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MEMORANDUM

To: Senate and House Committees on Education
From: Office of Revisor of Statutes
Date: March 4, 2024
Subject: Kansas Blueprint for Literacy

Senate Bill 532 would establish the Kansas blueprint for literacy. The Kansas blueprint for literacy would be implemented and administered by the director of literacy education who would be appointed and employed by the state board of regents. The blueprint for literacy would create a literacy advisory committee, require the state board of regents and the state board of education to collaborate on a literacy micro-credential and professional development, authorize the state board of regents to recommend diagnostic and formative literacy assessments, authorize university presidents and deans of education oversight over postsecondary literacy courses and require a plan to establish centers of excellence in reading.

Literacy Advisory Committee
(Section 2)

The Kansas blueprint for literacy would establish a literacy advisory committee composed of voting and nonvoting members. The 15 voting members of the committee are:

- The director of literacy education who would serve as chairperson;
- One member appointed by the governor;
- One member of the house of representatives or a literacy expert appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;
- One member of the house of representatives or a literacy expert appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives;
- One member of the senate or a literacy expert appointed by the president of the senate;
- One member of the senate or a literacy expert appointed by the minority leader of the senate;
- One member appointed by and representing the Kansas national education association;
- One member appointed by and representing a school of education from Emporia state university, Fort Hays state university or Pittsburg state university;

- One member appointed by and representing a school of education from the university of Kansas, Kansas state university or Wichita state university;
- One member appointed by and representing Washburn university school of education;
- One member appointed by the Kansas association of community colleges to represent community colleges;
- One member appointed by the Kansas independent colleges association to represent a not-for-profit institution of postsecondary education school or college of education;
- One member appointed by the state board of education;
- One member of the state board of regents appointed by the state board of regents; and
- One member who is an English for speakers of other languages literacy expert appointed by the united school administrators of Kansas.

The nonvoting members of the committee are:

- The commissioner of education or the commissioner's designee; and
- Any number of members appointed by the director of literacy education.

The members of the committee would be appointed for four-year terms and, if a vacancy occurs in any member's position, the vacancy would be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. Any member who fails to attend three committee meetings within a 12-month period would have their appointment terminated and a new member would be appointed.

The committee would have the following duties and responsibilities:

- Monitoring progress of literacy training for teachers and literacy education of students;
- Designating best practices for literacy training for teachers and literacy education of students;
- The attainment of the goal to have 100% of the Kansas elementary teacher workforce achieve a micro-credential in the science of reading and structured literacy by 2030, leading to 85% of Kansas fourth graders achieving level 2 or above on the English language arts state assessment by 2033;
- Making recommendations to the director of literacy education;
- Making recommendations to the state board of education, state board of regents and postsecondary educational institution presidents or chancellors on literacy training for in-service and pre-service teachers, literacy education of students and reading instruction methods based on the science of reading;
- Making recommendations to the House and Senate committees on education on the implementation of the Kansas blueprint for literacy and any necessary changes to the blueprint; and
- Submitting a plan to the state board of regents on the establishment of centers of excellence in reading on or before January 1, 2025.

Director of Literacy Education

(Section 3)

The Kansas blueprint for literacy would require the executive director of the state board of regents to appoint a director of literacy education who would be an employee of the state board of regents. The director of literacy education would serve as chairperson of the literacy advisory committee and provide executive support to the committee. Additionally, the director would be required to:

- Implement and administer the Kansas blueprint for literacy;
- Appoint nonvoting ex officio members of the literacy advisory committee as necessary;
- Work with the state board of regents and the state board of education to ensure: projects on the initiatives, objectives and outcomes of the blueprint for literacy, development and utilization of the comprehensive assessment system and postsecondary educational institutions and elementary and secondary schools are using tier I literacy methodologies;
- Establish a program to track science of reading and structured literacy training progression of teachers;
- Report annually to the Senate and House education committees on the implementation and administration of the Kansas blueprint for literacy; and
- Report to the Senate and House education committees on or before January 31, 2025, on the state board of education's progress on utilization of the science of reading, elimination of discredited methodologies and the use of universal screening measures and assessments in elementary and secondary schools.

Tier I Literacy Methodology and Comprehensive Assessment System

(Section 4)

The blueprint for literacy would require the state's postsecondary educational institutions to designate practices based on the science of reading through structured literacy as the official tier I literacy methodology and prohibit the use of teaching any discredited methodologies.

The state board of regents would be required to collaborate with postsecondary educational institutions and research experts to establish a comprehensive reading and literacy assessment with universal screening measures and diagnostic, formative and summative assessments that would be used by each school district in the state. The state board of regents would make recommendations to the state board of education on the assessment system, ensure that it is available to school districts on or before May 1, 2025, and develop training modules for the assessment system on or before July 1, 2025.

The blueprint for literacy would also require school districts to use the comprehensive assessment system established by the state board of regents beginning in school year 2025-2026.

Additionally, the state board of regents would provide support to the state board of education in officially designating the science of reading as the official tier I literacy methodology, recommend universal screening measures and assessment system to school districts and accredited nonpublic schools, approve reading instruction methodologies recommended by the literacy advisory committee for postsecondary educational institutions.

Micro-Credential and Professional Development

(Section 5)

The blueprint for literacy would require the state board of regents and the state board of education to collaborate to:

- Jointly approve micro-credential or certification requirements for teachers in the science of reading and structured literacy;
- Develop or make accessible professional development programs and micro-credential courses at low or no cost to teachers;
- Ensure all pre-service teacher preparation programs are based on the science of reading and structured literacy;
- Publish standards and course progressions to achieve transparency of reading education programs; and
- Provide data to the director of literacy education to track the progression teacher training in the science of reading and structured literacy.

Postsecondary Educational Institution Responsibilities

(Section 6)

The blueprint for literacy would require the president or chancellor, provost and dean of the college or school of education to jointly have oversight and supervision of reading and literacy courses at their postsecondary educational institution. They would be required to:

- Ensure courses in the science of reading and structured literacy for all undergraduate early childhood and elementary teacher preparation programs;
- Appoint a representative to conduct an annual systemwide analysis of the curriculum maps across all literacy courses and present a report on the analysis and any results to the literacy advisory committee;
- Design and implement required courses to earn a degree in elementary education before August 2024 and assessments for such courses;
- Assist in the development of the science of reading and structured literacy micro-credential; and
- Provide information, advice and recommendations to the literacy advisory committee.

Centers of Excellence in Reading
(Section 7)

The blueprint for literacy would require the literacy advisory committee to develop a plan to establish six regional centers of excellence in reading. The plan would require collaboration between postsecondary educational institutions, the Center for Reading at Pittsburg State University and community-based literacy organizations, include co-location options and require the centers to:

- Provide evaluation and identification of reading difficulties and reading disabilities;
- Collaborate with school districts to develop strategic literacy plans for individual students;
- Collaborate with the state board of regents, the state board of education and postsecondary educational institutions on teacher training;
- Support professional development and training;
- Pilot structured reading and applied learning simulation laboratories for teachers;
- Identify projected costs, staffing and budget impacts to expand and sustain the centers; and
- Make recommendations and provide progress reports to the literacy advisory committee.

Effective Date

The blueprint for literacy would take effect upon publication in the Kansas Register.