
Wisconsin Legislative Council

AMENDMENT MEMO



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2021 Senate Bill 454

Senate Amendment 3

2021 SENATE BILL 454

Senate Bill 454 replaces an existing requirement for school districts and independent charter schools to administer an annual reading readiness assessment in four year-old kindergarten (4K) to second grade with a three-tier program of reading assessments. Under the bill, school districts and independent charter schools must administer a fundamental skills screening assessment twice in 4K, and to administer a universal screening assessment three times in each grade from 5K to second. The bill further requires that school districts and charter schools provide interventions to students identified as “at risk” because they score below the 25th percentile on an assessment, including the preparation of a personal reading plan for each student.

Districts and independent charter schools must also administer additional reading assessments, known as “Level 1” and “Level 2” screening assessments, to students if certain conditions exist. A district or school must administer a Level 1 or Level 2 screening assessment to a student if: (1) the student scored below the 25th percentile on the previous assessment and fails to make adequate progress after 12 weeks of interventions or intensive interventions; or (2) the student’s parent or teacher suspects the pupil has dyslexia and submits a request for a subsequent assessment.

The bill also requires school districts and independent charter schools to report assessment results and other information to parents, and requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to collect and report assessment and intervention information to the Legislature. Additionally, the bill requires DPI to prepare a list of approved fundamental skills, universal, Level 1, and Level 2 screening assessments, and the list must include names of particular assessments specifically enumerated in the bill.

Finally, the bill requires DPI to pay a school board or charter school the per pupil cost of each reading readiness screening assessment required under the bill from an existing appropriation.

SENATE AMENDMENT 3

Senate Amendment 3 consolidates and changes certain assessment and intervention requirements under the bill. The amendment replaces required “Level 1” and “Level 2” screening assessments with a required “diagnostic assessment,” defined as a tool that: (1) evaluates a student’s skills in phonemic awareness, decoding skills, alphabet knowledge, letter sound knowledge, rapid naming, phonological awareness, word recognition, spelling, vocabulary, listening comprehension, and oral reading fluency and reading comprehension when developmentally appropriate; and (2) allows a parent to complete a family history survey to provide additional information about learning difficulties in the student’s family. The amendment also eliminates the distinction between required “interventions” and “intensive interventions” and applies the more intensive requirements for all students identified as “at risk.”

Additionally, the amendment changes the timelines for administering assessments, providing interventions, and preparing personal reading plans for students. Under the bill, a school must administer a Level 1 screening assessment within 20 days after a universal screening assessment

indicates the student is at risk and the student shows an inadequate rate of progress after 12 weeks of intervention, or after a teacher or parent requests the assessment. Similarly, the bill requires a school to administer a Level 2 screening assessment within 20 days after a Level 1 assessment indicates the student is at risk and the student shows an inadequate rate of progress after 12 weeks of intensive intervention, or after a teacher or parent requests the assessment.

The amendment replaces these timelines with a requirement to administer a diagnostic assessment as follows: (1) by the second Friday of November after the first universal assessment of the school year identifies a student as “at risk;” (2) within 10 days after the second universal screening assessment identifies a student as “at risk;” or (3) within 20 days after a teacher or parent submits a request. Further, the amendment requires that parental notification be provided in a parent’s native language, and that notice of a student’s progress be given after the student receives 10 weeks of interventions, rather than 12 weeks.

Next, the amendment creates a timeline by which a school must create a personal reading plan for a student identified as “at risk” on an assessment. The school must prepare a plan by the second Friday of November for a student identified as “at-risk” based on a universal assessment administered early in the school year or diagnostic assessment given before that date. For a student identified as “at-risk” based on a universal assessment given in the middle of the school year or a subsequent diagnostic assessment, the school must prepare a plan within 10 days after the applicable assessment.

Finally, the amendment changes the required DPI list of approved assessments. Instead of enumerating names of specific assessments and requiring DPI to include them on its approved list, the amendment provides criteria that a universal screening or diagnostic assessment must meet before DPI may include it on the list.

BILL HISTORY

Senator Bernier introduced Senate Amendment 3 on October 19, 2021. On October 21, 2021, the Senate Committee on Education voted to recommend adoption of the amendment on a vote of Ayes, 7; Noes, 0; and voted to recommend passage of the bill, as amended, on a vote of Ayes, 4; Noes, 3.

EH:ksm