

**SENATE, No. 2645**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**221st LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 8, 2024

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex and Hudson)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires school districts to screen certain students for reading deficiencies.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning student literacy and supplementing chapter 40  
2 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. a. As used in this section, “reading deficiency” means  
8 scoring below grade level or being determined to be at risk of  
9 scoring below grade level based on a screening assessment.

10 b. A school district shall screen each student enrolled in  
11 kindergarten through grade three using a reading assessment  
12 approved or authorized pursuant to subsections f. or g. of this  
13 section. The assessment shall be administered three times per  
14 school year.

15 c. A school district shall annually screen any newly-enrolled  
16 student in the district in grades four through 12 using a reading  
17 assessment approved or authorized pursuant to subsections f. or g.  
18 of this section.

19 d. A school district shall screen any enrolled student at the  
20 request of the parent or guardian of the student using a reading  
21 assessment approved or authorized pursuant to subsections f. or g.  
22 of this section.

23 e. The reading assessments required pursuant to subsections b.,  
24 c., and d. of this section shall:

25 (1) measure phonological awareness, decoding, fluency,  
26 vocabulary, and comprehension; and

27 (2) identify students who have a reading deficiency.

28 f. (1) The Department of Education shall enter into a contract  
29 with at least two screening providers that have a reliable and valid  
30 reading assessment that meets the requirements of this act. Within  
31 the limits of available funds, the department shall make these  
32 reading assessments available for use by school districts.

33 (2) The department shall establish and distribute a list of  
34 providers with reliable and valid reading assessments approved for  
35 school district use for the screening and monitoring of student  
36 progress toward grade level reading.

37 g. Upon application, a school district may be granted a waiver  
38 of the requirement to use one of the reading assessments that have  
39 been approved by the department pursuant to subsection f. of this  
40 section, if the school district demonstrates to the department’s  
41 satisfaction that it has selected a comparable reading assessment.

42 h. A school district shall notify a parent or guardian of a  
43 student who exhibits a reading deficiency no later than 15 days after  
44 identification of the deficiency.

45 i. A school district shall provide appropriate evidence-based  
46 intervention strategies to any student exhibiting a reading  
47 deficiency as determined through the screening conducted pursuant  
48 to subsections b., c., and d. of this section.



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1 than 15 days after the deficiency is identified. The school district is  
2 also required to provide appropriate evidence-based intervention  
3 strategies to any student that exhibits a reading deficiency.

4 A school district is also required to annually report to the  
5 department the number of students screened and the number of  
6 students who were identified through the screening as exhibiting a  
7 reading deficiency.

8 The bill defines a “reading deficiency” as scoring below grade  
9 level or being determined to be at risk of scoring below grade level  
10 based on a screening assessment.