



2025-2026 General Assembly

# SENATE BILL 257: 2026 Appropriations Act, Sec. 7.8: Elementary and Middle School Literacy Improvement

**Analysis of:** S.L. 2026-41, Sec. 7.8

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**Prepared by:** Legislative Analysis  
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Section 7.8 of S.L. 2026-41 (Senate Bill 257) requires local school administrative units (LEAs) to assess students in kindergarten through fifth grade with valid, reliable, formative, and diagnostic reading assessments provided by the State Board of Education (SBE). Previously, only students in kindergarten through third grade were required to complete these assessments.

Similar to students in kindergarten through third grade, students in fourth and fifth grade who demonstrate difficulty with reading development based on the results of the assessments must receive an Individual Reading Plan. LEAs must provide notice to parents or guardians of students in fourth or fifth grade who are demonstrating difficulty with reading development or are not reading on grade level.

Additionally, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) must contract with Lexia Learning Systems, LLC, to provide Lexia Aspire Professional Learning to middle school teachers during the 2026-2027 school year. DPI must prioritize participation by teachers whose students would receive the most benefit from the training, including English Language Arts and Exceptional Children teachers. Any remaining funds can be used to provide additional Lexia Aspire Professional Learning to teachers or other educational personnel at the State or local level. The SBE must develop literacy standards for grades six through eight to align with Lexia Aspire Professional Learning.

This section became effective July 1, 2026.

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