

**South Carolina General Assembly**  
120th Session, 2013-2014

**R313, S516**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senators Peeler, Fair, Hayes, Courson, Young, Setzler, Malloy, Leatherman, Lourie, L. Martin, Johnson, Jackson, Allen, Rankin, Scott and Pinckney

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Companion/Similar bill(s): 3926, 3994

Introduced in the Senate on March 12, 2013

Introduced in the House on April 10, 2014

Last Amended on June 5, 2014

Passed by the General Assembly on June 5, 2014

Governor's Action: June 11, 2014, Signed

Summary: Read To Succeed Act

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date	Body	Action Description with journal page number
3/12/2013	Senate	Introduced and read first time ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 7</a> )
3/12/2013	Senate	Referred to Committee on <b>Education</b> ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 7</a> )
5/9/2013	Senate	Committee report: Favorable with amendment <b>Education</b> ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 3</a> )
5/13/2013		Scrivener's error corrected
3/4/2014	Senate	Special order, set for March 4, 2014 ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 28</a> )
3/4/2014	Senate	Roll call Ayes-32 Nays-13 ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 35</a> )
3/26/2014	Senate	Debate interrupted ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 64</a> )
4/1/2014	Senate	Debate interrupted ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 46</a> )
4/2/2014	Senate	Debate interrupted ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 80</a> )
4/3/2014	Senate	Debate interrupted ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 46</a> )
4/9/2014	Senate	Amended ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 103</a> )
4/9/2014	Senate	Read second time ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 103</a> )
4/9/2014	Senate	Roll call Ayes-36 Nays-6 ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 103</a> )
4/10/2014	Senate	Read third time and sent to House ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 26</a> )
4/10/2014	House	Introduced and read first time
4/10/2014	House	Referred to Committee on <b>Education and Public Works</b>
5/15/2014	House	Committee report: Favorable with amendment <b>Education and Public Works</b> ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 41</a> )
5/22/2014	House	Debate adjourned until Tues., 5-27-14 ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 20</a> )
5/27/2014	House	Amended ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 14</a> )
5/27/2014	House	Debate adjourned until Wed, 5-28-14 ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 14</a> )
5/28/2014	House	Debate adjourned until Thur., 5-29-14 ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 14</a> )
5/29/2014	House	Debate adjourned until Tues., 6-3-14 ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 27</a> )
6/3/2014	House	Debate adjourned until Wed., 6-4-14 ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 20</a> )
6/4/2014	House	Read second time ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 13</a> )
6/4/2014	House	Roll call Yeas-75 Nays-20 ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 13</a> )
6/5/2014		Scrivener's error corrected
6/5/2014	House	Amended ( <a href="#">House Journal-page 75</a> )

6/5/2014 House Roll call Yeas-66 Nays-5 ([House Journal-page 75](#))  
6/5/2014 House Read third time and returned to Senate with amendments ([House Journal-page 75](#))  
6/5/2014 Senate Concurred in House amendment and enrolled ([Senate Journal-page 72](#))  
6/5/2014 Senate Roll call Ayes-40 Nays-4 ([Senate Journal-page 72](#))  
6/9/2014 Ratified R 313  
6/11/2014 Signed By Governor

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## **VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

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1 **NOTE: THIS COPY IS A TEMPORARY VERSION. THIS**  
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5 **PUBLISHED IN THE ADVANCE SHEET, THIS NOTE WILL**  
6 **BE REMOVED.**

7  
8 (R313, S516)

9  
10 **AN ACT TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH**  
11 **CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING CHAPTER 155 TO TITLE 59**  
12 **SO AS TO CREATE THE SOUTH CAROLINA READ TO**  
13 **SUCCEED OFFICE AND TO PROVIDE FOR ITS PURPOSES,**  
14 **TO PROVIDE NECESSARY DEFINITIONS, TO PROVIDE FOR**  
15 **A COMPREHENSIVE STATE PLAN TO IMPROVE READING**  
16 **ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY ASSESSING THE**  
17 **READINESS AND READING PROFICIENCY OF STUDENTS**  
18 **PROGRESSING FROM PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH**  
19 **THIRD GRADE AND PROVIDING APPROPRIATE**  
20 **INTERVENTIONS AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS**  
21 **AS APPROPRIATE, TO PROVIDE RELATED OBLIGATIONS**  
22 **OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, READ TO**  
23 **SUCCEED OFFICE, STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, AND**  
24 **EACH SCHOOL CONCERNING THE PLAN AND RELATED**  
25 **PROVISIONS, TO PROVIDE THAT BEGINNING WITH THE**  
26 **2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR A STUDENT MUST BE RETAINED**  
27 **IN THE THIRD GRADE IF HE FAILS TO DEMONSTRATE**  
28 **READING PROFICIENCY AT THE END OF THE THIRD**  
29 **GRADE AS INDICATED BY SCORING AT A CERTAIN**  
30 **ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL ON THE STATE SUMMATIVE**  
31 **READING ASSESSMENT, TO PROVIDE EXCEPTIONS, TO**  
32 **PROVIDE FOR THE ASSISTANCE OF RETAINED STUDENTS**  
33 **THROUGH CERTAIN SUPPORT AND SERVICES, TO**  
34 **PROVIDE RELATED EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR**  
35 **TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IMPLEMENTED OVER**  
36 **SEVERAL YEARS, TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL SCHOOL**  
37 **DISTRICTS TO CREATE FAMILY-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY**  
38 **PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE AND ENHANCE READING**  
39 **DEVELOPMENT AND PROFICIENCY THROUGHOUT THE**  
40 **YEAR IN HOMES AND IN THE COMMUNITY, TO REQUIRE**  
41 **THE READ TO SUCCEED OFFICE AND EACH DISTRICT TO**  
42 **PLAN FOR AND ACT DECISIVELY TO ENGAGE THE**  
43 **FAMILIES OF STUDENTS AS FULL PARTICIPATING**

1 PARTNERS IN PROMOTING THE READING AND WRITING  
2 HABITS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR  
3 CHILDREN IN A CERTAIN MANNER, AND TO PROVIDE  
4 THE BOARD AND DEPARTMENT SHALL TRANSLATE THE  
5 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR READING AND  
6 WRITING SPECIFIED IN THIS CHAPTER INTO  
7 STANDARDS, PRACTICES, AND PROCEDURES FOR  
8 SCHOOL DISTRICTS, BOARDS, AND THEIR EMPLOYEES  
9 AND FOR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AS APPROPRIATE AND  
10 IN A CERTAIN MANNER; BY ADDING CHAPTER 156 TO  
11 TITLE 59 SO AS TO CREATE THE CHILD EARLY READING  
12 DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAM, TO  
13 PROVIDE A FULL DAY, FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN  
14 PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN WHICH MUST BE  
15 MADE AVAILABLE TO QUALIFIED CHILDREN IN ALL  
16 PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITHIN THE STATE, TO  
17 SPECIFY REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM, TO  
18 PROVIDE THE PROGRAM FIRST MUST BE MADE  
19 AVAILABLE TO ELIGIBLE CHILDREN IN EIGHT SPECIFIC  
20 TRIAL DISTRICTS AND THAT REMAINING FUNDS MAY BE  
21 USED TO EXPAND THE PROGRAM IN A SPECIFIC  
22 MANNER, TO PROVIDE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, TO  
23 PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR  
24 DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY, TO PROVIDE RELATED  
25 REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,  
26 READ TO SUCCEED OFFICE, AND THE OFFICE OF FIRST  
27 STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS, TO REQUIRE PROVIDERS  
28 OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CHILD EARLY READING  
29 DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAM SHALL  
30 OFFER A COMPLETE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IN  
31 ACCORDANCE WITH AGE-APPROPRIATE  
32 INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND A RESEARCH-BASED  
33 PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM ALIGNED WITH SCHOOL  
34 SUCCESS, TO PROVIDE RELATED REQUIREMENTS, TO  
35 RECOGNIZE AND IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN  
36 THE SKILLS AND PREPARATION OF PREKINDERGARTEN  
37 INSTRUCTORS AND THE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF  
38 STUDENTS, TO PROVIDE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE  
39 PROVIDERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR TRANSPORTATION  
40 FUNDS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN CRITERIA AND  
41 REQUIREMENTS, TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE  
42 READ TO SUCCEED OFFICE WITH RESPECT TO  
43 APPROVED PRIVATE PROVIDERS AND PUBLIC

