

1 AN ACT concerning schools.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing
5 Section 2-3.51 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/2-3.51) (from Ch. 122, par. 2-3.51)

7 Sec. 2-3.51. Reading Improvement Block Grant Program.
8 To improve the reading and study skills of children from
9 kindergarten through sixth grade in school districts. The
10 State Board of Education is authorized to administer a
11 Reading Improvement Block Grant Program. As used in this
12 Section:

13 "School district" includes ~~shall include~~ those schools
14 designated as "laboratory schools".

15 "Scientifically based reading research" means the
16 application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures
17 to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development,
18 reading instruction, and reading difficulties. The term
19 includes research that employs systematic, empirical methods
20 that draw on observation or experiment, involves rigorous
21 data analysis that is adequate to test the stated hypotheses
22 and to justify the general conclusions drawn, relies on
23 measurements or observational methods that provide valid data
24 across evaluators and observers and across multiple
25 measurements and observations, and has been accepted by
26 peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent
27 experts through a comparably rigorous, objective and
28 scientific review.

29 (a) Funds for the Reading Improvement Block Grant
30 Program shall be distributed to school districts on the
31 following basis: 70% of monies shall be awarded on the prior

1 year's best 3 months average daily attendance and 30% shall
2 be distributed on the number of economically disadvantaged
3 (E.C.I.A. Chapter I) pupils in the district, provided that
4 the State Board may distribute an amount not to exceed 2% of
5 the monies appropriated for the Reading Improvement Block
6 Grant Program for the purpose of providing teacher training
7 and re-training in the teaching of reading. Program funds
8 shall be distributed to school districts in 2 semi-annual
9 installments, one payment on or before October 30, and one
10 payment prior to April 30, of each year. The State Board
11 shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the
12 implementation of this program. Programs provided with grant
13 funds shall not replace quality classroom reading
14 instruction, but shall instead supplement such instruction.

15 (a-5) Reading Improvement Block Grant Program funds
16 shall be used by school districts in the following manner:

17 (1) to hire reading specialists, reading teachers,
18 and reading aides in order to provide early reading
19 intervention in kindergarten through grade 2 and programs
20 of continued reading support for students in grades 3
21 through 6 to reduce class size in grades kindergarten
22 through 3 for the purpose of providing more intensified
23 reading instruction;

24 (2) in kindergarten through grade 2, to establish
25 short-term tutorial early reading intervention programs
26 for children who are at risk of failing to learn to read;
27 these programs shall (i) focus on scientifically based
28 research and best practices with proven long-term
29 results, (ii) identify students in need of help no later
30 than the middle of first grade, (iii) provide ongoing
31 training for teachers in the program, (iv) focus
32 instruction on strengthening a student's phonemic
33 awareness, phonics, fluency, and comprehension skills,
34 (v) provide a means to document and evaluate student

1 growth, and (vi) provide properly trained staff to extend
 2 the time devoted in kindergarten through third grade to
 3 intensified reading instruction, including phonie
 4 instruction, either by lengthening the school day or
 5 lengthening the school year;

6 (3) to create transitional grades for students
 7 needing intensified reading instruction either between
 8 the first and second grades or between the second and
 9 third grades in accordance with the authority granted
 10 school districts in Section 10-21.2 of this Code;

11 (3) (4) to continue direct reading instruction for
 12 grades 3 4 through 6;

13 (4) (5) in grades 3 through 6, to establish
 14 programs of support for students who demonstrate a need
 15 for continued assistance in learning to read and in
 16 maintaining reading achievement; these programs shall (i)
 17 focus on scientifically based research and best practices
 18 with proven long-term results, (ii) provide ongoing
 19 training for teachers and other staff members in the
 20 program, (iii) focus instruction on strengthening a
 21 student's phonics, fluency, and comprehension skills in
 22 grades 3 through 6, (iv) provide a means to evaluate and
 23 document student growth, and (v) provide properly trained
 24 staff to establish reading academies in schools that
 25 focus on the mechanics of reading, the application of
 26 reading skills, and the reading of rich literature and
 27 that reflect a commitment of time and resources to these
 28 functions;

29 (5) (6) in grades K through 6, to provide classroom
 30 reading materials for students; each district may
 31 allocate up to 25% of the funds for this purpose to
 32 conduct intense vocabulary, spelling, and related writing
 33 enrichment programs that promote better understanding of
 34 language and words; and

1 (6) (7) to provide a long-term professional
2 development program for classroom teachers,
3 administrators, and other appropriate staff; the program
4 shall (i) focus on scientifically based research and best
5 practices with proven long-term results, (ii) provide a
6 means to evaluate student progress in reading as a result
7 of the training, (iii) and be provided by approved staff
8 development providers. ~~to-increase--the--availability--of~~
9 ~~reading-specialists-and-teacher-aides-for-reading;-and~~
10 (8) ~~--to--train--and-retrain-teachers-of-kindergarten~~
11 ~~through-third-grade-to-be-proficient-in-the--teaching--of~~
12 ~~reading,-including-phonie-instruction-~~

13 (a-10) Reading Improvement Block Grant Program funds
14 shall be made available to each eligible school district
15 submitting an approved application developed by the State
16 Board beginning with the 1998-99 school year. Applications
17 shall include a proposed assessment method or methods for
18 measuring the reading growth of students who receive direct
19 instruction as a result of the funding and the impact of
20 staff development activities on student growth in reading
21 ~~student-reading-skills~~. Such methods may include the reading
22 portion of the Illinois Standards Achievement Testing Goals
23 ~~and-Assessment~~ Program. At the end of each school year the
24 district shall report performance of progress assessment
25 results to the State Board. Districts not demonstrating
26 performance progress using an approved assessment method
27 shall not be eligible for funding in the third or subsequent
28 years until such progress is established.

29 (a-15) The State Superintendent of Education, in
30 cooperation with the school districts participating in the
31 program, shall annually report to the leadership of the
32 General Assembly on the results of the Reading Improvement
33 Block Grant Program and the progress being made on improving
34 the reading skills of students in kindergarten through the

1 sixth grade.

2 (b) (Blank).

3 (c) (Blank).

4 (d) Grants under the Reading Improvement Program shall
5 be awarded provided there is an appropriation for the
6 program, and funding levels for each district shall be
7 prorated according to the amount of the appropriation.

8 (e) (Blank).

9 (f) (Blank).

10 (Source: P.A. 90-548, eff. 1-1-98; 90-640, eff. 1-1-99.)

11 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect on
12 July 1, 2001.