AN ACT relating to reading diagnostic and intervention grants and declaring and emergency.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. KRS 158.792 is amended to read as follows:

(1) As used in this section and KRS 164.0207, unless the context requires otherwise:

(a) "Comprehensive reading program" means a program that emphasizes the essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and connections between writing and reading acquisition and motivation to read;

(b) "Reading diagnostic assessment" means an assessment that identifies a struggling reader and measures the reader's skills against established performance levels in the essential components of reading. The purpose is to screen for areas that require intervention in order for the student to learn to read proficiently;

(c) "Reading intervention program" means short-term intensive instruction in the essential skills necessary to read proficiently that is provided to a student by a highly trained teacher. This instruction may be conducted one-on-one or in small groups; shall be research-based, reliable, and replicable; and shall be based on the ongoing assessment of individual student needs; and

(d) "Reliable, replicable research" means objective, valid, scientific studies that:

1. Include rigorously defined samples of subjects that are sufficiently large and representative to support the general conclusions drawn;

2. Rely on measurements that meet established standards of reliability and validity;

3. Test competing theories, where multiple theories exist;

4. Are subjected to peer review before their results are published; and

5. Discover effective strategies for improving reading skills.
The reading diagnostic and intervention fund is created to help teachers and library media specialists improve the reading skills of struggling readers in the primary program **and to assist schools in employing reading interventionists who specialize in providing those services**. The Department of Education, upon the recommendation of the Reading Diagnostic and Intervention Grant Steering Committee, shall provide renewable, two (2) year grants to schools to support teachers **and reading interventionists** in the implementation of reliable, replicable research-based reading intervention programs that use a balance of diagnostic tools and instructional strategies that emphasize phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and connections between writing and reading acquisition and motivation to read to address the diverse learning needs of those students reading at low levels. Any moneys in the fund at the close of the fiscal year shall not lapse but shall be carried forward to be used for the purposes specified in this section.

(a) The Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate administrative regulations, based on recommendations from the secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, the Reading Diagnostic and Intervention Grant Steering Committee established in KRS 158.794, and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development established in KRS 164.0207 to:

1. Identify eligible grant applicants, taking into consideration how the grant program described in this section will relate to other grant programs;
2. Specify the criteria for acceptable diagnostic assessments and intervention programs;
3. Specify the criteria for acceptable ongoing assessment of each child to determine his or her reading progress;
4. Establish the minimum evaluation process for an annual review of each
grant recipient's program and progress;

5. Identify the annual data that must be provided from grant recipients;

6. Define the application review and approval process;

7. Establish matching requirements deemed necessary;

8. Define the professional development and continuing education requirements for teachers, library media specialists, administrators, and staff of grant recipients;

9. Establish the conditions for renewal of a two (2) year grant; and

10. Specify other conditions necessary to implement the purposes of this section.

(b) The board shall require that a grant applicant provide assurances that the following principles will be met if the applicant's request for funding is approved:

1. A research-based comprehensive schoolwide reading program will be available;

2. Intervention services will supplement, not replace, regular classroom instruction;

3. Intervention services will be provided to struggling primary program readers within the school based upon ongoing assessment of their needs; and

4. A system for informing parents of struggling readers of the available family literacy services within the district will be established.

(c) The board shall not restrict how a grant applicant shall utilize grant funds as it relates to the applicant's use of funds for professional development, resources, tools, employment of reading interventionists, and other expenses authorized by this section. The grant applicant shall have discretion in allocating grant funds for purposes authorized by this section; however, the
board may consider the effectiveness of those uses in reviewing the
application.

(4) In order to qualify for funding, the school council, or if none exists, the principal or
the superintendent of schools, shall allocate matching funds required by grant
recipients under subsection (3) of this section. Funding for professional
development allocated to the school council under KRS 160.345 and for continuing
education under KRS 158.070 may be used as part of the school's match.

(5) The Department of Education shall make available to schools:

(a) Information concerning successful, research-based comprehensive reading
programs, diagnostic tools for pre- and post-assessment, and intervention
programs, from the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development created
under KRS 164.0207;

(b) Strategies for successfully implementing early reading programs, including
professional development support and the identification of funding sources;

(c) A list of professional development providers offering teacher training related
to reading that emphasizes the essential components for successful reading:
phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and
connections between writing and reading acquisition and motivation to read.

(6) The Department of Education shall submit a report to the Interim Joint Committee
on Education no later than September 1 of each year outlining the use of grant
funds. The report shall also include comparisons of the overall costs and
effectiveness of intervention programs. The annual report for an odd-numbered year
shall include an estimate of the cost to expand the reading diagnostic and
intervention grant program.

➢ Section 2. Notwithstanding any regulation or rule adopted by the Kentucky
Department of Education, any grant application submitted previously to the department
Section 3. Whereas reading diagnostic and intervention grants are critical to helping Kentucky students achieve literacy and the grant approval process has already begun for the next two years, an emergency is declared to exist, and this Act takes effect upon its passage and approval by the Governor or upon its otherwise becoming a law.