

By: Kolkhorst, West

S.B. No. 925

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to providing training academies for public school teachers who provide reading instruction to students in kindergarten through grade three.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter J, Chapter 21, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 21.4552 to read as follows:

Sec. 21.4552. TEACHER LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT ACADEMIES.

(a) The commissioner shall develop and make available literacy achievement academies for teachers who provide reading instruction to students at the kindergarten or first, second, or third grade level.

(b) A literacy achievement academy developed under this section:

(1) must include training in:

(A) effective and systematic instructional practices in reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; and

(B) the use of empirically validated instructional methods that are appropriate for struggling readers; and

(2) may include training in effective instructional practices in writing.

(c) The commissioner shall adopt criteria for selecting

1 teachers who may attend a literacy achievement academy. In
2 adopting selection criteria under this subsection, the
3 commissioner shall:

4 (1) require granting a priority to teachers employed
5 by a school district at a campus at which 50 percent or more of the
6 students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged; and

7 (2) provide a process through which a teacher not
8 employed at a campus described by Subdivision (1) may attend the
9 academy if the academy has available space and the school district
10 employing the teacher pays the costs of the teacher's attendance.

11 (d) From funds appropriated for that purpose, a teacher who
12 attends a literacy achievement academy is entitled to receive a
13 stipend in the amount determined by the commissioner. A stipend
14 received under this subsection is not considered in determining
15 whether a school district is paying the teacher the minimum monthly
16 salary under Section 21.402.

17 (e) On request of the commissioner, regional education
18 service centers shall assist the commissioner and agency with
19 training and other activities relating to the development and
20 operation of literacy achievement academies.

21 (f) This section expires September 1, 2027.

22 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
23 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
24 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
25 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
26 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.