1 **PROVIDERS, TO PROVIDE FUNDING FORMULAS, TO**  
2 **PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
3 **SHALL MAINTAIN A LIST OF ALL APPROVED PUBLIC AND**  
4 **PRIVATE PROVIDERS AND PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT**  
5 **OF EDUCATION AND THE OFFICE OF FIRST STEPS**  
6 **INFORMATION NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE**  
7 **REQUIREMENTS OF THIS CHAPTER, TO PROVIDE THE**  
8 **OFFICE OF FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS IS**  
9 **RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLLECTION AND**  
10 **MAINTENANCE OF DATA ON THE STATE-FUNDED**  
11 **PROGRAMS PROVIDED THROUGH PRIVATE PROVIDERS,**  
12 **AND TO MAKE THESE REQUIREMENTS CONTINGENT ON**  
13 **STATE FUNDING.**

14  
15 Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly finds that national  
16 research has documented that students unable to comprehend  
17 grade-level text struggle in all their courses; and

18  
19 Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly finds that while  
20 reading typically has been assessed through standardized tests  
21 beginning in third grade, research has found that many struggling  
22 readers reach preschool or kindergarten with low oral language skills  
23 and limited print awareness. Once in school, they and other students  
24 fail to develop proficiency with reading and comprehension because of  
25 inadequate instruction and engaged practice; and

26  
27 Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly finds that research has  
28 also shown that students who have difficulty comprehending texts  
29 struggle academically in their content area courses but seldom receive  
30 effective instructional intervention during middle and high school to  
31 improve their reading comprehension. These are the students least  
32 likely to graduate; and

33  
34 Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly finds that one recent  
35 longitudinal study found that students reading below grade level at the  
36 end of third grade were six times more likely to leave school without a  
37 high school diploma; and

38  
39 Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly finds that reading  
40 proficiency is a fundamental life skill vital for the educational and  
41 economic success of our citizens and State. In accordance with the  
42 ruling of the South Carolina Supreme Court that all students must be  
43 given “an opportunity to acquire the ability to read, write, and speak the

1 English language”, the South Carolina General Assembly finds that all  
2 students must be given high quality instruction and engage in ample  
3 time actually reading and writing in order to learn to read, comprehend,  
4 write, speak, listen, and use language effectively across all content  
5 areas; and  
6

7 Whereas, to guarantee that all students exhibit these abilities and  
8 behaviors, the State of South Carolina must implement a  
9 comprehensive and strategic approach to reading proficiency for  
10 students in prekindergarten through twelfth grade that begins when  
11 each student enters the public school system and continues until he or  
12 she graduates. Now, therefore,  
13

14 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:  
15

16 **South Carolina Read to Succeed Act**  
17

18 SECTION 1. Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:  
19

20 “CHAPTER 155  
21

22 South Carolina Read to Succeed Act  
23

24 Section 59-155-110. There is established within the South Carolina  
25 Department of Education the South Carolina Read to Succeed Office to  
26 implement a comprehensive, systemic approach to reading which will  
27 ensure that:

28 (1) classroom teachers use evidence-based reading instruction in  
29 prekindergarten through grade twelve, to include oral language,  
30 phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and  
31 comprehension; administer and interpret valid and reliable assessments;  
32 analyze data to inform reading instruction; and provide evidence-based  
33 interventions as needed so that all students develop proficiency with  
34 literacy skills and comprehension;

35 (2) classroom teachers periodically reassess their curriculum and  
36 instruction to determine if they are helping each student progress as a  
37 proficient reader and make modifications as appropriate;

38 (3) each student who cannot yet comprehend grade-level text is  
39 identified and served as early as possible and at all stages of his or her  
40 educational process;

41 (4) each student receives targeted, effective, comprehension support  
42 from the classroom teacher and, if needed, supplemental support from a

1 reading interventionist so that ultimately all students can comprehend  
2 grade-level texts;

3 (5) each student and his parent or guardian is continuously  
4 informed in writing of:

5 (a) the student's reading proficiency needs, progress, and ability  
6 to comprehend and write grade-level texts;

7 (b) specific actions the classroom teacher and other reading  
8 professionals have taken and will take to help the student comprehend  
9 and write grade-level texts; and

10 (c) specific actions that the parent or guardian can take to help  
11 the student comprehend grade-level texts by providing access to books,  
12 assuring time for the student to read independently, reading to students,  
13 and talking with the student about books;

14 (6) classroom teachers receive preservice and in-service  
15 coursework which prepares them to help all students comprehend  
16 grade-level texts;

17 (7) all students develop reading and writing proficiency to prepare  
18 them to graduate and to succeed in their career and postsecondary  
19 education; and

20 (8) each school district publishes annually a comprehensive  
21 research-based reading plan that includes intervention options available  
22 to students and funding for these services.

23  
24 Section 59-155-120. As used in this chapter:

25 (1) 'Board' means the State Board of Education.

26 (2) 'Department' means the State Department of Education.

27 (3) 'Discipline-specific literacy' means the ability to read, write,  
28 listen, and speak across various disciplines and content areas including,  
29 but not limited to, English/language arts, science, mathematics, social  
30 studies, physical education, health, the arts, and career and technology  
31 education.

32 (4) 'Readiness assessment' means assessments used to analyze  
33 students' literacy, mathematical, physical, social, and  
34 emotional-behavioral competencies in prekindergarten or kindergarten.

35 (5) 'Reading interventions' means individual or group assistance in  
36 the classroom and supplemental support based on curricular and  
37 instructional decisions made by classroom teachers who have proven  
38 effectiveness in teaching reading and an add-on literacy endorsement or  
39 reading/literacy coaches who meet the minimum qualifications  
40 established in guidelines published by the Department of Education.

41 (6) 'Reading portfolio' means an organized collection of evidence  
42 and assessments documenting that the student has demonstrated

1 mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above  
2 the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment.

3 (7) 'Reading proficiency' means the ability of students to meet state  
4 reading standards in kindergarten through grade twelve, demonstrated  
5 by readiness, formative, or summative assessments.

6 (8) 'Reading proficiency skills' means the ability to understand  
7 how written language works at the word, sentence, paragraph, and text  
8 level and mastery of the skills, strategies, and oral and written language  
9 needed to comprehend grade-level texts.

10 (9) 'Research-based formative assessment' means assessments used  
11 within the school year to analyze strengths and weaknesses in reading  
12 comprehension of students individually to adapt instruction to meet  
13 student needs, make decisions about appropriate intervention services,  
14 and inform placement and instructional planning for the next grade  
15 level.

16 (10) 'Substantially fails to demonstrate third-grade reading  
17 proficiency' means a student who does not demonstrate reading  
18 proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the  
19 lowest achievement level on the statewide summative reading  
20 assessment that equates to Not Met 1 on the Palmetto Assessment of  
21 State Standards (PASS).

22 (11) 'Summative assessment' means state-approved assessments  
23 administered in grades three through eight and any statewide  
24 assessment used in grades nine through twelve to determine student  
25 mastery of grade-level or content standards.

26 (12) 'Summer reading camp' means an educational program offered  
27 in the summer by each local school district or consortia of school  
28 districts for students who are unable to comprehend grade-level texts  
29 and who qualify for mandatory retention.

30 (13) 'Third-grade reading proficiency' means the ability to read  
31 grade-level texts by the end of a student's third grade year as  
32 demonstrated by the results of state-approved assessments administered  
33 to third grade students, or through other assessments as noted in this  
34 chapter and adopted by the board.

35 (14) 'Writing proficiency skills' means the ability to communicate  
36 information, analysis, and persuasive points of view effectively in  
37 writing.

