

1 State of Arkansas  
2 95th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2025  
4

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 206

5 By: Senator Crowell  
6 By: Representative R. Burkes  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

8  
9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE RIGHT TO READ ACT; TO AMEND THE  
10 AMOUNT OF THE LITERACY TUTORING GRANT AWARDED UNDER  
11 THE RIGHT TO READ ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
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## Subtitle

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15 TO AMEND THE RIGHT TO READ ACT; AND TO  
16 AMEND THE AMOUNT OF THE LITERACY  
17 TUTORING GRANT AWARDED UNDER THE RIGHT  
18 TO READ ACT.  
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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-17-429(b) and (c), concerning  
23 requirements for certain individuals to have proficient knowledge and skills  
24 to teach reading and obtain certain professional development under the Right  
25 to Read Act, are amended to read as follows:

26 (b)(1)(A) ~~No later than 2023, the~~ The following shall have proficient  
27 knowledge and skills to teach reading consistent with the best practices of  
28 scientific reading instruction:

29 (i) A person who completes a state-approved educator  
30 preparation program; and

31 (ii) A person seeking teacher licensure by  
32 reciprocity or by adding an endorsement.

33 (B) ~~No later than 2023, a~~ A person who completes a state-  
34 approved educator preparation program other than a teacher of elementary  
35 education program shall demonstrate an awareness of the best practices of  
36 scientific reading instruction.



1           (2) ~~Beginning no later than the 2022-2023 school year, each~~ Each  
 2 state-approved educator preparation program shall post on its website  
 3 information describing its program to prepare teachers to teach reading using  
 4 scientific reading instruction aligned with but not limited to the content  
 5 measured by the stand-alone reading assessment adopted by the State Board of  
 6 Education under § 6-17-402.

7           (c)(1) ~~Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, a~~ Each public school  
 8 district and an open-enrollment public charter school shall provide the  
 9 following professional development in scientific reading instruction:

10                   (A) For teachers licensed at the elementary level in  
 11 kindergarten through grade six (K-6), teachers with a special education  
 12 license in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), and teachers licensed as  
 13 reading specialists in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), professional  
 14 development for one (1) of the prescribed pathways to obtaining a proficiency  
 15 credential in knowledge and practices in scientific reading instruction; and

16                   (B) For teachers licensed at a level other than the  
 17 elementary level in kindergarten through grade six (K-6), teachers with a  
 18 special education license in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), and  
 19 teachers licensed as reading specialists in kindergarten through grade twelve  
 20 (K-12), professional development for one (1) of the prescribed pathways to  
 21 obtaining an awareness credential in knowledge and practices in scientific  
 22 reading instruction.

23           (2) ~~Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, a~~ Each public  
 24 school or open-enrollment public charter school that does not provide the  
 25 professional development under subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall:

26                   (A) Be placed in probationary status; and

27                   (B) Provide notice to parents that the public school  
 28 district has not met the requirements of this section.

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 30           SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-17-429(d)(2), concerning the requirement  
 31 for teachers to demonstrate proficiency or awareness in the knowledge and  
 32 practices of scientific reading instruction under the Right to Read Act, is  
 33 amended to read as follows:

34           (2) All teachers ~~who begin employment in the 2023-2024 school~~  
 35 ~~year and each following school year~~ shall demonstrate proficiency or  
 36 awareness in knowledge and practices of scientific reading instruction as is

1 applicable to their teaching position by completing the prescribed  
 2 proficiency or awareness in knowledge and practices of scientific reading  
 3 instruction credential either:

4 (A) As a condition of licensure; or

5 (B) Within one (1) year if the teacher is:

6 (i) Already licensed; or

7 (ii) Employed under a waiver from licensure.

