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Subject: Reading Coach Proviso

This certainly isn't the finished product...I'm not in love with it yet. It's a first draft, though.

One thing I should say is that I'm writing this version to be more stripped-down than I intend to write the real permanent enabling language for the bill. If the proviso is only intended to be for one year, then some of the longer-term language might not be a great fit in this context. For instance, I feel like the qualifications might have to be a bit soft in this proviso version. If this proviso makes it into the budget (and if a permanent law isn't passed first), then the proviso might not become law until June...that doesn't give the Department long to set the minimum qualifications, or districts long to find qualifying coaches. I'm a little worried about being overly prescriptive with the qualifications for FY 2014-15, given that timetable.

In a perfect world, you'd pass a permanent law to establish this program well before the budget is adopted...then you wouldn't have to even deal with qualifications in the proviso, because the permanent law would already be in place and the Department would already be implementing.

I feel like the top half of (B) especially needs some tweaking still. Also, the text below lets the Department keep \$150k to implement all this. That theoretically wouldn't work, since I calculated the funding level for this program to the precise amount needed to fund each school's allocation. Some will reject the money, though, and some will hire a coach for less than the maximum. Others won't be able to find anyone to hire until September or October, so presumably, if this thing actually plays out at the recommended level, I wouldn't be surprised if the trap-door language in (E) dumped a couple million into the neediest districts' professional development.

One other nuance I feel I should note – the proviso generally gives money to the districts, since they handle the accounting, but the eligibility criteria are tied to the individual elementary schools themselves, and that's where the money is targeted. That said, the trap door in (E) distributes money to all the districts that contain at least one elementary school that is at or above 20% on Not Met 1 or 2, and the professional development money would then stay and be used at the district level. I'm not sure I want it to stay that way, but again...first draft. Thanks.

CLS

New Proviso 1.XX (SDE: Reading Coaches):

- (A) Funds appropriated for Reading Coaches must be allocated to school districts by the Department of Education as follows:
- 1) for each elementary school in which twenty percent or more of the students scored either Not Met 1 or Not Met 2 on the reading and research test in the most recent year for which such data are available, the school district shall be eligible to receive the lesser of either \$62,730 or the actual cost of salary and benefits for a full-time reading coach; and
 - 2) for each elementary school in which fewer than twenty percent of the students scored either Not Met 1 or Not Met 2 on the reading and research test during the same period, the school district shall be eligible to receive the lesser of either \$31,365 or fifty percent of the actual cost of salary and benefits for a full-time reading coach. A school district must provide a 1:1 local match for each state dollar provided under this paragraph.
- (B) Funds appropriated for Reading Coaches may not be used to supplant existing school district expenditures, but may only be used for a dedicated reading coach, who shall provide services including but not limited to:
- 1) modeling effective instructional strategies for teachers;
 - 2) facilitating study groups;
 - 3) training teachers in data analysis and using data to differentiate instruction;
 - 4) coaching and mentoring colleagues;

- 5) providing daily support to classroom teachers;
- 6) working with teachers to ensure that research-based reading programs are implemented with fidelity;
- 7) helping to increase instructional density to meet the needs of all students;
- 8) helping lead and support reading leadership teams at their school(s);
- 9) continuing to increase their knowledge base in best practices in reading instruction, intervention, and instructional reading strategies;
- 10) working with all teachers (including content area, and elective areas) in the school they serve, prioritizing their time to those teachers, activities, and roles that will have the greatest impact on student achievement, namely coaching and mentoring in classrooms; and
- 11) working frequently with students in whole and small group instruction in the context of modeling and coaching in other teachers' classrooms.

A reading coach must not:

- 1) be assigned a regular classroom teaching assignment;
- 2) perform administrative functions that will confuse their role for teachers; or
- 3) devote a significant portion of his or her time to administering or coordinating assessments.

(C) No later than August 1, 2014, the Department of Education must publish guidelines that define the minimum qualifications for a reading coach for Fiscal Year 2014-15. These guidelines must deem any licensed teacher qualified if he or she:

- 1) holds a bachelor's degree and an add-on endorsement for literacy, or
- 2) holds a master's degree in reading or a closely-related field.

Within these guidelines, the Department of Education must also establish a process for Fiscal Year 2014-15 through which an elementary school may be permitted to use the allocation granted under subsection (A) in order to obtain in-school reading coaching services from a department-approved consultant or vendor, in the event that the school is not successful in identifying and directly employing a qualified candidate. The provisions of subsection (A), including the local match requirements, shall also apply to any allocations made pursuant to this paragraph.

(D) The Department of Education must develop procedures for monitoring the use of funds appropriated for Reading Coaches to ensure they are applied to their intended uses and are not redirected for other purposes. The Department of Education may receive up to \$150,000 of the funds appropriated for Reading Coaches in order to implement this program, provided that this allocation does not exceed the department's actual costs.

(E) Prior to the close of the current fiscal year, any remaining funds for Reading Coaches shall be distributed by the Department of Education among the school districts containing elementary schools that were eligible for and which elected to receive funding under subsection (A)(1) of this proviso; these funds shall be distributed in proportion to these districts' relative shares of students who scored either Not Met 1 or Not Met 2 on the research and reading test in the most recent year for which such data are available. Funds distributed under this subsection must be used exclusively to support reading-related professional development for teachers.

(F) The Department of Education shall require:

- 1) any school district receiving funding under subsection (A) to identify the name and qualifications of the supported reading coach; and
- 2) any school district receiving funding under subsection (E) to account for the specific amounts and uses of such funds.

(G) Funds appropriated for Reading Coaches shall be retained and carried forward to be used for the same purpose.

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