38  
39 Section 59-155-130. The Read to Succeed Office must guide and  
40 support districts and collaborate with university teacher training  
41 programs to increase reading proficiency through the following  
42 functions, including, but not limited to:



1 (1) providing professional development to teachers, school  
2 principals, and other administrative staff on reading and writing  
3 instruction and reading assessment that informs instruction;

4 (2) providing professional development to teachers, school  
5 principals, and other administrative staff on reading and writing in  
6 content areas;

7 (3) working collaboratively with institutions of higher learning  
8 offering courses in reading and writing and those institutions of higher  
9 education offering accredited master's degrees in reading-literacy to  
10 design coursework leading to a literacy teacher add-on endorsement by  
11 the State;

12 (4) providing professional development in reading and coaching for  
13 already certified reading/literacy coaches and literacy teachers;

14 (5) developing information and resources that school districts can  
15 use to provide workshops for parents about how they can support their  
16 children as readers and writers;

17 (6) assisting school districts in the development and  
18 implementation of their district reading proficiency plans for  
19 researched-based reading instruction programs and assisting each of  
20 their schools to develop its own implementation plan aligned with the  
21 district and state plans;

22 (7) annually designing content and questions for and review and  
23 approve the reading proficiency plan of each district.

24 (8) monitor and report to the State Board of Education the yearly  
25 success rate of summer reading camps. Districts must provide  
26 statistical data to include the:

27 (a) number of students enrolled in camps;

28 (b) number of students by grade level who successfully complete  
29 the camps;

30 (c) number of third-graders promoted to fourth grade;

31 (d) number of third-graders retained; and

32 (e) total expenditure made on operating the camps by source of  
33 funds to include in-kind donations; and

34 (9) provide an annual report to the General Assembly regarding the  
35 implementation of the South Carolina Read to Succeed Act and the  
36 State and the district's progress toward ensuring that at least ninety-five  
37 percent of all students are reading at grade level.

38  
39 Section 59-155-140. (A)(1) The department, with approval by the  
40 State Board of Education, shall develop, implement, evaluate, and  
41 continuously refine a comprehensive state plan to improve reading  
42 achievement in public schools. The State Reading Proficiency Plan

1 must be approved by the board by February 1, 2015, and must include,  
2 but not be limited to, sections addressing the following components:

- 3 (a) reading process;
- 4 (b) professional development to increase teacher reading  
5 expertise;
- 6 (c) professional development to increase reading expertise and  
7 literacy leadership of principals and assistant principals;
- 8 (d) reading instruction;
- 9 (e) reading assessment;
- 10 (f) discipline-specific literacy;
- 11 (g) writing;
- 12 (h) support for struggling readers;
- 13 (i) early childhood interventions;
- 14 (j) family support of literacy development;
- 15 (k) district guidance and support for reading proficiency;
- 16 (l) state guidance and support for reading proficiency;
- 17 (m) accountability; and
- 18 (n) urgency to improve reading proficiency.

19 (2) The state plan must be based on reading research and  
20 proven-effective practices, applied to the conditions prevailing in  
21 reading-literacy education in this State, with special emphasis on  
22 addressing instructional and institutional deficiencies that can be  
23 remedied through faithful implementation of research-based practices.  
24 The plan must provide standards, format, and guidance for districts to  
25 use to develop and annually update their plans, as well as to present and  
26 explain the research-based rationale for state-level actions to be taken.  
27 The plan must be updated annually and must incorporate a state reading  
28 proficiency progress report.

29 (3) The state plan must include specific details and explanations  
30 for all substantial uses of state, local, and federal funds promoting  
31 reading-literacy and best judgment estimates of the cost of  
32 research-supported, thoroughly analyzed proposals for initiation,  
33 expansion, or modification of major funding programs addressing  
34 reading and writing. Analyses of funding requirements must be  
35 prepared by the department for incorporation into the plan.

36 (B)(1) Beginning in Fiscal Year 2015-2016, each district must  
37 prepare a comprehensive annual reading proficiency plan for  
38 prekindergarten through twelfth grade consistent with the plan by  
39 responding to questions and presenting specific information and data in  
40 a format specified by the Read to Succeed Office. Each district's PK-12  
41 reading proficiency plan must present the rationale and details of its  
42 blueprint for action and support at the district, school, and classroom  
43 levels. Each district shall develop a comprehensive plan for supporting

1 the progress of students as readers and writers, monitoring the impact  
2 of its plan, and using data to make improvements and to inform its plan  
3 for the subsequent years. The district plan piloted in school districts in  
4 Fiscal Year 2013-2014 and revised based on the input of districts shall  
5 be used as the initial district reading plan framework in Fiscal Year  
6 2014-2015 to provide interventions for struggling readers and fully  
7 implemented in Fiscal Year 2015-2016 to align with the state plan.

8 (2) Each district PK-12 reading proficiency plan shall:

9 (a) document the reading and writing assessment and  
10 instruction planned for all PK-12 students and the interventions in  
11 prekindergarten through twelfth grade to be provided to all struggling  
12 readers who are not able to comprehend grade-level texts.  
13 Supplemental instruction shall be provided by teachers who have a  
14 literacy teacher add-on endorsement and offered during the school day  
15 and, as appropriate, before or after school in book clubs, through a  
16 summer reading camp, or both;

17 (b) include a system for helping parents understand how they  
18 can support the student as a reader at home;

19 (c) provide for the monitoring of reading achievement and  
20 growth at the classroom, school, and district levels with decisions about  
21 intervention based on all available data;

22 (d) ensure that students are provided with wide selections of  
23 texts over a wide range of genres and written on a wide range of  
24 reading levels to match the reading levels of students;

25 (e) provide teacher training in reading and writing instruction;  
26 and

27 (f) include strategically planned and developed partnerships  
28 with county libraries, state and local arts organizations, volunteers,  
29 social service organizations, and school media specialists to promote  
30 reading.

31 (3)(a) The Read to Succeed Office shall develop the format for  
32 the plan and the deadline for districts to submit their plans to the office  
33 for its approval. A school district that does not submit a plan or whose  
34 plan is not approved shall not receive any state funds for reading until it  
35 submits a plan that is approved. All district reading plans must be  
36 reviewed and approved by the Read to Succeed Office. The office shall  
37 provide written comments to each district on its plan and to all districts  
38 on common issues raised in prior or newly submitted district reading  
39 plans.

40 (b) The Read to Succeed Office shall monitor the district and  
41 school plans and use their findings to inform the training and support  
42 the office provides to districts and schools.

1 (c) The department may direct a district that is persistently  
2 unable to prepare an acceptable PK-12 reading proficiency plan or to  
3 help all students comprehend grade-level texts to enter into a  
4 multidistrict or contractual arrangement to develop an effective  
5 intervention plan.

6 (C) Each school must prepare an implementation plan aligned with  
7 the district reading proficiency plan to enable the district to monitor and  
8 support implementation at the school level. The school plan must be a  
9 component of the school's strategic plan required by Section  
10 59-18-1310. A school implementation plan shall be sufficiently  
11 detailed to provide practical guidance for classroom teachers. Proposed  
12 strategies for assessment, instruction, and other activities specified in  
13 the school plan must be sufficient to provide to classroom teachers and  
14 other instructional staff helpful guidance that can be related to the  
15 critical reading and writing needs of students in the school. In  
16 consultation with the School Improvement Council, each school must  
17 include in its implementation plan the training and support that will be  
18 provided to parents as needed to maximize their promotion of reading  
19 and writing by students at home and in the community.

