

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1995

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HOUSE BILL 917
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/4/95

Short Title: Literacy Restoration Act of 1995.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 12, 1995

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ENACT THE LITERACY RESTORATION ACT OF 1995.
Whereas, English is the official language of the United States of America; and
Whereas, it is a fundamental fact that written English (English Language) is based on the
alphabetic principle and is a phonetic language; and
Whereas, the philosophy that learning to read is just like learning to speak is accepted by
no responsible linguist, reading psychologist, or cognitive scientist in the research
community; and
Whereas, educational research clearly supports systematic phonics instruction as the most
effective and efficient way to teach an individual to read; and
Whereas, recent surveys conducted by the United States Department of Education
continue to show a serious decline in the ability of elementary and secondary students to
read in the United States in general and in North Carolina in particular; and
Whereas, almost all teacher colleges, universities, and public schools teach reading using
"whole language" methods or some derivative of "whole language" methods; and
Whereas, the reading competency level required of students graduating from North
Carolina high schools is now at only the sixth grade level; and
Whereas, the illiteracy rate for North Carolina stands at 28%; Now, therefore,
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

1 Section 1. This act shall be known as the "Literacy Restoration Act of 1995".

2 Sec. 2. G.S. 115C-81(a1) reads as rewritten:

3 "(a1) The Basic Education Program shall describe the education program to be
4 offered to every child in the public schools. It shall provide every student in the State
5 equal access to a Basic Education Program. Instruction shall be offered in the areas of
6 arts, communication skills, physical education and personal health and safety,
7 mathematics, media and computer skills, science, second languages, social studies, and
8 vocational education. Instruction in the language arts component of communications
9 skills in kindergarten through the third grade shall include as the primary method the use
10 of intensive systematic phonics.

11 Instruction in vocational and technical education under the Basic Education Program
12 shall be based on factors including:

- 13 (1) The integration of academic and vocational and technical education;
- 14 (2) A sequential course of study leading to both academic and occupational
15 competencies;
- 16 (3) Increased student work skill attainment and job placement;
- 17 (4) Increased linkages, where geographically feasible, between public
18 schools and community colleges, so the public schools can emphasize
19 academic preparation and the community colleges can emphasize
20 specific job training; and
- 21 (5) Instruction and experience, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of the
22 industry the students are prepared to enter."

23 Sec. 3. G.S. 115C-296(a) reads as rewritten:

24 "(a) The State Board of Education shall have entire control of certifying all
25 applicants for teaching positions in all public elementary and high schools of North
26 Carolina; ~~and it shall prescribe the rules and regulations for the renewal and extension of all~~
27 ~~certificates and shall determine and fix the salary for each grade and type of certificate which it~~
28 ~~authorizes. Provided, that the State Board of Education shall require each applicant for an initial~~
29 ~~certificate or graduate certificate to demonstrate his academic and professional preparation by~~
30 ~~achieving a prescribed minimum score at least equivalent to that required by the Board on~~
31 ~~November 30, 1972, on a standard examination appropriate and adequate for that purpose:~~
32 ~~Provided, further, that in the event the Board shall specify the National Teachers Examination for~~
33 ~~this purpose, the required minimum score shall not be lower than that which the Board required~~
34 ~~on November 30, 1972: Provided, further, that the State Board of Education shall not decrease~~
35 ~~the certification standards for physical education teachers or health education teachers below the~~
36 ~~standards in effect on June 1, 1988. Carolina. The State Board shall adopt rules for the~~
37 renewal and extension of all certificates and shall determine and fix the salary for each
38 grade and type of certificate that it authorizes. The rules shall:

- 39 (1) Require each applicant for an initial certificate or graduate certificate to
40 demonstrate academic and professional preparation by achieving a
41 prescribed minimum score at least equivalent to that required by the
42 Board on November 30, 1972, on a standard examination appropriate
43 and adequate for that purpose. If the Board specifies the National
44 Teachers Examination for this purpose, the required minimum score

- 1 shall not be lower than that which the Board required on November 30,
2 1972.
- 3 (2) Establish certification standards for physical education teachers and for
4 health education teachers that are not lower than the standards in effect
5 on June 1, 1988.
- 6 (3) Effective January 1, 1997, require each applicant for an initial certificate
7 or graduate certificate who may teach reading in the public schools to
8 have completed satisfactorily courses that include specific competencies
9 in intensive systematic phonics.
- 10 (4) Require all teachers who are certified by December 31, 1996, and who
11 teach reading in the public schools to receive in-service training in
12 intensive systematic phonics and to pass a competency test that includes
13 the elements of intensive systematic phonics. Effective January 1, 1998,
14 the certificates of these teachers who do not successfully complete the
15 in-service training and pass the competency exam shall not be
16 renewed."

17 Sec. 4. G.S. 115C-298 reads as rewritten:

18 **"§ 115C-298. Colleges may assist teachers in certification.**

19 Each and every college or university of the State is hereby authorized to aid public
20 school teachers or prospective teachers in securing, raising, or renewing their certificates,
21 in accordance with the rules ~~and regulations~~ of the State Board of Education. The rules of
22 the State Board of Education shall require institutions of higher education to require
23 students who may teach reading in the public schools to complete satisfactorily six
24 semester hours in intensive systematic phonics as a prerequisite for Board approval of the
25 institution's teacher education program. Effective January 1, 1997, no institution of
26 higher education shall recommend for certification any applicant who may teach reading
27 in the public schools who has not completed satisfactorily courses that include specific
28 competencies in intensive systematic phonics."

29 Sec. 5. This act becomes effective July 1, 1995.