

### Element Detail 3c

**Element:** Commission's Preliminary Report calls for the reorganization of schools so that teachers trained to diagnose and address students' learning needs can work collaboratively to monitor students and intervene when a student is struggling. Teachers would meet regularly to monitor student progress, decide on an intervention – academic or referral to services – and assign a single teacher to take responsibility for following the student until he or she is back on track. (See Working Group 2 elements)

As it will take several years to put this system in place, it will be necessary to develop a transitional program to address the needs of struggling learners. This will be a **tutoring program** for all students identified by their teachers as needing tutoring in reading. MSDE should develop guidelines for districts to use to assure that the districts use funds appropriated for this purpose for the highest priority students in the most efficient way possible. Over time, the roles of tutoring students will be assigned to regular teachers as their time is freed up to do this work and they are trained in diagnosing and addressing learning difficulties. [Note: Suggest to WG #2 that they include teacher PD and sufficient time in the school day for this purpose]

Just as the Commission's Interim Report proposed several measures to greatly reduce the proportion of students falling behind, it also proposed measures for enriching the curriculum for students who need and could benefit from challenges that go beyond the standard curriculum. MSDE will need additional funding to develop options for students who need opportunities for academic acceleration and enrichment.

### **Design Assumptions for Transitional Program:**

1. All K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students identified by teachers as needing literacy or numeracy support should be provided with tutoring in small groups of students
2. The aim of the tutoring is to get students to a proficient standard at each grade level
3. Students will transition out of tutoring support as soon as their teacher determines they are ready
4. Students in upper elementary school who continue to need tutoring should continue to get these services
5. Tutors should be trained reading and math specialists
6. As a new system is implemented, school leaders and teachers should be trained in new approaches to supporting students. This will involve three strands of training: training for school leaders on the system of supports; training for veteran teachers in schools; and training for new teachers in teacher prep institutions on the pedagogy as well as the new system.
7. The special education system would remain in place for students with disabilities, but as more students are supported early, fewer students will be referred for special education services

### **Implementation Considerations:**

1. HB 1415 (Chapter 361) authorizes funding for evidence-based early literacy intervention in grades K-8 with a priority for K-3<sup>rd</sup> graders in a school with a high concentration of students living in poverty. The bill mandates \$2.5 million in each of fiscal 2019 through 2022 for the program.
2. HB 1415 funding expires after fiscal 2022, with a requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of the program at that time. Because tutors are considered a transitional program, needed until teachers have time and capacity to provide this support themselves, it is not anticipated that funding will be renewed.

### **Other Options:**

1. Current legislation (HB 1415) funds reading tutors; could expand to include math tutors as well
2. Many students should be able to transition from tutoring by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
3. As expertise in diagnosing and supporting learning difficulties is added to teacher preparation and schools are organized in ways to allow teachers time to provide this support directly, this activity can be phased out.

