

The READ Act: HOW ALABAMA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

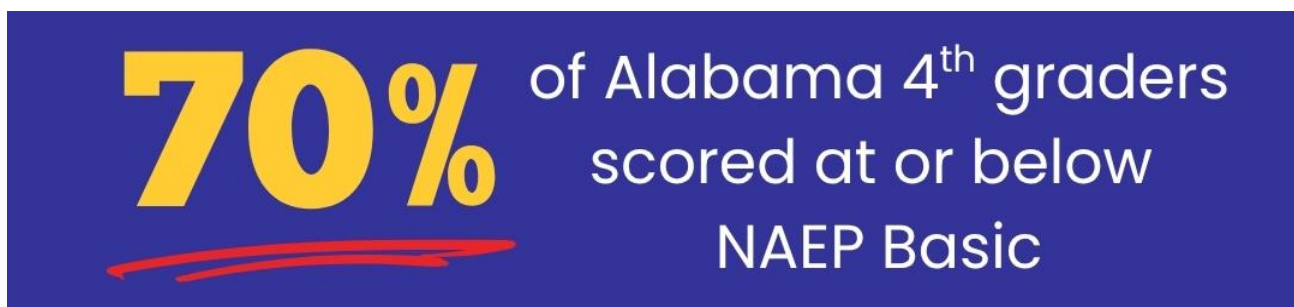
What is the READ Act?

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The bill modernizes CLSD for the first time since it was authorized under ESSA in 2015, through targeted structural changes that empower states to direct federal dollars to proven literacy strategies. The READ Act:

- **Defines the science of reading and rules out what failed.** The statutory definition explicitly excludes contextual-guessing approaches like three-cueing, finally updating federal law with the research clearly established in the 2000 National Reading panel.
 - **Raises the bar for evidence.** Redefines “evidence-based” to exclude the third and fourth tiers, limiting funded activities to strong or moderate evidence.
 - **Empowers states to build capacity.** Lowers the district pass-through floor from 95 percent to 75 percent - increasing the share states can keep for statewide coaching networks, literacy screenings, teacher preparation reform, and high-quality instructional materials: the exact levers Mississippi and Louisiana pulled to achieve success.
 - **Targets the lowest performers.** Priority goes to states that are consistently in the lowest quintile of 4th-grade reading on NAEP, providing guaranteed funding for states to develop and implement literacy plans. Currently, Alaska, DC, Delaware, Michigan, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, and West Virginia would be eligible for priority. All states will remain eligible for competitive funding.
 - **Fixes the educator pipeline.** Requires states to evaluate their teacher preparation programs and align certification with the science of reading, so that all teachers arrive ready on Day One in the classroom. Right now, too many future teachers take on debt for a credential that never actually prepares them to teach kids how to read, only to be retrained the moment they walk into a classroom - a monumental waste of their money and students' time.
 - **Screens kids early, and tells parents the truth.** Requires schools to assess all children for learning difficulties at least once before third grade, catching reading struggles before it's too late. Right now, 90% of parents believe their children are reading on grade level when only about a third actually are. The READ Act would also require schools to notify parents of the screening results within 30 days and explain how the school will help them catch up and what parents can do to support at home.
 - **Encourages states and districts to invest in what works.** Requires states to develop a list of high-quality, evidence-based curricula so that districts aren't left guessing about what works. The READ Act also encourages states and districts to invest in proven strategies, such as literacy coaches, tutoring, and summer learning programs.
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How are Alabama students performing?



How does the READ Act support Alabama students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Alabama has strong literacy policies that informed the development of the READ Act, helping to drive some of the strongest literacy gains in the country on NAEP. They banned three-cueing, require SEA guidance for district adoption of HQIM, and have robust systems for training and coaching educators. They also implemented universal literacy screenings with evidence-based interventions. Alabama already requires schools to notify parents in writing within 15 days when a K-3 student shows a reading deficiency, provide a reading improvement plan with at-home strategies, and report progress monthly. The READ Act would extend that notification requirement through 8th grade, aligning with Alabama's recent focus on adolescent literacy.

Alabama has had to scale back several of the programs that have been so successful in driving achievement gains, including coaching and summer learning programs, following the loss of ESSER funds and one-time state grants. Alabama would be an excellent candidate for the CLSD program; if awarded funds, the READ Act would empower them to scale up the evidence-based strategies that they've had to cut, and to continue to fund and implement comprehensive literacy reform.

