## WHAT'S IN THE 'RIGHT TO READ' LEGISLATION?



In June 2021, the Connecticut legislature passed the "Right to Read" legislation in Sections 394-404 of the Budget Implementer Bill, Public Act No. 21-2. The legislation systematizes a statewide reading response—based on the Science of Reading—by requiring the state to oversee all state and local efforts related to literacy, including setting reading curriculum requirements for districts, providing professional development, hiring external literacy coaches, and coordinating with teacher preparation programs. A newly established Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success (The Center) will be the hub of that work.

But now that the legislation has passed, what happens next?

This document outlines some of the state's new requirements, followed by a timeline of key action steps.

The legislation will require the state to:

- Have all districts implement early literacy reading curricula that are evidencebased and approved by The Center.
- Implement a coordinated state-wide reading plan for K-3.
- Research and develop a birth-to-12 reading success strategy, in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood.
- Support local boards of education and district leadership in improving reading outcomes for K-5 students.
- Support teachers, schools, and districts through coaching, leadership training, professional development, parental engagement, and technical assistance consistent with the state's intensive reading instruction program.
- Provide independent, random reviews of how districts are implementing the approved PreK-3 reading curricula and assessments.
- Publicly report the reading curricula being implemented by each district.
- Maintain a website about the state's intensive reading instruction program.
- Collaborate with institutions of higher education to ensure aligned teacher preparation.
- Publicly report the progress made by teacher preparation programs.

In addition to these legislative requirements, The Center can immediately begin to build a strong application for federal funding through the United States Department of Education's Comprehensive Literacy State Development Program under the ESEA.

## A TIMELINE OF KEY STEPS REQUIRED BY THE RIGHT TO READ LEGISLATION

JULY 1, 2021

The CT Department of Education establishes a Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success (The Center), under a director who consults with a Reading Leadership Implementation Council (The Council).

Not Later Than JULY 1, 2022

The director of The Center, in consultation with The Council, **approves at least 5 reading curriculum models** or programs to be implemented by districts.

For the School Year Commencing
JULY 1, 2022
And Then Each
School Year

The Center oversees an **intensive reading instruction program** to improve student literacy in grades K-3.

On or Before

JAN. 1, 2023

The Center develops a **coordinated state-wide reading plan for K-3** that contains research-driven strategies to produce effective reading instruction and improve student performance.

On or Before
JULY 1, 2023
And Then Biennially

Each district notifies The Center about which approved, evidence-based reading curriculum it is implementing.

For the School Year Commencing JULY 1, 2023 And Then Each School Year

Each district **implements a reading curriculum for grades PreK-3** from The Center's list of approved, evidence-based models.

The **Center compiles a list of reading assessments** for use by each district in identifying K-3 students who are below proficiency in reading.

Not Later Than
SEPT. 1, 2023
And Then Biennially

The **Center publicly reports** which approved, evidence-based reading curriculum is being implemented by each district.

ONGOING\*

The Center establishes a reading readiness program that provides **tiered supports in early literacy to alliance districts**.

\*Within available appropriations

FEB. 1, 2024

The Commissioner of Education conducts an **evaluation** of the activities of The Center and submits it to the General Assembly's **Education Committee** and **Appropriations Committee**.

## **About The Council:**

The 13 members of The Council will be designated by various state authorities and members of the legislature. The Council will publish annual goals for The Center and meet at least once every 2 months.

## About The Approved Early Reading Curricula:

The approved reading curricula must be: (1) evidenced-based; and (2) focused on competencies in: Oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name or letter name fluency and reading comprehension.