



**SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE**  
**STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT**  
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**Bill Number:** S. 0418 Amended by House Education and Public Works on April 25, 2023  
**Author:** Hembree  
**Subject:** Read to Succeed Endorsements  
**Requestor:** House Education and Public Works  
**RFA Analyst(s):** Bryant  
**Impact Date:** May 3, 2023 - Updated for Additional Agency Response

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### **Fiscal Impact Summary**

This amended bill replaces references to the South Carolina Read to Succeed Office with the S.C. Department of Education (SCDE). The amended bill requires classroom teachers to use scientifically-based reading instruction in prekindergarten through fifth grade and provide scientifically-based interventions as needed so that all students develop proficiency with literacy skills and comprehension. Classroom teachers must also receive pre-service and in-service coursework in foundational literacy skills, structured literacy, and the science of reading. Additionally, SCDE must work with state Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) offering courses in reading and writing for initial teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education to design coursework leading to a literacy teacher endorsement by the state.

The amended bill also requires the State Reading Proficiency Plan to be approved annually by the State Board of Education. The plan must present and explain the scientifically-based rationale for state-level actions to be taken. Each district must also prepare a comprehensive annual reading proficiency plan for prekindergarten through fifth grade. Additionally, each school must prepare, submit to the school district, and post on its website prior to the start of each school year an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. SCDE must also identify middle schools with 50 percent or more of its students scoring at the lowest achievement level on the statewide summative reading assessment.

The amended bill further requires SCDE to approve no more than three universal reading screeners for selection and use by school districts in kindergarten through third grade. Each district must use one of the approved universal screeners. SCDE must reimburse districts for the cost of the universal reading screener upon receipt of assessment data used in the progress monitoring system. SCDE must report annually data received from the districts and approved universal reading screeners to the Speaker of the House, House Education and Public Works Committee, President of the Senate, Senate Education Committee, and the Governor. SCDE must also implement an online reporting system to monitor the effectiveness of the universal reading screeners.

The amended bill also modifies certain exemptions to the mandatory retention policies for third grade students who fail to demonstrate reading proficiency. An individual reading plan, which

includes additional support for the student in achieving reading proficiency, must be provided in writing to the parent or guardian regardless of whether the child is ultimately retained. For students in kindergarten through second grade who are not demonstrating reading proficiency, additional support in foundational literacy skills must be provided until the student is meeting grade-level reading proficiency.

The amended bill also updates endorsement requirements relating to pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. The State Board of Education is authorized to approve guidelines and procedures on an annual basis for professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsement requirements for teachers of early childhood and elementary education, including special education teachers, interventionists, reading specialists, and administrators, whose responsibilities, either directly or indirectly, substantially relate to reading and literacy instruction, support, or interventions. Local school districts must work with SCDE to offer the required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements at no charge to educators.

Additionally, beginning September 1, 2024, the amended bill requires early childhood, elementary, and special education teacher candidates seeking their initial certification in South Carolina to earn a passing score on a test of reading instruction and intervention and data-based decision-making principles as approved by the State Board of Education. The board must also approve guidelines and procedures to allow in-service educators the option of utilizing the test to exempt certain requirements. Contingent upon funding by the General Assembly, the test must be provided at no cost to the educator.

The amended bill further requires SCDE to publish annually the approved courses, guidelines, and procedures used in evaluating all courses and professional development leading to the literacy teacher endorsement. Prior to August 1, 2024, and every five years thereafter, SCDE must conduct an evaluation of the approved courses.

The expenditure impact of this amended bill on SCDE and the local school districts is pending, contingent upon a response.

This amended bill is not expected to have an expenditure impact on state IHLs. Based on the responses received from Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, Lander University, and the University of South Carolina, we anticipate that IHLs will manage the provisions of the bill within existing appropriations.

This amended bill will have no expenditure impact on the S.C. Educational Television Commission (SCETV) since the bill removes SCETV as a required partner in providing Read to Succeed professional development opportunities for educators.

*This impact statement has been updated to include responses from IHLs and SCETV.*

## **Explanation of Fiscal Impact**

**Updated for Additional Agency Response on May 3, 2023**  
**Amended by House Education and Public Works on April 25, 2023**

### **State Expenditure**

This amended bill replaces references to the South Carolina Read to Succeed Office with SCDE. The amended bill requires classroom teachers to use scientifically-based reading instruction in prekindergarten through fifth grade and provide scientifically-based interventions as needed so that all students develop proficiency with literacy skills and comprehension. Classroom teachers must also receive pre-service and in-service coursework in foundational literacy skills, structured literacy, and the science of reading. Additionally, SCDE must work with state IHLs offering courses in reading and writing for initial teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education to design coursework in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills leading to a literacy teacher endorsement by the state. IHLs that offer initial teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education must provide SCDE, and publicly report on their website and to all potential teacher candidates, the success rate of the institution's teacher candidates who attempt the scientifically research-based instruction assessment approved by the board and required for teacher certification.

