

HOUSE SUMMARY OF SENATE AMENDMENTS**HB 85****2021 Regular Session****McKnight**

STUDENTS: Creates a literacy program for certain public school students

Synopsis of Senate Amendments

1. Authorize implementation of proposed law if local funds are available.

Digest of Bill as Finally Passed by Senate

Proposed law establishes the Steve Carter Literacy Program for eligible students. Defines "eligible student" as a public school student who is in kindergarten or the first, second, or third grade and who reads below grade level or is at risk for reading difficulties according to a literacy assessment, a student who is in the fourth or fifth grade and who scored below mastery in English language arts on the state assessment in the prior school year, or a student in these grades recommended by an English teacher. Gives priority to the lowest performing economically disadvantaged students.

Proposed law provides for payments of up to \$1000 per student per school year for eligible services intended to improve reading or literacy skills.

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Education to administer the program pursuant to rules and regulations adopted by the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education. Further requires the department to:

- (1) Develop an application process and accept applications for both students and service providers.
- (2) Evaluate students for eligibility.
- (3) Evaluate service providers for eligibility.
- (4) Remit payments to service providers for services rendered.
- (5) Annually report to the House and Senate education committees on the program.

Proposed law requires the department to evaluate program provider effectiveness through participants' Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) state assessment scores and literacy assessment results. Provides that providers who fail to demonstrate improvement in students' reading abilities for two consecutive years shall be deemed ineligible to participate in the program.

Proposed law requires the department to notify school governing authorities and the governing authorities to notify the parents or legal guardians of eligible students of the program and the application process.

Proposed law provides that implementation of the program is subject to the appropriation of funds or the availability of local funds. Authorizes the department to use funds appropriated for the purpose of increasing early literacy or supporting academic achievement among elementary school students.

(Adds R.S. 17:4032.1)