20  
21 Section 59-155-150. (A) With the enactment of this chapter, the  
22 State Superintendent of Education shall ensure that every student  
23 entering publically funded prekindergarten and kindergarten beginning  
24 in Fiscal Year 2014-2015 will be administered a readiness assessment  
25 by the forty-fifth day of the school year. Initially the assessment shall  
26 focus on early language and literacy development. Beginning in Fiscal  
27 Year 2016-2017, the assessment must assess each child's early  
28 language and literacy development, mathematical thinking, physical  
29 well-being, and social-emotional development. The assessment may  
30 include multiple assessments, all of which must be approved by the  
31 board. The approved assessments of academic readiness must be  
32 aligned with first and second grade standards for English/language arts  
33 and mathematics. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers  
34 and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness  
35 needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive,  
36 social, emotional, health problems, and concerning appropriate  
37 instruction for each child. The results of the assessment and the  
38 developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the  
39 child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or  
40 guardian. Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities  
41 for children whose oral language skills are assessed to be below the  
42 norm of their peers in the State must be aligned with the district's  
43 reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each

1 student. The results of each assessment also must be reported to the  
2 Read to Succeed Office.

3 (B) Any student enrolled in prekindergarten, kindergarten, first  
4 grade, second grade, or third grade who is substantially not  
5 demonstrating proficiency in reading, based upon formal diagnostic  
6 assessments or through teacher observations, must be provided  
7 intensive in-class and supplemental reading intervention immediately  
8 upon determination. The intensive interventions must be provided as  
9 individualized and small group assistance based on the analysis of  
10 assessment data. All sustained interventions must be aligned with the  
11 district's reading proficiency plan. These interventions must be at least  
12 thirty minutes in duration and be in addition to ninety minutes of daily  
13 reading and writing instruction provided to all students in kindergarten  
14 through grade three. The district must continue to provide intensive  
15 in-class intervention and at least thirty minutes of supplemental  
16 intervention until the student can comprehend and write text at  
17 grade-level independently. In addition, the parent or guardian of the  
18 student must be notified, in writing, of the child's inability to read  
19 grade-level texts, the interventions to be provided, and the child's  
20 reading abilities at the end of the planned interventions. The results of  
21 the initial assessments and progress monitoring also must be provided  
22 to the Read to Succeed Office.

23 (C) Programs that focus on early childhood literacy development in  
24 the State are required to promote:

25 (1) parent training and support for parent involvement in  
26 developing children's literacy; and

27 (2) development of oral language, print awareness, and emergent  
28 writing; and are encouraged to promote community literacy including,  
29 but not limited to, primary health care providers, faith-based  
30 organizations, county libraries, and service organizations.

31 (D) Districts that fail to provide reports on summer reading camps  
32 pursuant to Section 59-15-130(8) are ineligible to receive state funding  
33 for summer reading camps for the following fiscal year; however,  
34 districts must continue to operate summer reading camps as defined in  
35 this act.

36  
37 Section 59-155-160. (A) Beginning with the 2017-2018 school  
38 year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to  
39 demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as  
40 indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state  
41 summative reading assessment that equates to Not Met 1 on the  
42 Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS). A student may be  
43 exempt for good cause from the mandatory retention but shall continue

1 to receive instructional support and services and reading intervention  
2 appropriate for their age and reading level. Good cause exemptions  
3 include students:

4 (1) with limited English proficiency and less than two years of  
5 instruction in English as a Second Language program;

6 (2) with disabilities whose individual education plan indicates the  
7 use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and  
8 students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan or Section  
9 504 plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in  
10 reading for more than two years but still does not substantially  
11 demonstrate reading proficiency;

12 (3) who demonstrate third-grade reading proficiency on an  
13 alternative assessment approved by the board and which teachers may  
14 administer following the administration of the state assessment of  
15 reading;

16 (4) who have received two years of reading intervention and  
17 were previously retained;

18 (5) who through a reading portfolio document, the student's  
19 mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above  
20 the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment. Such  
21 evidence must be an organized collection of the student's mastery of  
22 the state English/language arts standards that are assessed by the Grade  
23 three state reading assessment. The Read to Succeed Office shall  
24 develop the assessment tool for the student portfolio; however the  
25 student portfolio must meet the following minimum criteria:

26 (a) be selected by the student's English/language arts teacher  
27 or summer reading camp instructor;

28 (b) be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only  
29 include student work that has been independently produced in the  
30 classroom;

31 (c) include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the  
32 Grade three state reading assessment have been met. Evidence is to  
33 include multiple choice items and passages that are approximately sixty  
34 percent literary text and forty percent information text, and that are  
35 between one hundred and seven hundred words with an average of five  
36 hundred words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from  
37 the district or school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned  
38 with the state English/language arts standards or teacher-prepared  
39 assessments;

40 (d) be an organized collection of evidence of the student's  
41 mastery of the English/language arts state standards that are assessed  
42 by the grade three state reading assessment. For each benchmark there

1 must be at least three examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade  
2 of seventy percent or above; and

3 (e) be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate  
4 assessment of the required reading skills; and

5 (6) who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the  
6 conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrate through either a  
7 reading portfolio or through a norm-referenced, alternative assessment,  
8 selected from a list of norm-referenced, alternative assessments  
9 approved by the Read to Succeed Office for use in the summer reading  
10 camps, that the student's mastery of the state standards in reading is  
11 equal to at least a level above the lowest level on the state reading  
12 assessment.

13 (B) The superintendent of the local school district must determine  
14 whether a student in the district may be exempt from the mandatory  
15 retention by taking all of the following steps:

16 (1) The teacher of a student eligible for exemption must submit  
17 to the principal documentation on the proposed exemption and  
18 evidence that promotion of the student is appropriate based on the  
19 student's academic record. This evidence must be limited to the  
20 student's individual education program, alternative assessments, or  
21 student reading portfolio. The Read to Succeed Office must provide  
22 districts with a standardized form to use in the process.

23 (2) The principal must review the documentation and determine  
24 whether the student should be promoted. If the principal determines  
25 the student should be promoted, the principal must submit a written  
26 recommendation for promotion to the district superintendent for final  
27 determination.

28 (3) The district superintendent's acceptance or rejection of the  
29 recommendation must be in writing and a copy must be provided to the  
30 parent or guardian of the child.

31 (4) A parent or legal guardian may appeal the decision to retain a  
32 student to the district superintendent if there is a compelling reason  
33 why the student should not be retained. A parent or legal guardian  
34 must appeal, in writing, within two weeks after the notification of  
35 retention. The letter must be addressed to the district superintendent  
36 and specify the reasons why the student should not be retained. The  
37 district superintendent shall render a decision and provide copies to the  
38 parent or legal guardian and the principal.

39 (C)(1) Students eligible for retention under the provisions in Section  
40 59-155-160(A) may enroll in a summer reading camp provided by their  
41 school district or a summer reading camp consortium to which their  
42 district belongs prior to being retained the following school year.  
43 Summer reading camps must be at least six weeks in duration with a

1 minimum of four days of instruction per week and four hours of  
2 instruction per day, or the equivalent minimum hours of instruction in  
3 the summer. The camps must be taught by compensated teachers who  
4 have at least an add-on literacy endorsement or who have documented  
5 and demonstrated substantial success in helping students comprehend  
6 grade level texts. The Read to Succeed Office shall assist districts that  
7 cannot find qualified teachers to work in the summer camps. Districts  
8 also may choose to contract for the services of qualified instructors or  
9 collaborate with one or more districts to provide a summer reading  
10 camp. Schools and school districts are encouraged to partner with  
11 county or school libraries, institutions of higher learning, community  
12 organizations, faith-based institutions, businesses, pediatric and family  
13 practice medical personnel, and other groups to provide volunteers,  
14 mentors, tutors, space, or other support to assist with the provision of  
15 the summer reading camps. A parent or guardian of a student who does  
16 not substantially demonstrate proficiency in comprehending texts  
17 appropriate for his grade level must make the final decision regarding  
18 the student's participation in the summer reading camp.

19 (2) A district may include in the summer reading camps students  
20 who are not exhibiting reading proficiency at any grade and do not  
21 meet the good cause exemption. Districts may charge fees for these  
22 students to attend the summer reading camps based on a sliding scale  
23 pursuant to Section 59-19-90, except where a child is found to be  
24 reading below grade level in the first, second, or third grade and does  
25 not meet the good cause exemption.