The amended bill also requires the State Reading Proficiency Plan to be approved annually by the State Board of Education. The plan must present and explain the scientifically based rationale for state-level actions to be taken. Each district must also prepare a comprehensive annual reading proficiency plan for prekindergarten through fifth grade. The plan must document how reading and writing assessment and instruction for all prekindergarten through fifth grade students is aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills, as well as how scientifically-based supplemental interventions are provided to students who fail to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency. Supplemental instruction must be provided by teachers who have a literacy teacher endorsement and offered during the school day and, as appropriate, before or after school in high dose, low ration tutoring through a summer reading camp, or both. Additionally, each school must prepare, submit to the school district, and post on its website prior to the start of each school year an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. SCDE must also identify middle schools with 50 percent or more of its students scoring at the lowest achievement level on the statewide summative reading assessment. An identified school must prepare, submit to the district, and post on its website prior to the start of each year identified an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. In consultation with the School Improvement Council, each school must include in its implementation plan the training and support that will be provided to parents as needed.

The amended bill further requires SCDE to approve no more than three universal reading screeners for selection and use by school districts in kindergarten through third grade. Each district must use one of the approved universal screeners, which must be administered in the first thirty days of the school year and repeated at midyear and at the end of the school year to determine student progression in reading. The district must notify parents after the administration of each universal reading screener and create an individual reading plan for each student

demonstrating literacy deficiencies based on the screener data. SCDE must reimburse districts for the cost of the universal reading screen upon receipt of assessment data used in the progress monitoring system. Administration of a universal reading screener can be replaced with a selected alternative assessment and progress monitoring tool for students in kindergarten through third grade with a significant cognitive disability. SCDE must report annually, on a grade level basis, data received from the districts and approved universal reading screeners to the Speaker of the House, House Education and Public Works Committee, President of the Senate, Senate Education Committee, and Governor. SCDE must also implement an online reporting system to monitor the effectiveness of the universal reading screeners.

The amended bill modifies certain exemptions to the mandatory retention policies for third grade students who fail to demonstrate reading proficiency. An individual reading plan, which includes additional support for the student in achieving reading proficiency, must be provided in writing to the parent or guardian regardless of whether the child is ultimately retained. For students in kindergarten through second grade who are not demonstrating reading proficiency, additional support in foundational literacy skills must be provided until the student is meeting grade-level reading proficiency.

The amended bill also updates endorsement requirements relating to pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. The State Board of Education must approve guidelines on an annual basis for professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsement requirements for teachers of early childhood and elementary education whose responsibilities substantially relate to reading and literacy instruction, support, or interventions. The guidelines must also include the issuance of appropriate credit to individuals who have completed an intensive and prolonged professional development program. Local school districts must work with SCDE to offer the required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements at no charge to educators. In-service hours earned through professional development must be used for the renewal of teaching certificates in all subject areas.

Additionally, beginning September 1, 2024, the amended bill requires early childhood, elementary, and special education teacher candidates seeking their initial certification in South Carolina to earn a passing score on a test of reading instruction and intervention and data-based decision-making principles as approved by the State Board of Education. The board must approve guidelines and procedures to allow in-service educators the option of utilizing the test to exempt requirements established by the board related to professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements. As part of this process, the board must set a minimum cut score that an in-service educator must achieve to take advantage of this provision of the bill. Contingent upon funding by the General Assembly, the test must be provided at no cost to the educator. Teachers, administrators, and other certified faculty and staff are exempt from having to earn the literacy endorsement to maintain certification only if they are not educating or serving students in a school or other educational setting.

The amended bill further requires SCDE to publish annual guidelines and procedures used in evaluating all coursework and professional development, as well as the approved courses and professional development, leading to the literacy teacher endorsement. Prior to August 1, 2024,

and every five years thereafter, SCDE must conduct an evaluation of the approved courses. The evaluation must include survey data from prior course participants, and SCDE must remove any courses receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation from the list of approved courses and professional development.

**S.C. Department of Education.** The expenditure impact of this amended bill on SCDE is pending, contingent upon a response.

