

**CHAPTER 125--H.F.No. 4492**

*An act relating to education; modifying the Read Act; requiring early literacy field experience for certain teacher candidates; establishing a high school diploma for veterans; requiring rulemaking; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, sections 120B.119, subdivision 7, by adding a subdivision; 120B.123, by adding a subdivision; 122A.092, by adding a subdivision; Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, sections 120B.119, subdivision 10; 120B.12, subdivisions 2, 2a, 4a; 120B.123, subdivisions 1, 5; 120B.124, subdivision 5; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 127A; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.124, subdivision 6.*

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

**ARTICLE 1****THE READ ACT**

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.119, subdivision 7, is amended to read:

Subd. 7. **Literacy specialist.** "Literacy specialist" means a person licensed by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board ~~as a teacher of reading, a special education teacher, or a kindergarten through grade 6 teacher~~, who has completed professional development approved by the Department of Education in structured literacy.

Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.119, subdivision 10, is amended to read:

Subd. 10. **Oral language.** "Oral language," also called "expressive language" ~~or~~ and "receptive language," includes speaking and listening, and consists of five components: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Oral language also includes sign language, in which speaking and listening skills are defined as expressive and receptive skills, and consists of phonology, including sign language phonological awareness, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.

Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.119, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 10a. **Parent.** "Parent" means a student's parent or legal guardian.

Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.12, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **Identification; report.** (a) Each school district must screen every student enrolled in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, and grade 3 using a screening tool approved by the Department of Education three times each school year: (1) within the first six weeks of the school year; (2) by February 15 each year; and (3) within the last six weeks of the school year. Students enrolled in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, and grade 3, including multilingual learners, students receiving special education services, and students enrolled in dual language immersion programs, must be universally screened for mastery of foundational reading skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, fluency, oral language, and for characteristics of dyslexia as measured by a screening tool approved by the Department of Education. The screening for characteristics of dyslexia may be integrated with universal screening for mastery of foundational skills and

expressive ~~or~~ and receptive language mastery. The screening tool used must be a valid and reliable universal screener that is highly correlated with foundational reading skills. ~~For students reading at grade level, beginning in the winter of grade 2, the oral reading fluency screener may be used to assess reading difficulties, including characteristics of dyslexia, without requiring a separate screening of each subcomponent of foundational reading skills.~~ A district must submit data on student performance in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, and grade 3 on foundational reading skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, fluency, and oral language to the Department of Education in the annual local literacy plan submission due on June 15.

(b) For students enrolled in dual language immersion programs:

(1) if students are screened in the partner language, they must be screened at the same interval as the screenings in English under paragraph (a);

(2) if the program provides instruction in foundational reading skills in English, the students receiving that instruction must be screened in English;

(3) if the program provides instruction in foundational reading skills in the partner language, the students receiving that instruction must be screened in the partner language;

(4) if no screener is available in the partner language, the districts must identify how students' reading proficiency is assessed and how the districts determine and provide targeted reading instruction in the partner language and supports to students identified as needing additional support in developing mastery of foundational reading skills; and

(5) the partner language screening tool must be approved by the district for kindergarten through grade 3 students.

(c) Students in grades 4 and above, including multilingual learners and students receiving special education services, who are not reading at grade level must be screened for reading difficulties, including characteristics of dyslexia, using a screening tool approved by the Department of Education, and must continue to receive evidence-based instruction, interventions, and progress monitoring until the students achieve grade-level proficiency. A parent, in consultation with a teacher, may opt a student out of the literacy screener if the parent and teacher decide that continuing to screen would not be beneficial to the student. In such limited cases, the student must continue to receive progress monitoring and literacy interventions.

(d) Reading screeners in English, and in the predominant languages of district students where practicable, must identify and evaluate students' areas of academic need related to literacy. The district also must monitor the progress and provide reading instruction appropriate to the specific needs of multilingual learners. The district must use an approved, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive screener and annually report summary screener results to the commissioner by June 15 in the form and manner determined by the commissioner.

(e) An English language learner must be screened for characteristics of dyslexia according to the vendor's assessment guidelines.

~~(e)~~ (f) The district also must include in its local literacy plan under subdivision 4a, a summary of the district's efforts to screen, identify, and provide interventions to students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia as measured by a screening tool approved by the Department of Education. Districts are strongly encouraged to use a MTSS framework. With respect to students screened or identified under paragraph (a), the report must include:

- (1) a summary of the district's efforts to screen for characteristics of reading difficulties, including dyslexia;
- (2) the number of students universally screened for that reporting year;
- (3) the number of students demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia for that year; and
- (4) an explanation of how students identified under this subdivision are provided with alternate instruction and interventions under section 125A.56, subdivision 1.

Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.12, subdivision 2a, is amended to read:

Subd. 2a. **Parent notification and involvement.** (a) A district must administer an approved reading screener to students in kindergarten through grade 3 within the first six weeks of the school year, by February 15 each year, and again within the last six weeks of the school year. A district must administer an approved reading screener to students in grades 4 and above who are not reading at grade level at least once per year until the student reaches grade-level proficiency. Schools, after administering each screener, must follow the language access plan under section 123B.32 and give the parent of each student who is not reading at or above grade level information from the screener about:

- (1) the student's reading proficiency as measured by a screener approved by the Department of Education;
- (2) reading-related services currently being provided to the student and the student's progress; and
- (3) strategies for parents to use at home in helping their student succeed in becoming grade-level proficient in reading in English and in their native language.

(b) For students enrolled in dual language immersion programs, the district must measure the student's reading proficiency in English or in the program's partner language, if available, according to subdivision 2. Following the district's language access plan under section 123B.32, the district must notify families with timely information about students' reading proficiency, including how the student's reading proficiency is assessed, any reading-related services or supports provided to the student and the student's progress, and strategies for families to use at home in helping students succeed in becoming grade-level proficient in reading in English or the partner language. The dual language immersion program may provide information about national research on reading proficiency for students in dual language immersion programs in the parent notification.

(c) A district may not use this section to deny a student's right to a special education evaluation.

Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.12, subdivision 4a, is amended to read:

Subd. 4a. **Local literacy plan.** (a) Consistent with this section, a school district must adopt a local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade level every year beginning in kindergarten and to support multilingual learners and students receiving special education services in achieving their individualized reading goals. A district must update and submit the plan to the commissioner by June 15 each year. The plan must be consistent with the Read Act, and include the following:

- (1) a process to assess students' foundational reading skills, oral language, and level of reading proficiency and the approved screeners used, by school site and grade level, under section 120B.123;
- (2) a process to notify and involve parents;

(3) a description of how schools in the district will determine the targeted reading instruction that is evidence-based and includes an intervention strategy for a student and the process for intensifying or modifying the reading strategy in order to obtain measurable reading progress;

(4) evidence-based intervention methods for students who are not reading at or above grade level and progress monitoring to provide information on the effectiveness of the intervention;

(5) identification of staff development needs, including a plan to meet those needs;

(6) the curricula used by school site and grade level and, if applicable, the district plan and timeline for adopting evidence-based curricula and materials starting in the 2025-2026 school year;

(7) a statement of whether the district has adopted a MTSS framework;

(8) student data using the measures of foundational literacy skills and mastery identified by the Department of Education for the following students:

(i) students in kindergarten through grade 3;

(ii) students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia; and

(iii) students in grades 4 to 12 who are identified as not reading at grade level;

(9) the number of teachers and other staff who have completed training approved by the department;

(10) the number of teachers and other staff proposed for training in structured literacy;

(11) how the district used funding provided under the Read Act to implement the requirements of the Read Act;

(12) beginning as soon as practicable after the end of fiscal year 2026, how the district used literacy aid funding received under section 124D.98; ~~and~~

(13) beginning on December 31, 2025, for a district with a dual language immersion program:

(i) the program's partner language;

(ii) grade levels included in the program;

(iii) the language used to screen students' foundational reading skills;

(iv) the percentage of grade 3 students taking the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments; and

(v) the number of students in the program in grades 4 to 12 who are identified as not reading at grade level; and

(14) beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, a description of how schools in the district will use the school library media center to complement students' foundational reading skills.

(b) Annually by June 15, the district must post its literacy plan on the official school district website and submit it to the commissioner of education using the template developed by the commissioner of education.

(c) Districts must use a streamlined template developed by the commissioner of education for local literacy plans that meets the requirements of this subdivision and requires all reading instruction and teacher training in reading instruction to be evidence-based. The template must require a district to report information

using the student categories required in the commissioner's report under paragraph (d). The template must focus district resources on improving students' foundational reading skills while reducing paperwork requirements for teachers.

