

Read to Succeed

Senate Bill No. 169 plan of having all third graders to be “proficient readers” is a bold and courageous initiative. It is well understood that 3rd grade is the point when students transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn!” Students that miss this benchmark will most often struggle to keep pace with fellow students in their learning rates and most will never recapture their basic reading skills.

Proficient 3rd grade readers can be an achievable goal but it does require more than retention (repeating what has not worked is not a solution). What if:

- After the first month of school you could predict a student’s probability of reaching grade-level reading benchmarks in K, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades?
- You could change the trajectory (improve the probability of reaching grade-level benchmarks) of that students learning path?
- You could conduct continuously (daily or even hourly) monitor progress of a student’s reading skills without the necessity of stopping the stream of instruction for administering a test?
- You could provide the teacher with continuous instructional, student based, norm-referenced reading data to help the teacher plan and modify a student’s personalized reading path?
- The teacher could retrieve an individual action plan for each student’s reading instruction along with specific reading activities, strategies, and scripts to target the student’s personalized learning?
- The administrator or instructional coach could constantly monitor a student’s progress in their acquisition of norm-referenced and grade-level reading skills as well as monitor the teacher’s use of the performance data in planning instruction?
- The teacher and administrator could retrieve important instructional data from their iPhone or iPad before arriving at school to anticipate/plan for the instructional day?
- Student reading performance and progress could be aggregated to the class, grade-level, school, district, AND state level on a continuous basis?

All of these are currently operational and achievable! They don’t have to be designed.

Computer based reading programs for K to 3rd grade students are available and I would encourage the Senate Education to include language in Senate Bill No. 169, that will encourage schools to adopt and utilize such programs. Program requirements should:

- Create a personalized learning path for students and continually modifies instruction to the individual needs of the student while providing the teacher with the resources to deliver direct instruction based on the student’s performance data
- Meet the criteria of having research that is peer reviewed AND published in national scientific reading journals
- Provide teachers with executable, norm-referenced performance data on a daily basis that enables teachers to plan and modify reading instruction without having to stop instructional time to administer a test

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Attachment 8

- Provide regular periodic and highly accurate *predictive* scores for K, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders, which indicate the likelihood of students reaching grade level reading skills by the end of the school year
- Be highly correlated with commonly used reading assessments, including DIBELS, AIMS Web, NWEA MAP assessment, and the Kansas State Reading Test

By incorporating the above language into Senate Bill No. 169, the Senate will be assured that allocated dollars will be used for rigorous interventions that have already shown increases in reading scores for thousands of Kansas students already using a reading program (this data is available upon request). Now it is time to elevate these interventions to larger numbers of students across Kansas. Retention by itself can be devastating for a student AND expensive to the State when it requires an additional year of public schooling.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on behalf of Senate Bill No. 169 and the students and school districts in Kansas.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald H. Fast, Ed.D.

Newton, KS