
HOUSE BILL 2142

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representatives Corry, Callan, Couture, and Reeves

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1 AN ACT Relating to creating a reading coaches grant program;
2 adding a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; creating a new section;
3 and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

6 (a) The educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability
7 committee reported in 2023 that the COVID-19 pandemic showed there
8 has been a "failure to produce equitable outcomes for all students";

9 (b) Every child should have an equal opportunity to learn,
10 regardless of the child's zip code, poverty level, or race;

11 (c) In the 2022-23 school year, 52 percent of, or 38,000, third
12 grade students did not meet the proficiency standard on the statewide
13 assessment in English language arts;

14 (d) There is a correlation between poverty level and low reading
15 literacy. Low-income third grade students score, on average, 32
16 percentage points lower on the English language arts assessment than
17 their nonlow-income peers;

18 (e) A reading coach can help improve the reading skills of
19 elementary school students; and

20 (f) Many school districts are unable to fund reading coaches or
21 other reading literacy initiatives out of local dollars.

1 (2) In order to improve the reading literacy rate in this state
2 and to close the opportunity gap, the legislature intends to
3 establish the reading coaches grant program.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) Subject to the funds appropriated specifically for this
7 purpose, the reading to ensure academic development grant program,
8 known as the READ grant program, is established to improve early
9 elementary student literacy.

10 (2) Beginning September 1, 2024, the office of the superintendent
11 of public instruction may award up to 125 READ grants. Grants may not
12 exceed \$75,000 per year for four years, per elementary school. Grants
13 may be awarded to one or more elementary schools within an applying
14 school district.

15 (3) (a) In making grant allocations, the office of the
16 superintendent of public instruction must give priority to elementary
17 schools with the highest percentages of tested students receiving a
18 score of basic or below basic on the third grade statewide assessment
19 in English language arts in the previous school year. The office may
20 also consider the percentage of students qualifying for free or
21 reduced-price meals and the percentage of students participating in
22 English language learner programs.

23 (b) For the purposes of this subsection, the office of the
24 superintendent of public instruction must exclude the following from
25 the calculation of a school's percentage of tested students:

26 (i) Students enrolled in the transitional bilingual instruction
27 program unless the student has participated in the program for three
28 school years; and

29 (ii) Students with disabilities whose individualized education
30 program specifies a different standard to measure reading performance
31 than is required for the statewide assessment in English language
32 arts.

33 (4) School districts with an elementary school that receives
34 grant funds under this section must use the funds to hire reading
35 coaches in the awarded elementary school. As used in this section, a
36 reading coach is a classified staff person, with at least two years
37 of experience teaching literacy skills to students, who provides
38 additional educational support services to elementary students to
39 improve their reading skills.

1 (5) (a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
2 must evaluate the READ grant program, in collaboration with
3 recipients of the grants in this section, and prepare a report on the
4 outcomes of the program. The report must include a comparison between
5 the third grade statewide English language arts assessment scores,
6 both proficiency and growth rates, of the awarded elementary schools
7 and the scores of comparable schools. A preliminary report is due
8 November 30, 2026, and a final report is due November 30, 2028.

9 (b) The report required by (a) of this subsection must be
10 submitted to the appropriate committees of the house of
11 representatives and the senate, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036.

12 (6) This section expires July 1, 2029.

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