(d) By December 1, 2025, the commissioner of education must submit a report to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over prekindergarten through grade 12 education summarizing the local literacy plans submitted to the commissioner. The summary must include the following information:

(1) the number of teachers and other staff, by grade level, who have completed training approved by the Department of Education;

(2) the number of teachers and other staff, by grade level, required to complete the training under section 120B.123, subdivision 5, who have not completed the training;

(3) the number of teachers exempt under section 120B.123, subdivision 5, from completing training approved by the Department of Education;

(4) the statewide total number of teachers or other staff required to complete the training under section 120B.123, subdivision 5, that have received other training or education that meets the requirements of the training approved by the Department of Education;

(5) by school site and grade, the approved screeners and the reading curriculum used;

(6) by school site and grade, using the measurements of foundational literacy skills and mastery identified by the department, both aggregated data and disaggregated data on student performance on the approved screeners using the student categories under section 120B.35, subdivision 3, paragraph (a), clause (2); and

(7) information about dual language immersion programs.

(e) By December 1, 2026, and December 1, 2027, the commissioner of education must submit updated reports containing the information required under paragraph (d) and updates and recommendations from the dual language immersion advisory committee established under subdivision 6, to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over prekindergarten through grade 12 education.

Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.123, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **Approved screeners.** (a) A district must administer an approved evidence-based reading screener to students in kindergarten through grade 3 within the first six weeks of the school year, by February 15 each year, and again within the last six weeks of the school year. A district must provide vendor-approved screening accommodations to students with documented accommodation plans. The screener must be one of the screening tools approved by the Department of Education. A district must identify any screener it uses in the district's annual literacy plan, and submit screening data with the annual literacy plan by June 15.

(b) Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, district staff and external partners offering literacy supports in schools may only use screeners that have been approved by the Department of Education.

Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.123, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

Subd. 5. **Professional development.** (a) A district must provide training from a menu of approved evidence-based training programs to the following teachers and staff by July 1, 2026:

- (1) reading intervention teachers working with students in kindergarten through grade 12;
  - (2) all classroom teachers of students in kindergarten through grade 3 and children in prekindergarten programs;
  - (3) kindergarten through grade 12 special education teachers responsible for foundational reading instruction;
  - (4) curriculum directors;
  - (5) instructional support staff, contractors, and volunteers who assist in providing reading interventions under the oversight and monitoring of a trained licensed teacher;
  - (6) employees who select literacy instructional materials for a district; and
  - (7) teachers holding English as a second language teaching licenses.
- (b) A district must provide training from a menu of approved evidence-based training programs to the following teachers by July 1, 2027:
- (1) teachers who provide foundational reading instruction to students in grades 4 to 12;
  - (2) teachers who provide instruction to students in a state-approved alternative program; and
  - (3) teachers who provide instruction to students in dual language immersion programs.
- (c) The commissioner of education may grant a district an extension to the deadlines in this subdivision.
- (d) Training provided by the following may satisfy the professional development requirements under this subdivision:
- (1) a certified trained facilitator; or
  - (2) a training program that the department has determined meets the professional development requirements under the Read Act.
- (e) Beginning July 1, 2027, an educator required to receive training under paragraph (a), who is new to the state of Minnesota or is a newly licensed teacher who did not receive instruction in the teaching of foundational reading skills based on structured literacy, must complete one of the approved required trainings. Training must be offered through the regional literacy network and facilitated by a local certified trained facilitator. The Department of Education must review district literacy lead waiver requests and grant waivers to educators new to the state or educators who provide reading instruction exclusively using alternatives to sound-based approaches, and who have completed the professional development requirements consistent with this subdivision.
- (f) For the 2024-2025 ~~and~~, 2025-2026, and 2026-2027 school years only, the hours of instruction requirement under section 120A.41 for students in elementary and secondary school, as defined in section 120A.05, subdivisions 9 and 13, is reduced by 5-1/2 hours for a district that enters into an agreement with the exclusive representative of the teachers that requires teachers to receive at least 5-1/2 hours of approved evidence-based training required under this subdivision, on a day when other students in the district receive instruction. If a charter school's teachers are not represented by an exclusive representative, the charter school may reduce the number of instructional hours for students in elementary and secondary school, as defined in section 120A.05, subdivisions 9 and 13, by 5-1/2 hours after consulting with its teachers in order to provide teachers with at least 5-1/2 hours of evidence-based training required under this subdivision on

a day when other students receive instruction. The hours of instruction reduction for secondary school students is applicable only for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school year years.

(g) An educator who was first enrolled in an elementary, special education, or early childhood education Minnesota-approved teacher preparation program on or after June 1, 2026, does not need to receive additional training according to paragraph (a).

Sec. 9. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.123, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 8. **Accessibility standards.** (a) All professional development and digital curriculum resources must comply with the accessibility standards developed according to section 16E.03, subdivision 9.