**State Institutions of Higher Learning.** This amended bill requires IHLs to work collaboratively with SCDE to offer courses in reading and writing for initial teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education. IHLs must provide SCDE, and publicly report on their website and to all potential teacher candidates, the success rate of the institution's teacher candidates who attempt the scientifically research-based reading instruction assessment required for teacher certification.

The amended bill is not expected to have an expenditure impact on IHLs. The four responding IHLs indicate that the amended bill may increase expenses. However, the institutions anticipate that they will manage the provisions of the bill with existing staff and resources. Clemson University indicates that the bill will increase expenses by up to \$200,000 in FY 2023-24 to advise and follow-up with students, create and distribute documentation, satisfy record keeping and reporting requirements, and make curriculum course changes. Coastal Carolina University indicates that the amended bill will increase the institution's expenses by up to \$27,000 in FY 2023-24. Of this amount, \$6,000 is for training pre-service teachers on the selected universal reading screeners, and \$21,000 is for one-time costs for course redevelopment. Coastal Carolina University reports that any additional employee hours to manage the reporting requirements will be assigned to current staff within the existing budget. Lander University indicates that the amended bill will increase expenses by approximately \$20,000 in FY 2023-24 to redevelop courses and provide test preparation materials. The University of South Carolina estimates that the amended bill will have minimal to no fiscal impact. Based on the responses received from Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, Lander University, and the University of South Carolina, we anticipate that IHLs will manage the provisions of the amended bill within existing appropriations. We will update this impact statement if the IHLs provide a different response. *This section of the impact statement has been updated to include responses from IHLs.*

**S.C. Educational Television Commission.** This amended bill eliminates the requirement that SCETV must collaborate with SCDE to provide professional development courses to ensure that educators have access to multiple avenues of receiving endorsements. SCETV indicates that the amended bill will have no expenditure impact on the agency since the bill removes SCETV as a required partner in providing Read to Succeed professional development opportunities for educators. SCETV reports that these courses are currently managed by a staff member who supports all other renewal credit professional development opportunities. The agency anticipates that this position will continue, as will the offering of courses. *This section of the impact statement has been updated to include a response from SCETV.*

## **State Revenue**

N/A

## **Local Expenditure**

This amended bill requires each local school district to prepare a comprehensive annual reading proficiency plan for prekindergarten through fifth grade. Additionally, each school must prepare, submit to the school district, and post on its website prior to the start of each school year an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. A middle school with 50 percent or more of its students scoring at the lowest achievement level on the statewide summative reading assessment must also prepare, submit to the district, and post on its website prior to the start of each year identified an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. In consultation with the School Improvement Council, each school must include in its implementation plan the training and support that will be provided to parents.

Each district is also required to use one of the universal reading screeners approved by SCDE. The universal reading screener must be administered in the first thirty days of the school year and repeated at midyear and at the end of the school year to determine student progression in reading. The district must notify parents after the administration of each universal reading screener and create an individual reading plan for each student demonstrating literacy deficiencies based on the screener data. SCDE must reimburse districts for the cost of the universal reading screener upon receipt of assessment data used in the progress monitoring system.

The amended bill also modifies certain exemptions to the mandatory retention policies for third grade students who fail to demonstrate reading proficiency. An individual reading plan, which includes additional support for the student in achieving reading proficiency, must be provided in writing to the parent or guardian regardless of whether the child is ultimately retained. For students in kindergarten through second grade who are not demonstrating reading proficiency, additional support in foundational literacy skills must be provided until the student is meeting grade-level reading proficiency.

Lastly, the amended bill requires local school districts to work with SCDE to offer required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements, as approved by the State Board of Education, at no charge to educators.

The expenditure impact of this bill on the local school districts is pending, contingent upon a response.

## **Local Revenue**

N/A

## **Amended by House Education and Public Works on April 25, 2023**

### **State Expenditure**

This amended bill replaces references to the South Carolina Read to Succeed Office with SCDE. The amended bill requires classroom teachers to use scientifically-based reading instruction in

prekindergarten through fifth grade and provide scientifically-based interventions as needed so that all students develop proficiency with literacy skills and comprehension. Classroom teachers must also receive pre-service and in-service coursework in foundational literacy skills, structured literacy, and the science of reading. Additionally, SCDE must work with state IHLs offering courses in reading and writing for initial teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education to design coursework in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills leading to a literacy teacher endorsement by the state. IHLs that offer initial teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education must provide SCDE, and publicly report on their website and to all potential teacher candidates, the success rate of the institution's teacher candidates who attempt the scientifically research-based instruction assessment approved by the board and required for teacher certification.