26 (D) Retained students must be provided intensive instructional  
27 services and support, including a minimum of ninety minutes of daily  
28 reading and writing instruction, supplemental text-based instruction,  
29 and other strategies prescribed by the school district. These strategies  
30 may include, but are not limited to, instruction directly focused on  
31 improving the student's individual reading proficiency skills through  
32 small group instruction, reduced teacher-student ratios, more frequent  
33 student progress monitoring, tutoring or mentoring, transition classes  
34 containing students in multiple grade spans, and extended school day,  
35 week, or year reading support. The school must report to the Read to  
36 Succeed Office on the progress of students in the class at the end of the  
37 school year and at other times as required by the office based on the  
38 reading progression monitoring requirements of these students.

39 (E) If the student is not demonstrating third-grade reading  
40 proficiency by the end of the second grading period of the third grade:

41 (1)(a) his parent or guardian timely must be notified, in writing,  
42 that the student is being considered for retention and a conference with



1 the parent or guardian must be held prior to a determination regarding  
2 retention is made, and conferences must be documented;

3 (b) within two weeks following the parent teacher conference,  
4 copies of the conference form must be provided to the principal, parent  
5 or guardian, teacher and other school personnel who are working with  
6 the child on literacy, and summary statements must be sent to parents  
7 or legal guardians who do not attend the conference;

8 (c) following the parent/teacher retention conference, the  
9 principal, classroom teacher, and other school personnel who are  
10 working with the child on literacy must review the recommendation for  
11 retention and provide suggestions for supplemental instruction; and

12 (d) recommendations and observations of the principal,  
13 teacher, parent or legal guardian, and other school personnel who are  
14 working with the child on literacy must be considered when  
15 determining whether to retain the student.

16 (2) The parent or guardian may designate another person as an  
17 education advocate also to act on their behalf to receive notification and  
18 to assume the responsibility of promoting the reading success of the  
19 child. The parent or guardian of a retained student must be offered  
20 supplemental tutoring for the retained student in evidenced-based  
21 services outside the instructional day.

22 (F) For students in grades four and above who are substantially not  
23 demonstrating reading proficiency, interventions shall be provided by  
24 reading interventionists in the classroom and supplementally by  
25 teachers with a literacy teacher add-on endorsement or reading/literacy  
26 coaches. This supplemental support will be provided during the school  
27 day and, as appropriate, before or after school as documented in the  
28 district reading plan, and may include book clubs or summer reading  
29 camps.

30  
31 Section 59-155-170. (A) To help students develop and apply their  
32 reading and writing skills across the school day in all the academic  
33 disciplines, including, but not limited to, English/language arts,  
34 mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, career and technology  
35 education, and physical and health education, teachers of these content  
36 areas at all grade levels must focus on helping students comprehend  
37 print and nonprint texts authentic to the content area. The Read to  
38 Succeed Program is intended to institutionalize in the public schools a  
39 comprehensive system to promote high achievement in the content  
40 areas described in this chapter through extensive reading and writing.  
41 Research-based practices must be employed to promote comprehension  
42 skills through, but not limited to:

43 (1) vocabulary;

- 1 (2) connotation of words;
- 2 (3) connotations of words in context with adjoining or prior text;
- 3 (4) concepts from prior text;
- 4 (5) personal background knowledge;
- 5 (6) ability to interpret meaning through sentence structure
- 6 features;
- 7 (7) questioning;
- 8 (8) visualization; and
- 9 (9) discussion of text with peers.

10 (B) These practices must be mastered by teachers through  
11 high-quality training and addressed through well-designed and  
12 effectively executed assessment and instruction implemented with  
13 fidelity to research-based instructional practices presented in the state,  
14 district, and school reading plans. All teachers, administrators, and  
15 support staff must be trained adequately in reading comprehension in  
16 order to perform effectively their roles enabling each student to become  
17 proficient in content area reading and writing.

18 (C) During Fiscal Year 2014-2015, the Read to Succeed Office shall  
19 establish a set of essential competencies that describe what certified  
20 teachers at the early childhood, elementary, middle or secondary levels  
21 must know and be able to do so that all students can comprehend  
22 grade-level texts. These competencies, developed collaboratively with  
23 the faculty of higher education institutions and based on research and  
24 national standards, must then be incorporated into the coursework  
25 required by Section 59-155-180. The Read to Succeed Office, in  
26 collaboration with South Carolina Educational Television, shall provide  
27 professional development courses to ensure that educators have access  
28 to multiple avenues of receiving endorsements.

29  
30 Section 59-155-180. (A) As a student progresses through school,  
31 reading comprehension in content areas such as science, mathematics,  
32 social studies, English/language arts, career and technology education,  
33 and the arts is critical to the student's academic success. Therefore, to  
34 improve the academic success of all students in prekindergarten  
35 through grade twelve, the State shall strengthen its preservice and  
36 in-service teacher education programs.

37 (B)(1) Beginning with students entering a teacher education program  
38 in the fall semester of the 2016-2017 school year, all preservice teacher  
39 education programs including MAT degree programs must require all  
40 candidates seeking certification at the early childhood or elementary  
41 level to complete a twelve credit hour sequence in literacy that includes  
42 a school-based practicum and ensures that candidates grasp the theory,  
43 research, and practices that support and guide the teaching of reading.

1 The six components of the reading process that are comprehension, oral  
2 language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary  
3 will provide the focus for this sequence to ensure that all teacher  
4 candidates are skilled in diagnosing a child's reading problems and are  
5 capable of providing an effective intervention. All teacher preparation  
6 programs must be approved for licensure by the State Department of  
7 Education to ensure that all teacher education candidates possess the  
8 knowledge and skills to assist effectively all children in becoming  
9 proficient readers. The General Assembly is not mandating an increase  
10 in the number of credit hours required for teacher candidates, but is  
11 requiring that preservice teacher education programs prioritize their  
12 missions and resources so all early and elementary education teachers  
13 have the knowledge and skills to provide effective instruction in  
14 reading and numeracy to all students.

15 (2) Beginning with students entering a teacher education program  
16 in the fall semester of the 2016-2017 school year, all preservice teacher  
17 education programs, including MAT degree programs, must require all  
18 candidates seeking certification at the middle or secondary level to  
19 complete a six credit hour sequence in literacy that includes a course in  
20 the foundations of literacy and a course in content-area reading. All  
21 middle and secondary teacher preparation programs must be approved  
22 by the department to ensure that all teacher candidates possess the  
23 necessary knowledge and skills to assist effectively all adolescents in  
24 becoming proficient readers. The General Assembly is not mandating  
25 an increase in the number of semester hours required for teacher  
26 candidates but rather is requiring that preservice teacher education  
27 programs prioritize their mission and resources so all middle and  
28 secondary education teachers have the knowledge and skills to provide  
29 effective instruction in reading and numeracy to all students.

30 (C)(1) To ensure that practicing professionals possess the knowledge  
31 and skills necessary to assist all children and adolescents in becoming  
32 proficient readers, multiple pathways are needed for developing this  
33 capacity.

34 (2) A reading/literacy coach shall be employed in each  
35 elementary school. Reading coaches shall serve as job-embedded,  
36 stable resources for professional development throughout schools in  
37 order to generate improvement in reading and literacy instruction and  
38 student achievement. Reading coaches shall support and provide initial  
39 and ongoing professional development to teachers based on an analysis  
40 of student assessment and the provision of differentiated instruction and  
41 intensive intervention. The reading coach shall:

1 (a) model effective instructional strategies for teachers by  
2 working weekly with students in whole, and small groups, or  
3 individually;

4 (b) facilitate study groups;

5 (c) train teachers in data analysis and using data to  
6 differentiate instruction;

7 (d) coaching and mentoring colleagues;

8 (e) work with teachers to ensure that research-based reading  
9 programs are implemented with fidelity; and

10 (f) work with all teachers (including content area and elective  
11 areas) at the school they serve, and help prioritize time for those  
12 teachers, activities, and roles that will have the greatest impact on  
13 student achievement, namely coaching and mentoring in the  
14 classrooms;

15 (g) help lead and support reading leadership teams.

