

STATE LITERACY PROGRAM

1999 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Sponsor: Jeff Alexander

AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A READING ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM IN THE STATE'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN GRADES ONE THROUGH THREE; REQUIRING EACH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOCUSED ON HAVING ALL STUDENTS READ AT THE THIRD GRADE LEVEL BY THE END OF THE THIRD GRADE; PROVIDING A \$5,000,000 APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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

ENACTS:

53A-1-606.5, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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

Section 1. Section **53A-1-606.5** is enacted 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 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.

(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 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.

(3) Each school district shall work with the elementary schools within its district boundaries to develop a school plan at each school focused on having all students reading at the third grade level by the end of the third grade.

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

Section 2. Appropriation.

(1) There is appropriated from the Uniform School Fund for fiscal year 1999-2000, \$5,000,000 to the State Board of Education for distribution to school districts as follows:

(a) each school district shall receive \$5,000 as a base amount; and

(b) the board shall distribute the balance of the appropriation to each district based on the district's average daily membership in the first, second, and third grades as compared to the state total average daily membership in the first, second, and third grades.

(2) Each district shall use its allocation to fund the program required under Subsection 53A-1-606.5(3).

(3) Each district shall distribute its allocation to the elementary schools within the district based on the need for reading improvement at the schools in the first, second, and third grades.

(4) A school district may not use any of the monies received under this section for administrative costs.

Section 3. Effective date.

This act takes effect on July 1, 1999.