

Senate File 2195 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 2195
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 3069)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to reading instruction, including modifying
2 provisions related to the language arts instruction provided
3 to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three and
4 the preparation in reading theory provided by practitioner
5 preparation programs, and including applicability
6 provisions.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 256.11, subsections 2 and 3, Code 2024,
2 are amended to read as follows:

3 2. a. The kindergarten program shall include experiences
4 designed to develop healthy emotional and social habits
5 and growth in the language arts, skills related to encoding
6 and decoding words, and communication skills, as well as a
7 capacity for the completion of individual tasks, and protect
8 and increase physical well-being with attention given to
9 experiences relating to the development of life skills and,
10 subject to [section 279.80](#), age-appropriate and research-based
11 human growth and development. A kindergarten teacher shall be
12 licensed to teach in kindergarten. An accredited nonpublic
13 school must meet the requirements of [this subsection](#) only if
14 the nonpublic school offers a kindergarten program; provided,
15 however, that [section 279.80](#) shall not apply to a nonpublic
16 school.

17 b. Commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2026,
18 the experiences designed to develop growth in the language arts
19 shall include evidence-based early reading instruction that
20 follows a scope and sequence and that is direct, systematic,
21 explicit, responsive, and that consists of all of the
22 following:

23 (1) Phonemic awareness and phonological awareness.

24 (2) Phonics, including decoding and encoding and
25 instruction in writing.

26 (3) Fluency, including oral language development.

27 (4) Vocabulary.

28 (5) Comprehension, including building background knowledge.

29 c. Commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2026,
30 the experiences designed to develop growth in the skills
31 related to encoding and decoding words shall not include
32 instruction related to any strategies or approaches that are
33 designed to teach students to read words based on meaning drawn
34 from context, structure and syntax, visual cues and pictures,
35 or rote memorization, including the instruction model commonly

1 known as the three-cueing system.

2 d. For purposes of this subsection, "evidence-based" means
3 instruction based on studies that use rigorous methods to
4 control common threats to internal and external validity,
5 measures found to be reliable and valid indicators of literacy,
6 and research findings or positive evaluation that such
7 activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve
8 student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and includes
9 ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity,
10 strategy, or intervention.

11 3. a. The following areas shall be taught in grades
12 one through six: English-language arts, social studies,
13 mathematics, science, health, physical education, traffic
14 safety, music, visual art, and, subject to [section 279.80](#),
15 age-appropriate and research-based human growth and
16 development. Computer science instruction incorporating
17 the standards established under section 256.7, subsection
18 26, paragraph "a", subparagraph (4), shall be offered in
19 at least one grade level commencing with the school year
20 beginning July 1, 2023. The health curriculum shall include
21 the characteristics of communicable diseases. The state board
22 as part of accreditation standards shall adopt curriculum
23 definitions for implementing the elementary program.

24 b. Commencing with the school year beginning July 1,
25 2026, the English-language arts curriculum taught in grades
26 one through three shall include evidence-based early reading
27 instruction that follows a scope and sequence and that is
28 direct, systematic, explicit, responsive, and that consists of
29 all of the following:

- 30 (1) Phonemic awareness and phonological awareness.
31 (2) Phonics, including decoding and encoding and
32 instruction in writing.
33 (3) Fluency, including oral language development.
34 (4) Vocabulary.
35 (5) Comprehension, including building background knowledge.

1 c. Commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2026,
2 the English-language arts curriculum focused on encoding and
3 decoding words in grades one through three shall not include
4 instruction related to any strategies or approaches that are
5 designed to teach students to read words based on meaning drawn
6 from context, structure and syntax, visual cues and pictures,
7 or rote memorization, including the instruction model commonly
8 known as the three-cueing system.

9 d. For purposes of this subsection, "evidence-based" means
10 instruction based on studies that use rigorous methods to
11 control common threats to internal and external validity,
12 measures found to be reliable and valid indicators of literacy,
13 and research findings or positive evaluation that such
14 activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve
15 student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and includes
16 ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity,
17 strategy, or intervention.