16 (3) The reading coach must not be assigned a regular classroom  
17 teaching assignment, must not perform administrative functions that  
18 deter from the flow of improving reading instruction and reading  
19 performance of students and must not devote a significant portion of his  
20 or her time to administering or coordinating assessments. By August 1,  
21 2014, the department must publish guidelines that define the minimum  
22 qualifications for a reading coach. Beginning in Fiscal Year  
23 2014-2015, reading/literacy coaches are required to earn the add-on  
24 certification within six years, except as exempted in items (4) and (5),  
25 by completing the necessary courses or professional development as  
26 required by the department for the add-on. During the six-year period,  
27 to increase the number of qualified reading coaches, the Read to  
28 Succeed Office shall identify and secure courses and professional  
29 development opportunities to assist educators in becoming reading  
30 coaches and in earning the literacy add-on endorsement. In addition,  
31 the Read to Succeed Office will establish a process through which a  
32 district may be permitted to use state appropriations for reading  
33 coaches to obtain in-school services from department-approved  
34 consultants or vendors, in the event that the school is not successful in  
35 identifying and directly employing a qualified candidate. Districts  
36 must provide to the Read to Succeed Office information on the name  
37 and qualifications of reading coaches funded by the state  
38 appropriations.

39 (4) Beginning in Fiscal Year 2015-2016, early childhood and  
40 elementary education certified classroom teachers, reading  
41 interventionists, and those special education teachers who provide  
42 learning disability and speech services to students who need to  
43 substantially improve their low reading and writing proficiency skills,

1 are required to earn the literacy teacher add-on endorsement within ten  
2 years of their most recent certification by taking at least two courses or  
3 six credit hours every five years, or the equivalent professional  
4 development hours as determined by the South Carolina Read to  
5 Succeed Office, consistent with existing recertification requirements.  
6 Inservice hours earned through professional development for the  
7 literacy teacher endorsement must be used for renewal of teaching  
8 certificates in all subject areas. The courses and professional  
9 development leading to the endorsement must be approved by the State  
10 Board of Education and must include foundations, assessment, content  
11 area reading and writing, instructional strategies, and an embedded or  
12 stand-alone practicum. Whenever possible these courses shall be  
13 offered at a professional development rate which is lower than the  
14 certified teacher rate. Early childhood and elementary education  
15 certified classroom teachers, reading specialists, and special education  
16 teachers who provide learning disability and speech services to students  
17 who need to improve substantially their reading and writing proficiency  
18 and who already possess their add-on Reading Teacher certification can  
19 take a content area reading course to obtain their Literacy Teacher  
20 add-on endorsement. Individuals who possess a literacy teacher add-on  
21 endorsement or who have earned a master's or doctorate degree in  
22 reading are exempt from this requirement. Individuals who have  
23 completed an intensive and prolonged professional development  
24 program like Reading Recovery, Project Read, the South Carolina  
25 Reading Initiative, or another similar program should submit their  
26 transcripts to the Office of Educator Licensure to determine if they  
27 have completed the coursework required for the literacy teacher add-on  
28 certificate.

29 (5) Beginning in Fiscal Year 2015-2016, middle and secondary  
30 licensed classroom teachers are required to take at least one course or  
31 three credit hours, or the equivalent professional development hours as  
32 determined by the South Carolina Read to Succeed Office, to improve  
33 reading instruction within five years of their most recent certification.  
34 The courses and professional development must be approved by the  
35 State Board of Education and include courses and professional  
36 development leading to the literacy teacher add-on endorsement.  
37 Coursework and professional development in reading must include a  
38 course in reading in the content areas. Whenever possible these  
39 courses will be offered at a professional development rate which is  
40 lower than the certified teacher rate. Individuals who possess a literacy  
41 teacher add-on endorsement or who have earned a master's or doctorate  
42 degree in reading are exempt from this requirement. Individuals who  
43 have completed an intensive, prolonged professional development

1 program like Reading Recovery, Project Read, the South Carolina  
2 Reading Initiative, or another similar program should submit their  
3 transcripts to the Office of Educator Licensure to determine if they  
4 have completed the coursework or professional development required  
5 for the literacy teacher add-on certificate.

6 (6) Beginning in Fiscal Year 2015-2016, principals and  
7 administrators who are responsible for reading instruction or  
8 intervention and school psychologists in a school district or school are  
9 required to take at least one course or three credit hours within five  
10 years of their most recent certification, or the equivalent professional  
11 development hours as determined by the South Carolina Read to  
12 Succeed Office. The course or professional development shall include  
13 information about reading process, instruction, assessment, or content  
14 area literacy and shall be approved by the Read to Succeed Office.

15 (7) The Read to Succeed Office shall publish by August 1, 2014,  
16 the guidelines and procedures used in evaluating all courses and  
17 professional development, including virtual courses and professional  
18 development, leading to the literacy teacher add-on endorsement.  
19 Annually by January first, the Read to Succeed Office shall publish the  
20 approved courses and approved professional development leading to  
21 the literacy teacher add-on endorsement.

22  
23 Section 59-155-190. Local school districts are encouraged to create  
24 family-school-community partnerships that focus on increasing the  
25 volume of reading, in school and at home, during the year and at home  
26 and in the community over the summer. Schools and districts should  
27 partner with county libraries, community organizations, local arts  
28 organizations, faith-based institutions, pediatric and family practice  
29 medical personnel, businesses, and other groups to provide volunteers,  
30 mentors, or tutors to assist with the provision of instructional supports,  
31 services, and books that enhance reading development and proficiency.  
32 A district shall include specific actions taken to accomplish the  
33 requirements of this section in its reading proficiency plan.

34  
35 Section 59-155-200. The Read to Succeed Office and each school  
36 district must plan for and act decisively to engage the families of  
37 students as full participating partners in promoting the reading and  
38 writing habits and skills development of their children. With support  
39 from the Read to Succeed Office, districts and individual schools shall  
40 provide families with information about how children progress as  
41 readers and writers and how they can support this progress. This family  
42 support must include providing time for their child to read, as well as  
43 reading to the child. To ensure that all families have access to a

1 considerable number and diverse range of books appealing to their  
2 children, schools should develop plans for enhancing home libraries  
3 and for accessing books from county libraries and school libraries and  
4 to inform families about their child’s ability to comprehend grade-level  
5 texts and how to interpret information about reading that is sent home.  
6 The districts and schools shall help families learn about reading and  
7 writing through open houses, South Carolina Educational Television,  
8 video and audio tapes, websites, and school-family events and  
9 collaborations that help link the home and school of the student. The  
10 information should enable family members to understand the reading  
11 and writing skills required for graduation and essential for success in a  
12 career. Each institution of higher learning may operate a year-round  
13 program similar to a summer reading camp to assist students not  
14 reading at grade level.

15  
16 Section 59-155-210. The board and department shall translate the  
17 statutory requirements for reading and writing specified in this chapter  
18 into standards, practices, and procedures for school districts, boards,  
19 and their employees and for other organizations as appropriate. In this  
20 effort, they shall solicit the advice of education stakeholders who have  
21 a deep understanding of reading, as well as school boards,  
22 administrators, and others who play key roles in facilitating support for  
23 and implementation of effective reading instruction.”

24  
25 **Child Early Reading Development and Education Program**

26  
27 SECTION 2. Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

28  
29 “CHAPTER 156

30  
31 Child Early Reading Development and Education Program

32  
33 Section 59-156-110. There is created the South Carolina Child  
34 Early Reading Development and Education Program which is a full  
35 day, four-year-old kindergarten program for at-risk children which  
36 must be made available to qualified children in all public school  
37 districts within the State. The program must focus on:

38 (1) a comprehensive, systemic approach to reading that follows the  
39 State Reading Proficiency Plan and the district’s comprehensive annual  
40 reading proficiency plan, both adopted pursuant to Chapter 155, Title  
41 59;

42 (2) successfully completing the readiness assessment administered  
43 pursuant to Section 59-155-150;

1 (3) the developmental and learning support that children must have  
2 in order to be ready for school;

3 (4) incorporating parenting education, including educating the  
4 parents as to methods that may assist the child pursuant to Section  
5 59-155-110, 59-155-130, and 59-155-140; and

6 (5) identifying community and civic organizations that can support  
7 early literacy efforts.