The amended bill also requires the State Reading Proficiency Plan to be approved annually by the State Board of Education. The plan must present and explain the scientifically based rationale for state-level actions to be taken. Each district must also prepare a comprehensive annual reading proficiency plan for prekindergarten through fifth grade. The plan must document how reading and writing assessment and instruction for all prekindergarten through fifth grade students is aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills, as well as how scientifically-based supplemental interventions are provided to students who fail to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency. Supplemental instruction must be provided by teachers who have a literacy teacher endorsement and offered during the school day and, as appropriate, before or after school in high dose, low ration tutoring through a summer reading camp, or both. Additionally, each school must prepare, submit to the school district, and post on its website prior to the start of each school year an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. SCDE must also identify middle schools with 50 percent or more of its students scoring at the lowest achievement level on the statewide summative reading assessment. An identified school must prepare, submit to the district, and post on its website prior to the start of each year identified an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. In consultation with the School Improvement Council, each school must include in its implementation plan the training and support that will be provided to parents as needed.

The amended bill further requires SCDE to approve no more than three universal reading screeners for selection and use by school districts in kindergarten through third grade. Each district must use one of the approved universal screeners, which must be administered in the first thirty days of the school year and repeated at midyear and at the end of the school year to determine student progression in reading. The district must notify parents after the administration of each universal reading screener and create an individual reading plan for each student demonstrating literacy deficiencies based on the screener data. SCDE must reimburse districts for the cost of the universal reading screen upon receipt of assessment data used in the progress monitoring system. Administration of a universal reading screener can be replaced with a selected alternative assessment and progress monitoring tool for students in kindergarten through third grade with a significant cognitive disability. SCDE must report annually, on a grade level basis, data received from the districts and approved universal reading screeners to the Speaker of the House, House Education and Public Works Committee, President of the Senate, Senate

Education Committee, and Governor. SCDE must also implement an online reporting system to monitor the effectiveness of the universal reading screeners.

The amended bill modifies certain exemptions to the mandatory retention policies for third grade students who fail to demonstrate reading proficiency. An individual reading plan, which includes additional support for the student in achieving reading proficiency, must be provided in writing to the parent or guardian regardless of whether the child is ultimately retained. For students in kindergarten through second grade who are not demonstrating reading proficiency, additional support in foundational literacy skills must be provided until the student is meeting grade-level reading proficiency.

The amended bill also updates endorsement requirements relating to pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. The State Board of Education must approve guidelines on an annual basis for professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsement requirements for teachers of early childhood and elementary education whose responsibilities substantially relate to reading and literacy instruction, support, or interventions. The guidelines must also include the issuance of appropriate credit to individuals who have completed an intensive and prolonged professional development program. Local school districts must work with SCDE to offer the required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements at no charge to educators. In-service hours earned through professional development must be used for the renewal of teaching certificates in all subject areas.

Additionally, beginning September 1, 2024, the amended bill requires early childhood, elementary, and special education teacher candidates seeking their initial certification in South Carolina to earn a passing score on a test of reading instruction and intervention and data-based decision-making principles as approved by the State Board of Education. The board must approve guidelines and procedures to allow in-service educators the option of utilizing the test to exempt requirements established by the board related to professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements. As part of this process, the board must set a minimum cut score that an in-service educator must achieve to take advantage of this provision of the bill. Contingent upon funding by the General Assembly, the test must be provided at no cost to the educator. Teachers, administrators, and other certified faculty and staff are exempt from having to earn the literacy endorsement to maintain certification only if they are not educating or serving students in a school or other educational setting.

The amended bill further requires SCDE to publish annual guidelines and procedures used in evaluating all coursework and professional development, as well as the approved courses and professional development, leading to the literacy teacher endorsement. Prior to August 1, 2024, and every five years thereafter, SCDE must conduct an evaluation of the approved courses. The evaluation must include survey data from prior course participants, and SCDE must remove any courses receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation from the list of approved courses and professional development.

**S.C. Department of Education.** The expenditure impact of this amended bill on SCDE is pending, contingent upon a response.



**State Institutions of Higher Learning.** This amended bill requires state IHLs to work collaboratively with SCDE to offer courses in reading and writing for initial teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, and special education. IHLs must provide SCDE, and publicly report on their website and to all potential teacher candidates, the success rate of the institution's teacher candidates who attempt the scientifically research-based reading instruction assessment required for teacher certification. The expenditure impact of this amended bill on state IHLs is pending, contingent upon a response.