(b) Professional development provided in accordance with the Read Act is subject to the requirements of section 363A.43.

Sec. 10. Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.124, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

Subd. 5. **Ongoing review of literacy materials.** (a) By October 1, 2026, the department must establish an ongoing review process in order to identify curriculum and intervention materials that are evidence-based, focused on structured literacy, culturally and linguistically responsive, and reflective of diverse populations. The department may partner with one or more institutions of higher education or a third party to conduct independent and objective reviews of curriculum and intervention materials using the competitive solicitation procedures under chapter 16C. The department must determine whether it will partner with an institution of higher education or a third party to conduct ongoing reviews of literacy materials by ~~June~~ October 1, 2026. A publisher may submit curriculum or intervention materials for review. The publisher is responsible for paying the cost of the review directly to ~~the~~ a partnering institution of higher education or third party. The review must use the Read Act rubric used to approve curriculum ~~and post~~. The department may modify the Read Act rubric as necessary to reflect the evolving needs of grade levels and special populations, including alignment with the Minnesota English Language Arts standards, the incorporation of culturally and linguistically responsive criteria, and the inclusion of criteria reflective of diverse populations. The Read Act rubric must be posted on the department website. The department and ~~institution of higher education~~ its partner may approve the curriculum or intervention materials if they determine that the curriculum or intervention materials are evidence-based, focused on structured literacy, culturally and linguistically responsive, and reflect diverse populations. The department must add the approved curriculum or intervention materials to the list of curricula and materials approved under the Read Act. Following each review cycle, the department must post its findings on the department's website. Alternative curriculum and intervention programs for those who cannot access sound-based approaches must be reviewed on the same review cycle as traditional programs.

(b) A program undergoing a full review cycle must be added to the reviewed curricula and intervention program list after the review process is completed.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 11. **REPEALER.**

Minnesota Statutes 2025 Supplement, section 120B.124, subdivision 6, is repealed.

**ARTICLE 2****HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS FOR VETERANS****Section 1. [127A.135] HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FOR VETERANS.**

Subdivision 1. **Diploma.** A school district or charter school must, upon a request under subdivision 2, issue a high school diploma to a veteran as defined in section 197.447 who was unable to complete their high school education for reasons related or unrelated to their military service, and who served:

(1) during the Korean Conflict from June 27, 1950, to January 31, 1955; or

(2) during the Vietnam War, either in the country from November 1, 1955, to May 7, 1975, or outside of the country from August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975.

Subd. 2. **Request.** A veteran may request a diploma on their own behalf, or a family member may make a posthumous request on behalf of a deceased veteran or service member. The high school diploma is awarded based on the veteran's knowledge and experience gained while in service, or the veteran's other relevant lived experience. The school district or charter school may require the veteran or veteran's requestor to provide evidence that the veteran was a Minnesota public school student or is a current Minnesota resident.

Subd. 3. **No report required.** Districts and charter schools are not required to report on diplomas issued under this section.

Subd. 4. **Assistance.** The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and county veteran service officers may provide assistance to districts and charter schools fulfilling these requests, including but not limited to verification of discharge paperwork.

**ARTICLE 3****OTHER LITERACY PROVISIONS**

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 122A.092, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 10. **Early literacy field experience.** (a) A teacher preparation provider approved by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board to prepare teacher candidates to provide instruction in early literacy must require a supervised early literacy field experience aligned to evidence-based best practices in reading consistent with sections 120B.118 to 120B.124. The early literacy field experience requirement applies to teacher candidates who enroll in teacher preparation programs in the 2027-2028 school year or later.

(b) The early literacy field experience must be integrated with learning experiences in reading instruction, including instruction on reading methods or equivalent, and must provide teacher candidates with opportunities to apply evidence-based literacy practices with students.

(c) The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board must adopt rules regarding the early literacy field experience requirement, including but not limited to:

(1) defining licensure areas in which teacher candidates must complete the early literacy field experience;

(2) establishing expectations for the scope and outcomes of the early literacy field experience;



(3) ensuring the field experience occurs primarily within a school building during the instructional day, while allowing for waivers when appropriate to accommodate unique program delivery models or documented hardship; and

(4) requiring the field experience includes observation with actionable feedback to ensure growth and attainment of related reading standards.

(d) In adopting rules under this subdivision, the board must allow flexibility for teacher preparation programs to demonstrate that candidates have met required standards through field experiences.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2026.

Presented to the governor May 20, 2026

Signed by the governor May 27, 2026, 12:31 p.m.