18 Sec. 2. Section 256.16, subsection 1, paragraph a, Code
19 2024, is amended to read as follows:

20 a. (1) Include preparation in reading theory, knowledge,
21 strategies, and approaches; and for integrating literacy
22 instruction into content areas.

23 (2) Such preparation shall address all students, including
24 but not limited to ~~students~~ all of the following:

25 (a) ~~Students~~ with disabilities; ~~students.~~

26 (b) ~~Students~~ who are at risk of academic failure; ~~students.~~

27 (c) ~~Students~~ who have been identified as gifted and talented
28 or English learners; ~~and students.~~

29 (d) ~~Students~~ with dyslexia, whether or not such students
30 have been identified as children requiring special education
31 under [chapter 256B](#).

32 (3) Such preparation shall include evidence-based early
33 reading instruction and practical application that follow a
34 scope and sequence that are direct, systematic, explicit,
35 responsive, and that consist of all of the following:

1 (a) Phonemic awareness and phonological awareness.

2 (b) Phonics, including decoding and encoding and
3 instruction in writing.

4 (c) Fluency, including oral language development.

5 (d) Vocabulary.

6 (e) Comprehension, including building background knowledge.

7 (4) Such preparation shall not include instruction or
8 practical application that is designed to teach students to
9 encode and decode words based on meaning drawn from context,
10 structure and syntax, visual cues and pictures, or rote
11 memorization, including the instruction model commonly known as
12 the three-cueing system.

13 (5) For purposes of this paragraph, "evidence-based" means
14 instruction based on studies that use rigorous methods to
15 control common threats to internal and external validity,
16 measures found to be reliable and valid indicators of literacy,
17 and research findings or positive evaluation that such
18 activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve
19 student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and includes
20 ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity,
21 strategy, or intervention.

22 Sec. 3. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraph g, Code
23 2024, is amended to read as follows:

24 g. Be subject to and comply with the requirements of section
25 256.7, subsection 21, and the educational standards of section
26 256.11, unless specifically waived by the state board during
27 the application process; provided, however, that the state
28 board shall not waive the educational standards related to
29 language arts instruction in kindergarten through grade three
30 established in section 256.11, subsections 2 and 3.

31 Sec. 4. APPLICABILITY. The following applies to students
32 admitted to an approved practitioner preparation program on or
33 after July 1, 2025:

34 The section of this Act amending section 256.16, subsection
35 1, paragraph "a".

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

EXPLANATION

The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

This bill relates to reading instruction, including modifying provisions related to the language arts instruction provided to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three and the preparation in reading theory provided by practitioner preparation programs.

The bill requires the kindergarten program to include experiences designed to develop growth in skills related to encoding and decoding words. The bill modifies provisions related to the language arts instruction provided to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three in school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, and charter schools. The bill provides that, commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2026, such instruction shall include evidence-based early reading instruction that follows a scope and sequence and that is direct, systematic, explicit, responsive, and that consists of phonemic and phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Additionally, the bill prohibits such instruction from incorporating any strategies or approaches that are designed to teach students to read words based on meaning drawn from context, structure and syntax, visual cues and pictures, or rote memorization, including the instruction model commonly known as the three-cueing system.

The bill modifies provisions related to preparation in reading theory, knowledge, strategies, and approaches provided in practitioner preparation programs. The bill requires that such preparation include evidence-based early reading instruction and practical application that follow a scope and sequence that are direct, systematic, explicit, responsive, and that also consist of phonemic and phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The bill prohibits such preparation from including instruction or

1 practical application that is designed to teach students
2 to encode and decode words based on meaning drawn from
3 context, structure and syntax, visual cues and pictures, or
4 rote memorization, including the instruction model commonly
5 known as the three-cueing system. The bill provides that
6 these provisions apply to students admitted to an approved
7 practitioner preparation program on or after July 1, 2025.

8 The bill defines "evidence-based" to mean instruction
9 based on studies that use rigorous methods to control common
10 threats to internal and external validity, measures found to
11 be reliable and valid indicators of literacy, and research
12 findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy,
13 or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other
14 relevant outcomes and includes ongoing efforts to examine the
15 effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.