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 9 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-17-429(f)-(h), concerning resources,  
 10 curriculum programs, and professional development requirements under the  
 11 Right to Read Act, are amended to read as follows:

12 (f) ~~By the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, the~~ The division  
 13 shall identify and create an approved list of materials, resources, and  
 14 curriculum programs for public school districts and open-enrollment public  
 15 charter schools that are supported by the science of reading and based on  
 16 instruction that is explicit, systematic, cumulative, and diagnostic,  
 17 including without limitation:

18 (1) Dyslexia programs that are evidence-based and:

19 (A) Aligned to structured literacy; or

20 (B) Grounded in the Orton-Gillingham methodology;

21 (2) Evidence-based reading intervention programs; and

22 (3) Evidence-based reading programs that are grounded in the  
 23 science of reading.

24 (g)(1) ~~By the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, any~~ A public  
 25 school district and open-enrollment public charter school ~~purchasing~~ that  
 26 purchases a curriculum program shall choose a curriculum program from the  
 27 division's approved list of curriculum programs created under subsection (f)  
 28 of this section.

29 (2) A public school district or open-enrollment public charter  
 30 school that chooses to purchase a curriculum program that is not from the  
 31 division's approved list of curriculum programs shall submit the following to  
 32 the division for approval of the alternative curriculum program:

33 (A) A rationale for choosing the alternative curriculum  
 34 program; and

35 (B) Evidence-based research regarding the alternative  
 36 curriculum program.

1           (3) ~~By the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, any~~ A public  
 2 school district or open-enrollment public charter school that ~~is using~~ uses a  
 3 curriculum program that is not from the division's approved list created  
 4 under subsection (f) of this section shall notify all parents, legal  
 5 guardians, and persons standing in loco parentis to students in writing and  
 6 on the public school district's or open-enrollment public charter school's  
 7 website.

8           (h) ~~By the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, a~~ Each public  
 9 school district and an open-enrollment public charter school shall establish  
 10 a professional development program as required by § 6-15-2914(b)(1)(B) that  
 11 shall:

12           (1) Include without limitation instruction based on the science  
 13 of reading; and

14           (2) Be provided on an annual basis after the professional  
 15 development required under subdivision (c)(1) of this section is complete.

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 17           SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-17-429(i)(3)(B)(i), concerning  
 18 notification of a public school district's or an open-enrollment public  
 19 charter school's violation of requirements under the Right to Read Act, is  
 20 amended to read as follows:

21           (B)(i) ~~Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, if~~ If the  
 22 state board determines that a public school district or an open-enrollment  
 23 public charter school has violated subdivision (i)(3)(A) of this section, the  
 24 state board shall notify the public school district or the open-enrollment  
 25 public charter school of its violation.

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 27           SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-17-429(j)(2)(B), concerning the  
 28 establishment, administration, and amount of a literacy tutoring grant under  
 29 the Right to Read Act, is amended to read as follows:

30           (B) The literacy tutoring grant created under subdivision  
 31 (j)(2)(A) of this section shall be in the amount of ~~five hundred dollars~~  
 32 ~~(\$500)~~ one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) per eligible student per  
 33 year on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to eligible  
 34 students who are to be retained in grade three (3).

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 36           SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-17-429(j)(2)(C)(vi), concerning

1 responsibilities of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to  
2 administer and implement the literacy tutoring grant under the Right to Read  
3 Act, is amended to read as follows:

4 (vi) Remit payment for services provided, up to a  
5 maximum of ~~five hundred dollars (\$500)~~ one thousand five hundred dollars  
6 (\$1,500) per eligible student per school year, which may be used for any of  
7 the following purposes designed to improve reading or literacy skills:

8 (a) Online or in-person, high-dosage tutoring  
9 services from a list of state-approved providers whose employees are trained  
10 in the science of reading and hold:

11 (1) Valid teaching certificates in  
12 either elementary education or reading; or

13 (2) Baccalaureate or graduate degrees in  
14 education, English, or another subject area indicative of expertise in  
15 reading and literacy; or

16 (b) Evidence-based digital literacy  
17 applications or software programs from a list of state-approved programs that  
18 are in alignment with the science of reading;

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