

READING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

1999 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Sponsor: Karen W. Morgan

AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION; PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A READING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH; PROVIDING THAT THE CENTER ASSIST SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN IDENTIFYING, ASSESSING, AND PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH READING DIFFICULTIES; PROVIDING FOR A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM; PROVIDING A \$250,000 APPROPRIATION FOR THE CENTER; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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

ENACTS:

53A-3-402.10, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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

Section 1. Section **53A-3-402.10** is enacted to read:

53A-3-402.10. Reading Skills Development Center -- Purpose.

(1) The Legislature recognizes the critical importance of identifying, assessing, and assisting students with reading difficulties at an early age in order for them to have successful and productive school and life experiences.

(2) In order to help accomplish this, there is established a Reading Skills Development Center, hereafter referred to as the "center", at the University of Utah to:

(a) assist school districts in detecting reading difficulties in students in the early grades;
and

(b) provide instructional intervention to enable the students to overcome their reading difficulties.

(3) (a) The center shall assist school districts by providing expertise in the assessment of reading difficulties and designing effective instructional interventions to overcome those difficulties.

(b) The assessment and intervention programs shall focus primarily on grades one through three in order to correct any detected difficulties by the end of the third grade, but assessment and instructional intervention services shall be available to public education students of all ages.

(c) School districts may use the assessment and intervention programs on site at the center, at the student's school, or by using interactive technology.

(4) (a) The center shall provide school districts with a professional development program for reading endorsements that can be added to active elementary certificates.

(b) Each school district may allow its teachers to participate in the program through:

(i) programs taught on-site at local schools;

(ii) distance education with videotaped classes and on-site facilitators; and

(iii) interactive delivery by computers and video.

(c) Each school district may use this professional teacher development program in an effort to place at least one reading specialist in each of its elementary schools.

(5) The center shall provide school district administrators, school administrators, and school teachers with the most current research-based knowledge about reading and reading instruction through nationally and internationally recognized reading researchers and instructional specialists.

Section 2. Appropriation.

(1) There is appropriated from the General Fund for fiscal year 1999-2000, \$250,000 to the University of Utah to help fund the activities of the Reading Skills Development Center at the university.

(2) The money appropriated in Subsection (1) is nonlapsing.

Section 3. Effective date.

This act takes effect on July 1, 1999.