**S.C. Educational Television Commission.** This bill eliminates the requirement that SCETV must collaborate with SCDE to provide professional development courses to ensure that educators have access to multiple avenues of receiving endorsements. The expenditure impact of this amended bill on SCETV is pending, contingent upon a response.

### **State Revenue**

N/A

### **Local Expenditure**

This amended bill requires each local school district to prepare a comprehensive annual reading proficiency plan for prekindergarten through fifth grade. Additionally, each school must prepare, submit to the school district, and post on its website prior to the start of each school year an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. A middle school with 50 percent or more of its students scoring at the lowest achievement level on the statewide summative reading assessment must also prepare, submit to the district, and post on its website prior to the start of each year identified an implementation plan aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. In consultation with the School Improvement Council, each school must include in its implementation plan the training and support that will be provided to parents.

Each district is also required to use one of the universal reading screeners approved by SCDE. The universal reading screener must be administered in the first thirty days of the school year and repeated at midyear and at the end of the school year to determine student progression in reading. The district must notify parents after the administration of each universal reading screener and create an individual reading plan for each student demonstrating literacy deficiencies based on the screener data. SCDE must reimburse districts for the cost of the universal reading screener upon receipt of assessment data used in the progress monitoring system.

The amended bill also modifies certain exemptions to the mandatory retention policies for third grade students who fail to demonstrate reading proficiency. An individual reading plan, which includes additional support for the student in achieving reading proficiency, must be provided in writing to the parent or guardian regardless of whether the child is ultimately retained. For students in kindergarten through second grade who are not demonstrating reading proficiency, additional support in foundational literacy skills must be provided until the student is meeting grade-level reading proficiency.

Lastly, the amended bill requires local school districts to work with SCDE to offer required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements, as approved by the State Board of Education, at no charge to educators.

The expenditure impact of this bill on the local school districts is pending, contingent upon a response.

### **Local Revenue**

N/A

### **Updated for Additional Agency Response on February 24, 2023**

#### **Introduced on January 19, 2023**

#### **State Expenditure**

This bill updates the endorsement requirements of the South Carolina Read to Succeed Act relating to pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.

The bill requires the State Board of Education to approve guidelines on an annual basis for professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsement requirements for teachers of early childhood and elementary education whose responsibilities substantially relate to reading and literacy instruction, support, or interventions. The guidelines must also include the issuance of appropriate credit to individuals who have completed an intensive and prolonged professional development program. Local school districts must work with SCDE to offer the required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements at no charge to educators. Additionally, in-service hours earned through professional development must be used for the renewal of teaching certificates in all subject areas.

Additionally, beginning July 1, 2023, the bill requires early childhood, elementary, and special education teacher candidates seeking their initial certification in South Carolina to earn a passing score on a test of reading instruction and intervention and data-based decision-making principles as approved by the board. The State Board of Education must approve guidelines and procedures to allow in-service educators the option of utilizing the test to exempt requirements established by the board related to professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements. As part of this process, the board must set a minimum cut score that an in-service educator must achieve to take advantage of this provision of the bill. Contingent upon funding by the General Assembly, the test must be provided at no cost to the educator. Teachers, administrators, and other certified faculty and staff are exempt from having to earn the literacy add-on endorsement to maintain certification only if they are not educating or serving students in a school or other educational setting.

The bill further requires SCDE to publish annual guidelines and procedures used in evaluating all coursework and professional development, as well as the approved courses and professional development, leading to the literacy teacher add-on endorsement. Prior to August 1, 2024, and every five years thereafter, SCDE must conduct an evaluation of the approved courses. The evaluation must include survey data from prior course participants, and SCDE must remove any

courses receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation from the list of approved courses and professional development.

**S.C. Department of Education.** SCDE anticipates the need for 1.0 FTE with annual salary and fringe expenses of \$107,000 to implement the provisions of the bill. SCDE also reports that any additional operating costs associated with the new FTE, such as the purchase of equipment, can be managed within existing appropriations. Additionally, the agency indicates that the procurement of an external Institution of Higher Learning evaluator to evaluate the approved courses will cost approximately \$100,000 every five years. The agency will need a recurring appropriation of \$20,000 per year to cover this cost. SCDE further indicates that requiring a subject area assessment in reading for certification purposes will cost approximately \$156 for each teacher candidate seeking an initial certification in Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education. This cost covers one administration of the Praxis reading assessment for these certification fields. The agency estimates that this testing requirement could impact approximately 2,500 educators in these certification fields, resulting in an estimated cost of \$390,000 per year, which is contingent upon funding by the General Assembly. Therefore, this bill will increase expenses for SCDE by approximately \$517,000 each year beginning in FY 2023-24. SCDE reports that the agency will request a General Fund appropriation increase to fund the expenses.

