



ROSENSTEIN, FIST & RINGOLD

RED BANNER UPDATE

Date: June 30, 2024

Re: SB 362

Signed: June 14, 2024

Effective: July 1, 2024

Topic: Reading Sufficiency Act—Strong Readers Act

Summary: The bill **extensively** amends existing law (70 O.S. § 6-200 and 70 O.S. § 1210.508A, et seq.) previously known as the “Reading Sufficiency Act.” The new bill, known now as the “Strong Readers Act,” intends to “ensure that progression from one grade to another is determined, in part, upon proficiency in reading, that school district board of education policies facilitate reading instruction and intervention services to address student reading needs, and that each student and his or her parent or legal guardian be informed of that student’s reading progress...”

Importantly, the bill removes provisions regarding retention of third graders who are not reading on grade-level. Rather than being held back, these students must instead be provided intensive intervention services.

The revised act also specifically prohibits districts from using the three-cueing system model of teaching students to read following the 2024-2025 school year. This includes any model of teaching students to read based on meaning, structure, syntax, and visual cues, which may also be known as meaning, structure, and visual (MSV), balanced literacy, or whole language.

In addition, the act expands the requirements for the administration of reading skills screening at the beginning, middle and end of each school year to all students in kindergarten, first, second and third grades. Previously, only kindergarten students were required to undergo screening. Reading skills screening must include phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Districts must use a screening instrument approved by the state.



Finally, the bill establishes the “Statewide Literacy Revolving Fund.” The purpose of the Fund will be to (1) implement training in the science of reading in teacher preparation programs, and (2) support teacher preparation programs in development and implementing a micro-credential in science of reading for certified teachers.

A detailed explanation of the many revisions to the Act are beyond the scope of this brief alert. A copy of the signed bill is being posted with this Red Banner for review.

Legal counsel at the firm is currently reviewing this legislation and will be advising clients as to any recommended changes to existing district policies.