shall coordinate their appointments so that diversity of gender, race, and geographical areas is reflective of the makeup of this state.
18
(b) Each member of the committee shall be a parent or legal guardian of a state K-12 public school student, a practicing teacher, a retired teacher, or employed in the field of education.
22
(c) On or before June 30, 2020, the committee shall revise the 2011 Alabama Action Plan for Literacy Birth Through Grade 12 in consultation with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading group, which shall be presented to the Governor, the
State Superintendent of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Chairs of the House Education Policy Committee and the Senate Education Policy Committee.

(d) The committee shall provide recommendations to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Chairs of the House Education Policy Committee and the Senate Education Policy Committee on implementing this act and shall provide standing oversight over the quality of professional learning and program quality. The committee shall provide recommendations to the State Superintendent of Education, the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Chairs of the House Education Policy Committee and the Senate Education Policy Committee on adopting innovative strategies and programming to improve the effectiveness of this act.

(e) Each member of the committee shall receive the same travel expense allowance as is paid to state employees for travel in the service of the committee, subject to available appropriations.

Section 8. The State Superintendent of Education shall provide technical assistance to local education agencies in complying with this act. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules as necessary to implement and enforce this act.

Section 9. This act shall become effective on the first day of the third month following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.
Speaker of the House of Representatives

President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives
I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and was passed by the House 15-MAY-19, as amended.

Jeff Woodard
Clerk

Senate 30-MAY-19
Amended and Passed
Concurred in Senate Amendment

House 30-MAY-19

APPROVED 6-10-19

TIME 2:27

GOVERNOR

Alabama Secretary Of State
Act Num....: 2019-523
Bill Num....: H-388
Recv'd 06/10/19 04:21pSLF
ENGROSSED

House Bill

20

ENGROSSED

House Bill

20

JEFF WOODARD, Clerk

JEFF WOODARD, Clerk

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE RESOLUTION AS REQUIRED IN SECTION C OF ACT NO. 81-889 WAS ADOPTED AND IS ATTACHED TO THE BILL, H.B. 379

YEAS 75 NAYS 13


CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

House Conferees

RE-REFERRED RE-COMMITTED

I hereby certify that the Resolution as required in Section C of Act No. 81-889 was adopted and is attached to the Bill, HB 379

YEAS 27 NAYS 0