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## **S.F. No. 3968 – Read Act Amendments (First Engrossment)**

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Section 1. **Title: The Read Act.** Amends the statutory citations for the Read Act.

Section 2. **Evidence-based.** Amends the definition of “evidence-based” to include word study.

Section 3. **Literacy specialist.** Strikes the language that excludes a literacy specialist employed by the Department of Education or by a school district as a literacy lead from the training requirements of the Read Act.

Section 4. **Oral language.** Amends the definition of “oral language” to include expressive sign language.

Section 5. **Word study.** Defines “word study” as instruction in word analysis or syllables, structural analysis or morphemes, and etymology.

Section 6. **Literacy goal.** Amends the purpose of the state literacy goal to “meet grade level proficiency.” Clarifies the training timelines. Excludes teachers who have completed the required training within the last 5 years from the training requirements.

Sections 7, 8 and 11. **Identification; report.** Increases the number of screenings for kindergarten through grade 3 students from two times to three times each school year.

Section 9. **Staff development.** Makes conforming changes. Clarifies that a district offering early childhood programs must provide the early childhood staff with the approved training.

Section 10. **Local literacy plan.** Amends a report to the legislature on local literacy plans to include the number of teachers and other staff required to complete the training that have not been trained. Requires updated reporting in 2026 and 2027.

Section 12. **Progress monitoring.** Clarifies that progress monitoring for students not reading at grade level is done using approved assessments.

Section 13. **Professional development.** For the 2024-2025 school year only, allows for a reduction in instructional hours for students in grades 1 through 3 to allow teachers to receive the required evidence-based training.

Section 14. **Special revenue fund.** Establishes a special revenue fund for all unobligated and unencumbered Read Act appropriations.

Section 15. **Resources.** Extends the partnership between the Department of Education and CAREI from August 30, 2025, to August 30, 2027.

Section 16. **Reconsideration.** Requires the Department of Education and CAREI to conduct a final intervention curriculum review by August 1, 2024.

Section 17. **Training for paraprofessionals.** Directs the Department of Education to partner with CAREI to identify or develop training for paraprofessionals that assist in providing literacy instruction or interventions to students on the key components of structured literacy instruction and intervention.

Section 18. **Minnesota reading corps program.** Requires Minnesota reading corps programs to use evidence-based reading instruction and interventions focused on structured literacy.

Section 19. **Literacy incentive aid uses.** Clarifies the allowed uses of a district's literacy incentive aid and allows it to be used to employ an intervention specialist.

Section 20. **Read act professional development.** Directs the Department of Education to use its funding under this section to develop a data collection system to collect and analyze the submission of local literacy plans and student-level universal screening data. Transfers any unspent funds to the Read Act program account in the special revenue fund.

Section 21. **Read Act deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing working group.**

Subdivision 1. **Working group purpose.** Directs the commissioner to establish a working group to make recommendations on literacy training, screeners, and curriculum for students who cannot fully access sound-based approaches.

Subd. 2. **Members.** Directs the commissioner to appoint representatives from the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI); the Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing; Minnesota State Academy of the Deaf; Minnesota State Academy of the Blind; Metro Deaf School; intermediate school districts; regional low-incidence facilitators; a deaf and hard of hearing teacher licensure preparation program; and teachers of students who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing.

Subd. 3. **Report.** Directs the working group to review curriculum, screeners, and training approved under the Read Act and make recommendations for adaptation of curriculum, screeners, and training available to districts, charter schools, teachers, and administrators to meet the needs of students and educators who cannot fully access sound-based approaches. Directs the working group to report to the legislature not later than January 15, 2025.

Subd. 4. **Administrative provisions.** Directs the commissioner to convene the first meeting of the working group. Working group members are eligible for per diem compensation according to section 15.059, subdivision 3. The working group expires on January 16, 2025.

Section 22. **Supplemental read act funding.** Appropriates money for read act implementation.

Section 23. **Appropriations.** Appropriates money for evidence-based reading instruction training reimbursement.

Section 24. **Revisor instruction.** Directs the revisor of statutes to renumber two sections of the Read Act and make necessary cross-reference changes.