

1 State of Arkansas  
2 92nd General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2019  
4

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 664

5 By: Senator Elliott  
6 By: Representative Scott  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CORRECTIONS SCHOOL SYSTEM, THE  
10 SCIENCE OF READING, AND DYSLEXIA SCREENING AND  
11 INTERVENTION SERVICES; TO REQUIRE A NEWLY COMMITTED  
12 INMATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION TO UNDERGO A  
13 READING ASSESSMENT AND DYSLEXIA SCREENING DURING THE  
14 INTAKE PROCESS; TO REQUIRE THAT INMATES WHO READ  
15 BELOW THE REQUIRED PROFICIENCY LEVEL OR DEMONSTRATE  
16 MARKERS OF DYSLEXIA BE PROVIDED WITH APPROPRIATE  
17 INTERVENTION SERVICES; TO REQUIRE THAT CURRENT  
18 INMATES RECEIVE INFORMATION REGARDING DYSLEXIA AND  
19 DYSLEXIA INTERVENTION SERVICES; TO REQUIRE THAT AN  
20 INDIVIDUAL WHO TEACHES AT A SCHOOL WITHIN THE  
21 CORRECTIONS SCHOOL SYSTEM DEMONSTRATE PROFICIENCY AND  
22 AWARENESS OF THE BEST PRACTICES OF SCIENTIFIC READING  
23 INSTRUCTION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
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## Subtitle

26 TO REQUIRE THAT NEW INMATES RECEIVE  
27 READING ASSESSMENTS AND DYSLEXIA  
28 SCREENINGS; TO REQUIRE READING AND  
29 DYSLEXIA SERVICES; AND TO REQUIRE  
30 CORRECTIONS TEACHERS KNOW BEST PRACTICES  
31 OF SCIENTIFIC READING INSTRUCTION.  
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35 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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1 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative intent.

2 The General Assembly finds that:

3 (1) Individuals undergo a process known as "intake" when  
4 entering the Department of Correction system as a new inmate;

5 (2) The intake process for new inmates can take at least three  
6 (3) to five (5) days, and sometimes longer in certain situations;

7 (3) During intake, inmates are given an academic examination  
8 amongst other relevant examinations;

9 (4) The inmate population of the department is approximately  
10 eighteen thousand (18,000);

11 (5) The mission of the department is to:

12 (A) Protect public safety by carrying out the mandate of  
13 the courts;

14 (B) Provide a safe and humane environment for all staff  
15 members and inmates;

16 (C) Strengthen the work ethic of inmates through teaching  
17 and instilling good habits; and

18 (D) Provide opportunities for staff members and inmates to  
19 improve spiritually, mentally, and physically;

20 (6) Part of the mission and vision of the department is to  
21 provide correctional services that return inmates to the community as  
22 productive people; and

23 (7) Central to achieving the mission and vision of the  
24 department is making sure that inmates return to the community as proficient  
25 readers.

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27 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 12, Chapter 29, Subchapter 3, is  
28 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

29 12-29-311. Dyslexia screening – Science of reading – Intervention  
30 services.

31 (a) Within thirty (30) calendar days, excluding holidays, of being  
32 committed to the Department of Correction, an inmate's reading proficiency  
33 level shall be assessed and a dyslexia screening shall be delivered with  
34 fidelity, as defined under § 6-41-602.

35 (b) If a reading assessment or dyslexia screening under subsection (a)  
36 of this section indicates that an inmate is reading below the level of

1 proficiency required to be a high-functioning reader, the inmate shall be  
2 provided:

3 (1) Evidence-based reading intervention based on the science of  
4 reading; and

5 (2) Dyslexia intervention that is evidence-based according to  
6 the Department of Higher Education compilation of appropriate intervention  
7 programs under Act 83 of 2019.

8 (c) An intervention provided for an inmate who is reading below the  
9 level of proficiency required to be a high-functioning reader under  
10 subsection (b) of this section shall be administered with fidelity, as  
11 defined under § 6-41-602.

12 (d) Current Department of Correction inmates shall be:

13 (1) Provided with information that explains what dyslexia is in  
14 a common and easily understandable language;

15 (2) Offered and encouraged to submit to dyslexia screening; and

16 (3) Provided with dyslexia intervention with fidelity, as  
17 defined under § 6-41-602, in the same manner as required for newly committed  
18 inmates under subsection (b) of this section.

19 (e) An individual who teaches nonreaders and inmates reading at a  
20 sixth-grade level and below at a school within the Corrections School System  
21 shall:

22 (1) Have and demonstrate proficient knowledge and skills to  
23 teach reading consistent with the best practices of scientific reading  
24 instruction as required under the Right to Read Act, § 6-17-429; and

25 (2) Administer reading instruction with fidelity, as defined  
26 under § 6-41-602.

27 (f) An individual who teaches inmates reading at a seventh-grade level  
28 and above at a school within the Corrections School System shall:

29 (1) Have and demonstrate awareness of the best practices of  
30 scientific reading instruction as required under the Right to Read Act, § 6-  
31 17-429; and

32 (2) Administer reading instruction with fidelity, as defined  
33 under § 6-41-602.

34 (g) The Department of Correction:

35 (1) Shall promulgate rules for implementing this section; and

36 (2) May consult with the Department of Education and make use of

1 Department of Education resources in order to implement this section.  
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