



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Wisconsin’s “Right to Read Act” Will Turn the Page on Outdated Reading Curriculum

MADISON – With state reading test scores plummeting, it’s time to turn the page on an outdated way to teach reading. On Thursday, State Representative Joel Kitchens and State Senator Duey Stroebel unveiled a bipartisan plan to revamp the way Wisconsin schools teach children to read. Representative Kitchens says it’s time for schools to shift to science-based reading instruction.

“Wisconsin is returning to the way most of us learned to read, because it works,” Kitchens said, “Our plan will help districts with this transition to the Science of Reading and make sure struggling readers are identified and get the help they need. This is a proven pathway to improving test scores.”

States like Mississippi turned their reading scores around by focusing on teaching the Science of Reading and screening young readers. Mississippi’s 4th graders improved to 29th in the national rankings and tied the national average for the first time. Mississippi was the only state to make significant gains in 4th-grade reading.

LRB – 2748/LRB - 3540 are modeled after the “Mississippi Miracle” and will spot struggling readers sooner, create an intervention plan for each student, change the way the state teaches reading, train new and current teachers in the science of reading, provide coaching assistance for schools, allow parents and taxpayers to see how schools are progressing in reading scores, and develop model retention policies for school districts.

“Wisconsin currently faces a literacy crisis,” Stroebel said, “In 2022, nearly 70% of Wisconsin 4th graders were not reading at grade level. This is the lowest recorded score since 1998. Further, students are four times more likely to not graduate if they aren’t reading at grade level by 3rd grade. This bill will get Wisconsin back on track to close achievement gaps in reading and language arts by shifting to a Science of Reading approach.”

The two lawmakers are currently seeking cosponsors for the bill.

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