8  
9 Section 59-156-120. (A)(1) The South Carolina Child Early  
10 Reading Development and Education Program first must be made  
11 available to eligible children from the following eight trial districts in  
12 Abbeville County School District et al. vs. South Carolina: Allendale,  
13 Dillon 2, Florence 4, Hampton 2, Jasper, Lee, Marion 7, and  
14 Orangeburg 3.

15 (2) With any funds remaining after funding the eight trial  
16 districts, the program must be expanded to the remaining plaintiff  
17 school districts in Abbeville County School District et al. vs. South  
18 Carolina and then expanded to eligible children residing in school  
19 districts with a poverty index of ninety percent or greater. Priority must  
20 be given to implementing the program first in those of the plaintiff  
21 districts which participated in the pilot program during the 2006-2007  
22 school year, then in the plaintiff districts having proportionally the  
23 largest population of underserved at-risk four-year-old children.

24 (3) With any funds remaining after funding the school districts  
25 delineated in items (1) and (2), the program must be expanded  
26 statewide. The General Assembly, in the annual general appropriations  
27 bill, shall set forth the priority schedule, the funding, and the manner in  
28 which the program is expanded.

29 (B) Unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year for this program  
30 shall be carried forward and shall remain in the program. In rare  
31 instances, students with documented kindergarten readiness barriers,  
32 especially reading barriers, may be permitted to enroll for a second  
33 year, or at age five, at the discretion of the Department of Education for  
34 students being served by a public provider or at the discretion of the  
35 Office of South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness for students  
36 being served by a private provider.

37  
38 Section 59-156-130. (A) Each child residing in the program's  
39 district, who has attained the age of four years on or before September  
40 first of the school year and meets the at-risk criteria, is eligible for  
41 enrollment in the South Carolina Child Early Reading Development  
42 and Education Program for one year.



1 (B)(1) The parent of each eligible child may enroll the child in one  
2 of the following programs:

3 (a) a school-year four-year-old kindergarten program delivered  
4 by an approved public provider; or

5 (b) a school-year four-year-old kindergarten program delivered  
6 by an approved private provider.

7 (2) The parent enrolling a child must complete and submit an  
8 application to the approved provider of choice. The application must  
9 be submitted on forms and must be accompanied by a copy of the  
10 child's birth certificate, immunization documentation, and  
11 documentation of the student's eligibility as evidenced by family  
12 income documentation showing an annual family income of one  
13 hundred eighty-five percent or less of the federal poverty guidelines as  
14 promulgated annually by the United States Department of Health and  
15 Human Services or a statement of Medicaid eligibility.

16 (3) In submitting an application for enrollment, the parent agrees  
17 to comply with provider attendance policies during the school year.  
18 The attendance policy must state that the program consists of six and  
19 one-half hours of instructional time daily and operates for a period of  
20 not less than one hundred eighty days a year. Pursuant to program  
21 guidelines, noncompliance with attendance policies may result in  
22 removal from the program.

23 (C)(1) No parent is required to pay tuition or fees solely for the  
24 purpose of enrolling in or attending the program established under this  
25 chapter. Nothing in this chapter prohibits charging fees for childcare  
26 that may be provided outside the times of the instructional day provided  
27 in these programs.

28 (2) If by October first of the school year at least seventy-five  
29 percent of the total number of children eligible for the Child Early  
30 Reading Development and Education Program in a district or county  
31 are projected to be enrolled in that program, Head Start, or ABC Child  
32 Care Program as determined by the Department of Education and the  
33 Office of First Steps, Child Early Reading Development and Education  
34 Program providers may then enroll pay-lunch children who score at or  
35 below the twenty-fifth national percentile on two of the three DIAL-3  
36 subscales and may receive reimbursement for these children if funds  
37 are available.

38  
39 Section 59-156-140. (A) Public school providers participating in  
40 the South Carolina Child Early Reading Development and Education  
41 Program must submit an application to the Department of Education.  
42 Private providers participating in the South Carolina Child Early  
43 Reading Development and Education Program must submit an

1 application to the Office of First Steps. The application must be  
2 submitted on the forms prescribed, contain assurances that the provider  
3 meets all program criteria set forth in this section, and will comply with  
4 all reporting and assessment requirements.

5 (B) Providers shall:

6 (1) comply with all federal and state laws and constitutional  
7 provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race,  
8 creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for  
9 special education services;

10 (2) comply with all state and local health and safety laws and  
11 codes;

12 (3) comply with all state laws that apply regarding criminal  
13 background checks for employees and exclude from employment any  
14 individual not permitted by state law to work with children;

15 (4) be accountable for meeting the educational needs of the child  
16 and report at least quarterly to the parent or guardian on his progress;

17 (5) comply with all program, reporting, and assessment criteria  
18 required of providers;

19 (6) maintain individual student records for each child enrolled in  
20 the program, including, but not limited to, assessment data, health data,  
21 records of teacher observations, and records of parent or guardian and  
22 teacher conferences;

23 (7) designate whether extended day services will be offered to  
24 the parents and guardians of children participating in the program;

25 (8) be approved, registered, or licensed by the Department of  
26 Social Services; and

27 (9) comply with all state and federal laws and requirements  
28 specific to program providers.

29 (C) Providers may limit student enrollment based upon space  
30 available, but, if enrollment exceeds available space, providers shall  
31 enroll children with first priority given to children with the lowest  
32 scores on an approved prekindergarten readiness assessment. Private  
33 providers must not be required to expand their programs to  
34 accommodate all children desiring enrollment, but are encouraged to  
35 keep a waiting list for students they are unable to serve because of  
36 space limitations.

37  
38 Section 59-156-150. The Department of Education, the Read to  
39 Succeed Office, and the Office of First Steps to School Readiness shall:

40 (1) develop the provider application form;

41 (2) develop the child enrollment application form;

42 (3) develop a list of approved research-based preschool curricula  
43 for use in the program based upon the South Carolina Content

1 Standards, and provide training and technical assistance to support its  
2 effective use in approved classrooms serving children;

3 (4) develop a list of approved prekindergarten readiness  
4 assessments to be used in conjunction with the program, and provide  
5 assessments and technical assistance to support assessment  
6 administration in approved classrooms serving children;

7 (5) establish criteria for awarding new classroom equipping grants;

8 (6) establish criteria for the parenting education program providers  
9 must offer;

10 (7) establish a list of early childhood related fields that may be used  
11 in meeting the lead teacher qualifications;

12 (8) develop a list of data-collection needs to be used in  
13 implementation and evaluation of the program;

14 (9) identify teacher preparation program options and assist lead  
15 teachers in meeting teacher program requirements;

16 (10) establish criteria for granting student retention waivers; and

17 (11) establish criteria for granting classroom-size requirements  
18 waivers.

19  
20 Section 59-156-160. (A) Providers of the South Carolina Child  
21 Early Reading Development and Education Program shall offer a  
22 complete educational program in accordance with age-appropriate  
23 instructional practice and a research-based preschool curriculum  
24 aligned with school success. The program must focus on:

25 (1) a comprehensive, systemic approach to reading that follows  
26 the State Reading Proficiency Plan and the district's comprehensive  
27 annual reading proficiency plan, both adopted pursuant to Chapter 155,  
28 Title 59;

29 (2) successfully completing the readiness assessment  
30 administered pursuant to Section 59-155-150;

31 (3) the developmental and learning support that children must  
32 have in order to be ready for school;

33 (4) incorporating parenting education, including educating the  
34 parents as to methods that may assist the child pursuant to Section  
35 59-155-110, 59-155-130, and 59-55-140, including strengthening  
36 parent involvement in the learning process with an emphasis on  
37 interactive literacy; and

38 (5) identifying community and civic organizations that can  
39 support early literacy efforts.

