

CHAPTER 17**(HB 251)**

AN ACT relating to the evaluation of educator preparation programs.

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

➔Section 1. KRS 158.840 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) The General Assembly hereby finds that reading and mathematics proficiency are gateway skills necessary for all Kentucky students to achieve the academic goals established in KRS 158.6451. It is the General Assembly's intent that:
 - (a) All students in kindergarten through grade three (3) having difficulty in reading and mathematics receive early diagnosis and intervention services from highly trained teachers;
 - (b) All students in kindergarten through grade three (3) needing to make accelerated progress toward proficiency in mathematics based on data from valid and reliable universal screening and diagnostic assessments receive high-quality, evidence-based mathematics instruction and intervention aligned to the Kentucky academic standards for mathematics;
 - (c) All students demonstrate proficiency in reading and mathematics as they progress through the relevant curricula and complete each assessment level required by the Kentucky Board of Education for the state assessment program established under KRS 158.6453 and in compliance with the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor; and
 - (d) Students who are struggling in reading and mathematics or are not at the proficient level on statewide assessments shall be provided evidence-based and developmentally appropriate diagnostic and intervention services, and instructional modifications necessary to learn.

The General Assembly, the Kentucky Board of Education, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, colleges and universities, local boards of education, school administrators, school councils, teachers, parents and families, and other educational entities, such as the Education Professional Standards Board, P-16 councils, the statewide reading research center established under KRS 164.0207, and the Center for Middle School Academic Achievement must collaborate if the intentions specified in this subsection are to be met. Intensive focus on student achievement in reading and mathematics does not negate the responsibility of any entity to help students obtain proficiency in other core curriculum content areas.

- (2) The General Assembly's role is to set policies that address the achievement levels of all students and provide resources for the professional growth of teachers and administrators, assessing students' academic achievement, including valid and reliable universal screening and diagnostic assessment and instructional interventions, technology innovations, targeted reading and mathematics statewide initiatives, research and the distribution of research findings, services for students beyond the regular school day, and other services needed to help struggling learners.
- (3) The Kentucky Board of Education shall regularly review and modify, when appropriate, its statewide assessment policies and practices to enable local school districts and schools to carry out the provisions of the statewide assessment and accountability system, required under KRS 158.6453 to improve student achievement in mathematics and reading.
- (4) The Kentucky Department of Education shall:
 - (a) Provide assistance to schools and teachers, including publicizing professional development opportunities, methods of measuring effective professional development, the availability of high quality instructional materials, and developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable screening and diagnostic assessments of student competency in mathematics and reading. The department shall provide access to samples of units of study, annotated student work, diagnostic instruments, and research findings, and give guidance on parental engagement;
 - (b) Work with state and national educators and subject-matter experts to identify student reading and mathematical skills in each subject area that align with the state content standards adopted under KRS

158.6453 and identify teaching strategies in each subject area that can be used explicitly to develop the identified reading and mathematical skills under this paragraph;

- (c) Encourage the development of comprehensive middle and high school adolescent reading and mathematics plans to be incorporated into the curricula of each subject area to improve the reading comprehension and mathematical skills of all students;
 - (d) Conduct an annual review of the state grant programs it manages and make recommendations, when needed, to the Interim Joint Committee on Education for changes to statutory requirements that are necessary to gain a greater return on investment;
 - (e) Provide administrative support and oversight to programs to train classroom coaches and mentors to help teachers with reading and mathematics instruction; and
 - (f) Require no reporting of instructional plans, formative assessment results, staff effectiveness processes, or interventions implemented in the classroom, except for:
 - 1. Interventions implemented under KRS 158.305(2) and 158.8402;
 - 2. Funds provided under KRS 158.792 or 158.844; or
 - 3. Schools that are identified for comprehensive support and improvement and fail to exit comprehensive support and improvement status after three (3) consecutive years of implementing the turnaround intervention process as described in KRS 160.346.
- (5) The ~~{Council on Postsecondary Education, in cooperation with the }~~Education Professional Standards Board, ***in cooperation with the Council on Postsecondary Education***, shall exercise its duties and functions under KRS ~~161.028~~~~{164.020}~~ to ensure that teacher education programs are fulfilling the needs of Kentucky for highly skilled teachers. The ***Education Professional Standards Board***~~{council}~~ shall:
- (a) Coordinate the federal and state grant programs it administers with other statewide initiatives relating to improving student achievement in reading and mathematics to avoid duplication of effort and to make efficient use of resources;
 - (b) ~~{No later than November 1 of each year, }~~Submit ~~a {an annual}~~ report ***every three (3) years*** to the Legislative Research Commission for referral to the ***appropriate*** Interim Joint Committee on Education and the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue, summarizing the compliance of each teacher preparation program for alignment to early childhood education or elementary regular education standards and to the instructional requirements set forth in KRS 164.306(1) and 164.3061; and
 - (c) ***Regularly report program data to an external evaluator for***~~{Require that an external evaluator provide}~~ an annual analysis of the ability of teacher preparation programs to properly train and equip teacher preparation program students with the literacy and mathematics content knowledge and skills to educate students in kindergarten through grade three (3)~~{-}; and~~
 - (d) ~~{(6) The Education Professional Standards Board shall }~~Exercise its duties and responsibilities under KRS 161.030 and 161.048 to ensure highly qualified teachers.
- (6)~~{(7)}~~ Colleges and universities shall:
- (a) Utilize institution-wide resources to work with elementary and secondary educators and other entities to align curriculum content to ensure that students who achieve proficiency on standards established at the prekindergarten through secondary levels will require no remediation to successfully enter a postsecondary education program;
 - (b) Provide quality undergraduate teacher preparation programs to ensure that those preparing to teach reading or mathematics at all grade levels have the necessary content knowledge, assessment and diagnostic skills, and teaching methodologies and that teachers in all subject areas have the requisite skills for helping students at all grade levels develop critical strategies and skills for reading and comprehending subject matter;
 - (c) Deliver evidence-based continuing education for teachers in reading and mathematics through institutes, graduate level courses, and other professional development activities that support a statewide agenda for improving student achievement in reading and mathematics;

- (d) Conduct or assist with research on best practices in assessment, intervention strategies, teaching methodologies, costs and effectiveness of instructional models, and other factors as appropriate to reading and mathematics;
 - (e) Provide staff to consult and provide technical assistance to teachers, staff, and administrators at elementary, middle, and secondary school sites;
 - (f) Assume active roles in the statewide initiatives referenced in KRS 156.553 and 158.842; and
 - (g) Develop written procedures for measuring the effectiveness of activities outlined in paragraphs (a) to (f) of this subsection.
- ~~(7)(8)~~ School councils at all school levels are encouraged to identify and allocate resources to qualified teachers to become coaches or mentors in mathematics or coaches or mentors in reading with a focus on improving student achievement in their respective schools.
- ~~(8)(9)~~ Local school boards and superintendents shall provide local resources to supplement or match state and federal resources to support teachers, school administrators, and school councils in helping students achieve proficiency in reading and mathematics.
- ~~(9)(10)~~ Local school superintendents shall provide leadership and resources to the principals of all schools to facilitate curriculum alignment, communications, and technical support among schools to ensure that students are academically prepared to move to the next level of schooling.

Signed by Governor March 15, 2025.