#### **State Revenue**

N/A

#### **Local Expenditure**

This bill requires local school districts to work with SCDE to offer the required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements, as approved by the State Board of Education, at no charge to educators.

The overall expenditure impact of this bill on local school districts is undetermined due to the varying responses received from the districts. SCDE surveyed the seventy-three regular school districts and the three charter districts regarding the expenditure impact of this bill and received responses from thirty-five districts. Of the responding districts, eleven indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact, as any expenses will be minimal and can be managed with existing resources and staff. The remaining twenty-four districts indicate that expenses could increase by a range of \$1,500 to \$700,000 per district to offer the required courses and professional development free of charge to educators. Additionally, these costs will depend on the guidelines and procedures for professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements that are adopted by the State Board of Education, as well as the number of educators who will need certification, endorsements, and any other professional development.

*This section of the impact statement has been updated to include a response from the local school districts.*

#### **Local Revenue**

N/A

## **Introduced on January 19, 2023**

### **State Expenditure**

This bill updates the endorsement requirements of the South Carolina Read to Succeed Act relating to pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.

The bill requires the State Board of Education to approve guidelines on an annual basis for professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsement requirements for teachers of early childhood and elementary education whose responsibilities substantially relate to reading and literacy instruction, support, or interventions. The guidelines must also include the issuance of appropriate credit to individuals who have completed an intensive and prolonged professional development program. Local school districts must work with SCDE to offer the required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements at no charge to educators. Additionally, in-service hours earned through professional development must be used for the renewal of teaching certificates in all subject areas.

Additionally, beginning July 1, 2023, the bill requires early childhood, elementary, and special education teacher candidates seeking their initial certification in South Carolina to earn a passing score on a test of reading instruction and intervention and data-based decision-making principles as approved by the board. The State Board of Education must approve guidelines and procedures to allow in-service educators the option of utilizing the test to exempt requirements established by the board related to professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements. As part of this process, the board must set a minimum cut score that an in-service educator must achieve to take advantage of this provision of the bill. Contingent upon funding by the General Assembly, the test must be provided at no cost to the educator. Teachers, administrators, and other certified faculty and staff are exempt from having to earn the literacy add-on endorsement to maintain certification only if they are not educating or serving students in a school or other educational setting.

The bill further requires SCDE to publish annual guidelines and procedures used in evaluating all coursework and professional development, as well as the approved courses and professional development, leading to the literacy teacher add-on endorsement. Prior to August 1, 2024, and every five years thereafter, SCDE must conduct an evaluation of the approved courses. The evaluation must include survey data from prior course participants, and SCDE must remove any courses receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation from the list of approved courses and professional development.

**S.C. Department of Education.** SCDE anticipates the need for 1.0 FTE with annual salary and fringe expenses of \$107,000 to implement the provisions of the bill. SCDE also reports that any additional operating costs associated with the new FTE, such as the purchase of equipment, can be managed within existing appropriations. Additionally, the agency indicates that the procurement of an external Institution of Higher Learning evaluator to evaluate the approved courses will cost approximately \$100,000 every five years. The agency will need a recurring appropriation of \$20,000 per year to cover this cost. SCDE further indicates that requiring a subject area assessment in reading for certification purposes will cost approximately \$156 for

each teacher candidate seeking an initial certification in Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education. This cost covers one administration of the Praxis reading assessment for these certification fields. The agency estimates that this testing requirement could impact approximately 2,500 educators in these certification fields, resulting in an estimated cost of \$390,000 per year, which is contingent upon funding by the General Assembly. Therefore, this bill will increase expenses for SCDE by approximately \$517,000 each year beginning in FY 2023-24. SCDE reports that the agency will request a General Fund appropriation increase to fund the expenses.

**State Revenue**

N/A

**Local Expenditure**

This bill requires local school districts to work with SCDE to offer the required professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements, as approved by the State Board of Education, at no charge to educators.

The expenditure impact of this bill on the local school districts is pending, contingent upon responses from the districts.

**Local Revenue**

N/A



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Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director