40 (B) Providers shall offer high-quality, center-based programs,  
41 including, but not limited to, the following:

42 (1) employ a lead teacher with a two-year degree in early  
43 childhood education or related field or be granted a waiver of this

1 requirement from the Department of Education for public schools or  
2 from the Office of First Steps to School Readiness for private centers;

3 (2) employ an education assistant with preservice or in-service  
4 training in early childhood education;

5 (3) maintain classrooms with at least ten four-year-old children,  
6 but no more than twenty four-year-old children, with an adult to child  
7 ratio of 1:10. With classrooms having a minimum of ten children, the  
8 1:10 ratio must be a lead teacher to child ratio. Waivers of the  
9 minimum class size requirement may be granted by the South Carolina  
10 Department of Education for public providers or by the Office of First  
11 Steps to School Readiness for private providers on a case-by-case  
12 basis;

13 (4) offer a full day, center-based program with six and one-half  
14 hours of instruction daily for one hundred eighty school days;

15 (5) provide an approved research-based preschool curriculum  
16 that focuses on critical child development skills, especially early  
17 literacy, numeracy, and social and emotional development;

18 (6) engage parents' participation in their child's educational  
19 experience that shall include a minimum of two documented  
20 conferences for each year; and

21 (7) adhere to professional development requirements outlined in  
22 this chapter.

23  
24 Section 59-156-170. (A) Every classroom providing services to  
25 four-year-old children established pursuant to this chapter must have a  
26 qualified lead teacher and an education assistant as needed to maintain  
27 an adult to child ratio of 1:10.

28 (B)(1) In classrooms in private centers, the lead teacher must have at  
29 least a two-year degree in early childhood education or a related field  
30 and who is enrolled and is demonstrating progress toward the  
31 completion of a teacher education program within four years.

32 (2) In classrooms in public schools, the lead teacher must meet  
33 state requirements pertaining to certification.

34 (C) All education assistants in private centers and public schools  
35 must have the minimum of a high school diploma or the equivalent, and  
36 at least two years of experience working with children under five years  
37 old. The assistant must have completed the Early Childhood  
38 Development Credential (ECD) 101 or enroll and complete this course  
39 within twelve months of hire. Providers may request waivers to the  
40 ECD 101 requirement for those assistants who have demonstrated  
41 sufficient experience in teaching children five years old and younger.  
42 The providers must request this waiver in writing to First Steps or the

1 Department of Education, as applicable, and provide appropriate  
2 documentation as to the qualifications of the teaching assistant.

3

4 Section 59-156-180. The General Assembly recognizes there is a  
5 strong relationship between the skills and preparation of  
6 prekindergarten instructors and the educational outcomes of students.  
7 To improve these educational outcomes, participating providers shall  
8 require all personnel providing instruction and classroom support to  
9 students participating in the South Carolina Child Early Reading  
10 Development and Education Program to participate annually in a  
11 minimum of fifteen hours of professional development, including,  
12 teaching children from poverty. Professional development should  
13 provide instruction in strategies and techniques to address the  
14 age-appropriate progress of prekindergarten students in developing  
15 emergent literacy skills, including, but not limited to, oral  
16 communication, knowledge of print and letters, phonemic and  
17 phonological awareness, and vocabulary and comprehension  
18 development.

19

20 Section 59-156-190. Both public and private providers are eligible  
21 for transportation funds for the transportation of children to and from  
22 school. Nothing in this section prohibits providers from contracting  
23 with another entity to provide transportation services provided the  
24 entities adhere to the requirements of Section 56-5-195. Providers must  
25 not be responsible for transporting students attending programs outside  
26 the district lines. Parents choosing program providers located outside  
27 of their resident district shall be responsible for transportation. When  
28 transporting four-year-old child development students, providers shall  
29 make every effort to transport them with students of similar ages  
30 attending the same school. Of the amount appropriated for the  
31 program, not more than one hundred eighty-five dollars for each  
32 student may be retained by the Department of Education for the  
33 purposes of transporting four-year-old students. This amount annually  
34 must be increased by the same projected rate of inflation as determined  
35 by the Office of Research and Statistics of the State Budget and Control  
36 Board for the Education Finance Act.

37

38 Section 59-156-200. For all private providers approved to offer  
39 services pursuant to this chapter, the Office of First Steps to School  
40 Readiness shall:

- 41 (1) serve as the fiscal agent;
- 42 (2) verify student enrollment eligibility;

- 1 (3) recruit, review, and approve eligible providers. In considering  
2 approval of providers, consideration must be given to the provider's  
3 availability of permanent space for program service and whether  
4 temporary classroom space is necessary to provide services to any  
5 children;
- 6 (4) coordinate oversight, monitoring, technical assistance,  
7 coordination, and training for classroom providers;
- 8 (5) serve as a clearing house for information and best practices  
9 related to four-year-old kindergarten programs;
- 10 (6) receive, review, and approve new classroom grant applications  
11 and make recommendations for approval based on approved criteria;
- 12 (7) coordinate activities and promote collaboration with other  
13 private and public providers in developing and supporting four-year-old  
14 kindergarten programs;
- 15 (8) maintain a database of the children enrolled in the program; and  
16 (9) promulgate guidelines as necessary for the implementation of  
17 the program.

18  
19 Section 59-156-210. For all public school providers approved to  
20 offer services pursuant to this chapter, the Department of Education  
21 shall:

- 22 (1) serve as the fiscal agent;
- 23 (2) verify student enrollment eligibility;
- 24 (3) recruit, review, and approve eligible providers. In considering  
25 approval of providers, consideration must be given to the provider's  
26 availability of permanent space for program service and whether  
27 temporary classroom space is necessary to provide services to any  
28 children;
- 29 (4) coordinate oversight, monitoring, technical assistance,  
30 coordination, and training for classroom providers;
- 31 (5) serve as a clearing house for information and best practices  
32 related to four-year-old kindergarten programs;
- 33 (6) receive, review, and approve new classroom grant applications  
34 and make recommendations for approval based on approved criteria;
- 35 (7) coordinate activities and promote collaboration with other  
36 private and public providers in developing and supporting four-year-old  
37 kindergarten programs;
- 38 (8) maintain a database of the children enrolled in the program; and  
39 (9) promulgate guidelines as necessary for the implementation of  
40 the program.

41

1 Section 59-156-220. (A) Eligible students enrolling with private  
2 providers during the school year must be funded on a pro rata basis  
3 determined by the length of their enrollment.

4 (B) Private providers transporting eligible children to and from  
5 school must be eligible for a reimbursement of up to five hundred fifty  
6 dollars for each eligible child transported, funded on a pro rata basis  
7 determined by the length of the child's enrollment. Providers who are  
8 reimbursed are required to retain records as required by their fiscal  
9 agent.

10 (C) Providers enrolling between one and six eligible children must  
11 be eligible to receive up to one thousand dollars for each child in  
12 materials and equipment grant funding, with providers enrolling seven  
13 or more such children eligible for grants not to exceed ten thousand  
14 dollars.

15 (D) Providers receiving equipment grants are expected to participate  
16 in the program and provide high-quality, center-based programs for a  
17 minimum of three years. A provider who fails to participate for three  
18 years shall return a portion of the equipment allocation at a level  
19 determined by the Department of Education and the Office of First  
20 Steps to School Readiness. Funding to providers is contingent upon  
21 receipt of data as requested by the Department of Education and the  
22 Office of First Steps.

23 Section 59-156-230. The Department of Social Services shall:

24 (1) maintain a list of all approved public and private providers; and

25 (2) provide the Department of Education and the Office of First  
26 Steps information necessary to carry out the requirements of this  
27 chapter.  
28

29 Section 59-156-240. The Office of First Steps to School Readiness  
30 is responsible for the collection and maintenance of data on the  
31 state-funded programs provided through private providers.”  
32  
33

34 **Time effective, contingent on funding**

35  
36 SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor and  
37 is subject to the availability of state funding.  
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Ratified the 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*President of the Senate*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives*

Approved the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Governor*

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