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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - RHODE ISLAND CERTIFICATIONS STANDARDS BOARD
[SEE TITLE 16 CHAPTER 97 - THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT]

Introduced By: Representatives O'Brien, Amore, Corvese, McEntee, and Morin

Date Introduced: March 21, 2019

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-11.4 of the General Laws entitled "Rhode Island Certification
2 Standards Board [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby
3 amended by adding thereto the following section:

4 **16-11.4-6. Right to read act.**

5 (a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Right to Read Act".

6 (b) No later than 2025, the following shall have proficient knowledge and skills to teach
7 reading consistent with the best practices of scientific reading instruction:

8 (1) A person who completes a state-approved educator preparation program; and

9 (2) A person seeking teacher licensure by reciprocity or by adding an endorsement.

10 (b) No later than 2025, a person who completes a state-approved educator preparation
11 program other than a teacher of elementary education program shall demonstrate an awareness of
12 the best practices of scientific reading instruction.

13 (c) Beginning no later than the 2024-2025 school year, each state-approved educator
14 preparation program shall post on its website information describing its program to prepare
15 teachers to teach reading using scientific reading instruction aligned with, but not limited to, the
16 content measured by the stand-alone reading assessment adopted by the Rhode Island board of
17 education act.

18 (d) Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, a public school district and an open-

1 enrollment public charter school shall provide the following professional development in
2 scientific reading instruction:

3 (1) For teachers licensed at the elementary level, professional development for one (1) of
4 the prescribed pathways to obtaining a proficiency credential in knowledge and practices in
5 scientific reading instruction; and

6 (2) For teachers licensed at a level other than the elementary level, professional
7 development for one of the prescribed pathways to obtaining an awareness credential in
8 knowledge and practices in scientific reading instruction.

9 (e) Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, a public school that does not provide the
10 professional development under subsection (c)(1) of this section shall:

11 (1) Be placed in probationary status; and

12 (2) Provide notice to parents that the public school district has not met the requirements
13 of this section.

14 (f) By the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year:

15 (1) All teachers employed in a teaching position that requires an elementary education
16 (K-6) license or special education (K-12) license shall demonstrate proficiency in knowledge and
17 practices of scientific reading instruction; and

18 (2) All other teachers shall demonstrate awareness in knowledge and practices of
19 scientific reading instruction.

20 (g) All teachers who begin employment in the 2023-2024 school year and each school
21 year thereafter shall demonstrate proficiency or awareness in knowledge and practices in
22 scientific reading instruction as is applicable to their teaching position by completing the
23 prescribed proficiency or awareness in knowledge and practices of the scientific reading
24 instruction credential either:

25 (1) As a condition of licensure; or

26 (2) Within one year if the teacher is:

27 (i) Already licensed; or

28 (ii) Employed under a waiver from licensure.

29 (h) A provider of a state-approved educator preparation program shall include in its
30 annual report to the department of education a description of the provider's program to prepare
31 educators to teach reading using scientific reading instruction.

32 (i) A public school district that employs an educator in violation of this section or that
33 does not provide the professional development as required under this section shall be in violation
34 of the standards for accreditation of the Rhode Island board of education act and school districts

1 and may be placed in probationary status by the department.

2 (j) A public school district placed in probationary status under subsection (f)(1)(A) of this
3 section, shall send written notification to the parents of the students in the public school district of
4 the reason for being placed in probationary status.

5 (k) A provider of a state-approved educator preparation program that does not comply
6 with the requirements of this section may be subject to penalties up to and including having the
7 provider's approval status revoked.

8 (l) The department of elementary and secondary education is vested with the authority to
9 and shall enforce this section.

10 (m) The department of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate rules to
11 implement this section.

12 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on September 1, 2020.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - RHODE ISLAND CERTIFICATIONS STANDARDS BOARD
[SEE TITLE 16 CHAPTER 97 - THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT]

1 This Act would create the Right to Read Act to require licensed teachers at the
2 elementary level to be proficient in scientific reading instruction and further require all other
3 licensed teachers to have a cursory knowledge of scientific reading instruction.

4 This act would take effect on September 1, 2020.

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