

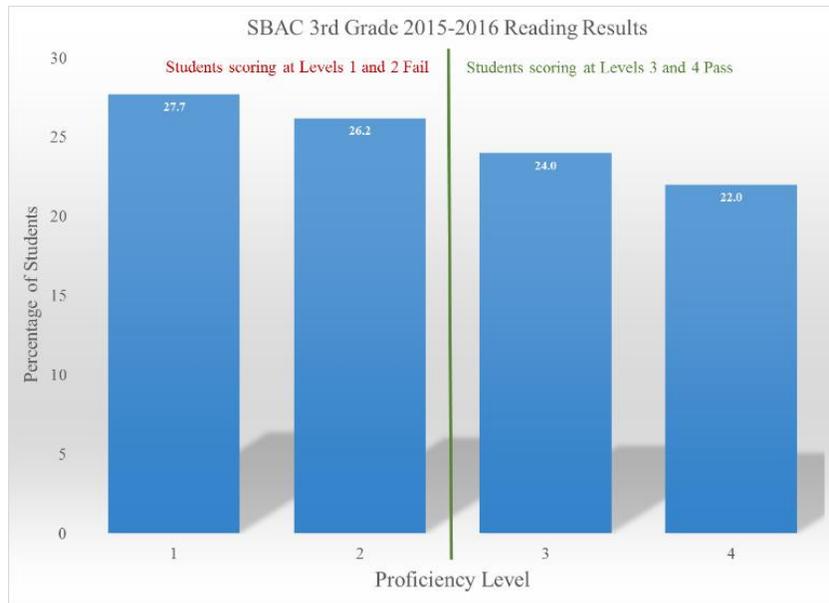
Senate Bill No. 391 (SB391) Read by Three: Revision Options that will Help Students

This brief is provided to support the aspects of SB391 that lead to increased literacy skills, to clarify the negative impacts that SB391 will have, and to offer ideas for revisions that would help our students in Nevada read well. SB391’s provisions for Kindergarten through 3rd early interventions and intervention plans for students who are reading below grade level are right on target. However, as SB391 currently stands, *over 50% of our students may be retained in third grade and retention has significant impacts, financially, academically, and psychologically.*

SB391 could be the ultimate Literacy Bill by removing retention and mandating interventions for all elementary students who are reading below grade level until they are reading on grade level.

Retention Evidence—SBAC and MAPs Data:

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and Measures of Academic Progress® (MAPs) are standards’ based, large-scale measures that aim to assess students’ knowledge of Common Core Standards. Last year, 53.9% of third graders in Nevada *failed* the SBAC in reading. Since all large-scale assessments yield a normal distribution (bell curve) of scores, the skewed distribution of results appears to support that Common Core Standards do not adequately address appropriate developmental functioning, let alone the instructional needs of English language learners and students with reading disabilities.



(Data source: www.nevadareportcard.com)

More importantly, MAPs is a similar, standards-based measure, assessing student performance on Common Core Standards with achievement expectations that typically fall at the 50th percentile.

Retention Impact—Financial:

If we estimate a sample budget based on the most recent SBAC performance, after the first year of retention in 2019 *an estimated additional 189.6 million dollars* will be needed to educate the students who will have been retained.

SAMPLE BUDGET IMPACT			
Total # Third Graders in NV 2015-16	Number* of 3 rd Graders who failed Reading SBACs in 2015-16	Estimated Educational cost per Student/Year	Estimated additional education cost for students retained due to SB391
37,745	20,345	\$9321	\$189,635,745

*(Calculated: Total Enrollment: 37,745 * Percent of third graders who failed: 0.539 = 20,345)

(Sources: <http://www.doe.nv.gov/DataCenter/Enrollment/>; https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/2016_NEA_Rankings_And_Estimates.pdf)

Retention Impact—Academic and Psychological:

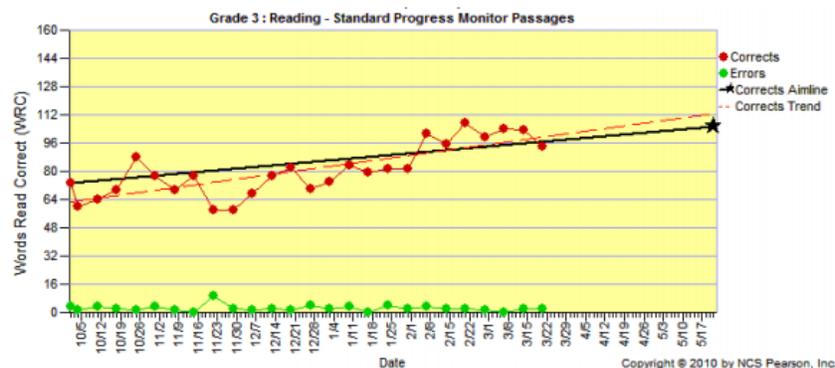
Research indicates that *retention has significant negative impacts on students' academic progress* (Hong & Yu, 2008; Wu, West, & Hughes, 2008; Hughes, Chen, Thoemmes, & Kwok, 2010; Jimerson & Renshaw, 2012) and *mental health*. Academically, students who are retained typically do not improve long-term, do not catch up with their peers (without targeted intervention), perform lower than other struggling students who were not retained, and suffer increased high school drop-out rates. Psychologically, “retention is predictive of emotional distress, low self-esteem, poor peer relations, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug abuse, early sexual activity, suicidal intentions, and violent behaviors during adolescence” (Jimerson & Renshaw, 2012; pp 12-13).

SB391 could be *the ultimate Literacy Bill* with revisions including:

- **Elimination of the retention component** AND
- A focus on best practices in K-5 literacy development:
 - Intervention plans for *all* K-5 students reading below grade level
 - **Quality reading interventions for all struggling readers until data indicate that they are reading on grade level**
 - Frequent progress monitoring, that yields a valid *rate of learning*
 - Data-driven instructional modifications until *rate of learning* narrows and closes achievement gaps
 - Time for students to methodically close the achievement gap

Mandate Frequent Progress Monitoring:

Frequent progress monitoring yields *rate of learning data*. Instead of one-shot testing (e.g., SBACs, MAPs), rate of learning data show when *students who are below grade level are narrowing and closing achievement gaps* in reading skills.



Mandate Data-Driven Instructional Practices:

Multi-tiered systems of support offer best practices and work for the majority of students (Shinn & Walker, 2010). They include:

- Universal screening for reading difficulties.
- A multi-tiered, data-driven instructional system providing early and intensive evidence-based instruction and direct interventions to help all students read well.
- Opportunities to learn at their instructional levels for students from diverse backgrounds, English language learners, students in special education, and those needing to overcome various environmental impacts.
- Changes in instruction/intervention based on each student's rate of growth and skill deficits.

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