

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas  
94th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2023

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 412

By: Senator Irvin

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE READING ENRICHMENT AND ACADEMIC DELIVERABLES ("READ") PROGRAM ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

TO CREATE THE READING ENRICHMENT AND ACADEMIC DELIVERABLES ("READ") PROGRAM ACT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 10, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-10-137. Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables ("READ") Program Act.

(a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables ("READ") Program Act".

(b) There is created the Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables ("READ") Program.

(c) A public school student is eligible for the program if the public school student:

(1) Is enrolled in prekindergarten in the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program under § 6-45-101 et seq., and does not score satisfactorily on a literacy component of the assessment required under § 6-45-110;

(2) Is in kindergarten through grade three (K-3) and does not meet the relevant grade-level reading standard as determined by a literacy



screeener administered by the public school in which the student is enrolled;

(3) Is in grades four (4) or five (5) and receives a score on the reading portion of the most recent statewide student assessment that indicates the public school student is reading below his or her grade level;  
or

(4) Has an eligibility status that is unknown according to measures provided under subdivision (c)(1)-(3) of this section due to a lack of availability of literacy screener or statewide student assessment results for the public school student, but has been recommended by one (1) or more teachers in whose class he or she is assigned due to his or her demonstrated reading difficulties.

(d)(1) The Department of Education shall administer and provide for the implementation of the program created by this section.

(2) In administering the program, the department shall:

(A)(i) Require public school districts to establish a schedule for eligible students to receive books from the public schools within the public school district.

(ii) The schedule required under subdivision (d)(2)(A)(i) of this section may constitute the distribution of three (3) books one (1) time every three (3) months;

(B) Publish on its website information regarding the program;

(C) Develop online support materials that may assist parents, legal guardians, and persons standing in loco parentis to children in developing their child's literacy skills;

(D)(i) Develop a list of high-quality, age-appropriate books and other reading materials that encompass diverse subjects and genres for each grade level that shall be mailed to students eligible to participate in the program.

(ii) The department shall exclude any books that are harmful to minors as defined by § 5-68-501;

(E) Support the local implementation of the program by providing marketing materials to public schools and public school districts to assist with public awareness campaigns; and

(F) Annually report by October 13 on its website the number of students participating in the program from each public school or

public school district;

(e) An otherwise eligible student shall be excluded from participating in the program upon the written request of his or her parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis to the eligible student.

(f)(1) The provisions of this section shall be implemented only upon the availability of funds.

(2) The department may make adjustments to the program as necessary based on the availability of funds.