
HOUSE BILL 2728

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session

By Representatives Stokesbary, Manweller, S. Hunt, and Johnson

Read first time 01/19/16. Referred to Committee on Education.

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 2015 that "The opportunity gap in Washington
8 state is persistent, pervasive, and unacceptable";

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 2014-15 school year, forty-eight percent of, or
12 thirty-eight thousand, third grade students did not meet the
13 proficiency standard on the statewide assessment in English language
14 arts;

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

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

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

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

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

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

12 (2) Beginning September 1, 2016, the office of the superintendent
13 of public instruction may award up to one hundred twenty-five READ
14 grants. Grants may not exceed seventy-five thousand dollars per year
15 for four years, per elementary school. Grants may be awarded to one
16 or more elementary schools within an applying school district.

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

25 (b) For the purposes of this subsection (3), the office of the
26 superintendent of public instruction must exclude the following from
27 the calculation of a school's percentage of tested students:

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

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

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

1 additional educational support services to elementary students to
2 improve their reading skills.

3 (5)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
4 must evaluate the reading to ensure academic development grant
5 program, in collaboration with recipients of the grants in this
6 section, and prepare a report on the outcomes of the program. The
7 report must include a comparison between the third grade statewide
8 English language arts assessment scores, both proficiency and growth
9 rates, of the awarded elementary schools and the scores of comparable
10 schools. A preliminary report is due November 30, 2018, and a final
11 report is due November 30, 2020.

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

15 (6) This section expires July 1, 2021.

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