

**READING ACHIEVEMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS -  
KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE THREE**

2001 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Sponsor: Karen W. Morgan**

**This act modifies provisions related to the State System of Public Education by setting a goal of having 90% or more of all third graders reading on or above grade level by the end of the third grade by 2006. The act requires an annual report on the percentage of students reading on or above grade level in the first, second, and third grades by school and by school district. The act requires each elementary school to develop a plan to achieve the reading goal and requires the plan to have assessment, intervention, and reporting components.**

This act affects sections of Utah Code Annotated 1953 as follows:

AMENDS:

**53A-1-606.5**, as enacted by Chapter 57, Laws of Utah 1999

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **53A-1-606.5** is amended to read:

**53A-1-606.5. Reading achievement in grades one through three -- Monitoring --  
Reporting -- Additional instruction.**

(1) (a) The Legislature recognizes that:

- (i) reading is the most fundamental skill, the gateway to knowledge and lifelong learning;
- (ii) there is an ever increasing demand for literacy in the highly technological society we

live in;

(iii) students who do not learn to read will be economically and socially disadvantaged;

(iv) reading problems exist in almost every classroom;

(v) almost all reading failure is preventable if reading difficulties are diagnosed and treated by no later than the end of the third grade; and

(vi) early identification and treatment of reading difficulties can result in students learning to read by the end of the third grade.

(b) It is therefore [a]:

(i) the long-term goal of the state to have every student in the state's public education system reading on or above grade level by the end of the third grade[-]; and

(ii) the short-term goal of the state to have 90% or more of all third graders reading on or above grade level by the end of the third grade in 2006.

(c) (i) The superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee shall make an annual report to the State Board of Education and to the Legislature's Education Interim Committee on the goals established in Subsection (1)(b).

(ii) The information shall be reported as part of the U-PASS testing program as required under Section 53A-3-602.5, beginning with the 2001-02 school year, and include the following for each school district and elementary school:

(A) the number and percent of all students reading on or above grade level at the end of the first, second, and third grades;

(B) the annual reading achievement growth from the prior year and cumulative reading achievement growth from the base year of 2001-02 in the percent of students reading on or above grade level for each year;

(C) those schools that reach the 90% reading achievement goal or achieve a sufficient magnitude of gain each year as determined by the State Board of Education from the 2001-02 base year or do both; and

(D) those elementary schools that fail to achieve a sufficient magnitude of gain each year as determined by the State Board of Education from the 2001-02 base year.

(d) The State Board of Education, through the superintendent of public instruction, shall determine as part of the U-PASS testing program:

(i) the appropriate statewide tests to assess reading levels at the end of each year in the first, second, and third grades;

(ii) an appropriate standard or cut score on each assessment for determining grade level reading mastery; and

(iii) the actual percent of students reading on or above grade level in the first, second, and third grades at each public elementary school as required under Subsection (1)(c)(i) by dividing the

headcount enrollment of students reading on or above grade level at that grade by the headcount enrollment of students in the building at that grade on the date that the reading assessment is administered.

(2) ~~[In order to ensure that all students are reading on or above the third grade level by the end of the third grade, the State Board of Education and local]~~ Local school boards shall ~~[work with the Legislature, through its interim committees and any task force that may be created to study and review accountability in public education]~~ annually review the U-PASS data regarding reading at school and district levels and shall work with districts and schools to review and revise plans as needed to meet the goal set in Subsection (1)(b).

(3) (a) Each school district shall ~~[work with]~~ require the elementary schools within its district boundaries to develop, in conjunction with all other school planning processes and requirements, a [school] reading achievement plan at each school [focused on having all students reading at the third grade level by the end of the third grade] for its kindergarten, first, second, and third graders to reach the reading goals set in Subsection (1)(b).

(b) The school principal shall take primary responsibility to provide leadership and allocate resources and support for teachers and students, most particularly for those who are reading below grade level, to achieve the reading goals.

(c) Each reading achievement plan shall include:

(i) an assessment component that:

(A) identifies those students who are reading below grade level;

(B) uses U-PASS and local assessment information throughout the year to determine students' instructional needs; and

(C) is consistent with the exemption provisions of Subsection 53A-1-603(3)(c) regarding such students as students with disabilities or limited English proficiency;

(ii) an intervention component:

(A) that provides adequate and appropriate interventions focused on bringing each student up to reading at or above grade level and which would permit retention in the grade level of a student reading below grade level based on a joint determination made by the principal or the principal's

designee, the student's teacher, and the student's parent;

(B) based on best practices identified through proven researched-based methods;

(C) that includes parental participation; and

(D) that, as resources allow, involves a reading specialist; and

(iii) a reporting component consistent with the data to be included in the school performance report required under Section 53A-3-602.5.

(4) The school district shall approve each school's plan prior to its implementation and review each plan annually.