The READ Act: HOW ALASKA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

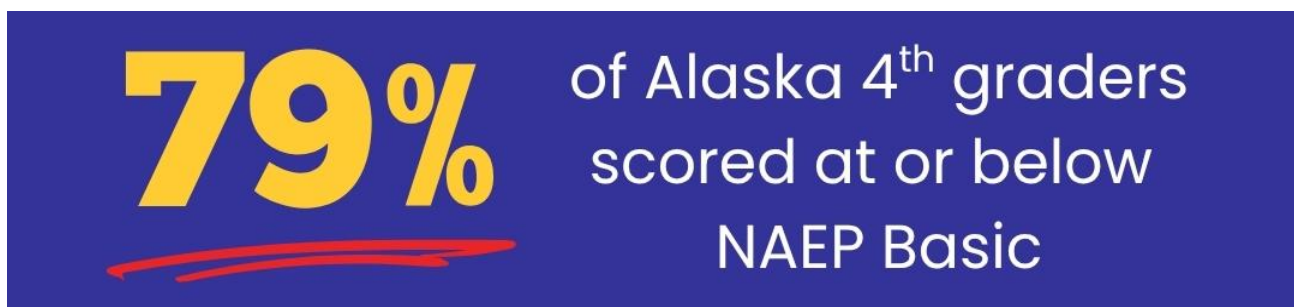
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How are Alaska students performing?



How does the READ Act support Alaska students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$50M, over five years, previous grants in 2019 and 2023

Alaska has taken steps in recent years to strengthen literacy instruction, including the passage of the Alaska Reads Act in 2022. The law established universal literacy screenings for students in kindergarten through third grade, required districts to create reading intervention plans for students who are not reading proficiently, expanded professional development opportunities for educators, and increased family notification and engagement around students' reading progress.

The Alaska Reads Act laid important groundwork for improving literacy outcomes, but Alaska continues to face significant challenges. The state remains one of the worst states in the country for literacy, and many students (particularly those in rural and remote communities) face barriers to accessing literacy specialists, high-quality instructional materials, and consistent intervention services. Implementing statewide literacy reforms is especially difficult in Alaska, where geographic challenges and teacher shortages can make it harder to provide the coaching, training, and support systems that stronger literacy frameworks depend on.

The READ Act would help Alaska build on the foundation created by the Alaska Reads Act by providing both additional resources and stronger implementation supports. Because Alaska continues to fall in the bottom quintile on NAEP, the state would be guaranteed CLSD funding until they see improvements. Dollars can be put towards evidence-based supports for both students and educators, which could include statewide virtual literacy coaching and professional learning networks that connect educators in remote communities with evidence-based training and support. Combined with stronger reporting requirements to pinpoint where literacy efforts may be falling short in implementation, these investments could help ensure that students across Alaska have access to high-quality literacy instruction regardless of where they live.

The READ Act: HOW COLORADO BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

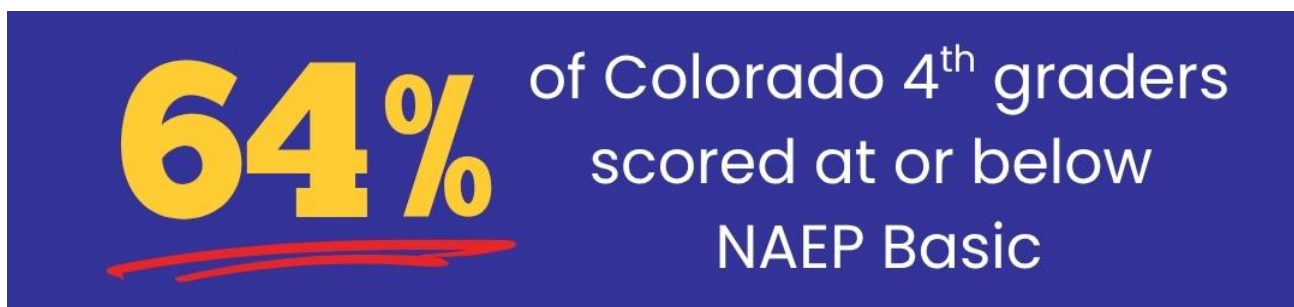
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How are Colorado students performing?



How does the READ Act support Colorado students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$21M, over 5 years

The Colorado READ Act requires K–3 teachers and 4–12 reading interventionists to complete evidence-based training in the science of reading, extends that requirement to principals and administrators, and directs the state education agency to publish lists of evidence-based reading curricula and K–3 screening assessments that districts can select from. Currently, a Colorado K-3 student identified with a significant reading deficiency receives an individualized READ plan that names the specific skill gaps, sets growth benchmarks, and gives parents concurrent strategies to reinforce instruction at home. The READ Act would strengthen this by requiring that parents be notified within 30 days of identification and extend the notification requirement through 8th grade. In addition, the state's 2025 update (SB 25-200) added screening for characteristics of dyslexia and required dyslexia talking points in communication with parents, which will be phased in in 2027.

But much of that infrastructure has been carried by state per-pupil READ funding, Early Literacy Grants, and a comparatively modest federal CLSD grant that will not stretch to cover the full scope of the work. The federal READ Act would extend Colorado's funding horizon and deepen its existing CLSD investment - sustaining the coaching, high-quality instructional materials, and intervention systems the state law already calls for, while adding additional reporting requirements to provide greater transparency into how these reforms are actually implemented in the classroom.

The READ Act: HOW CONNECTICUT BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

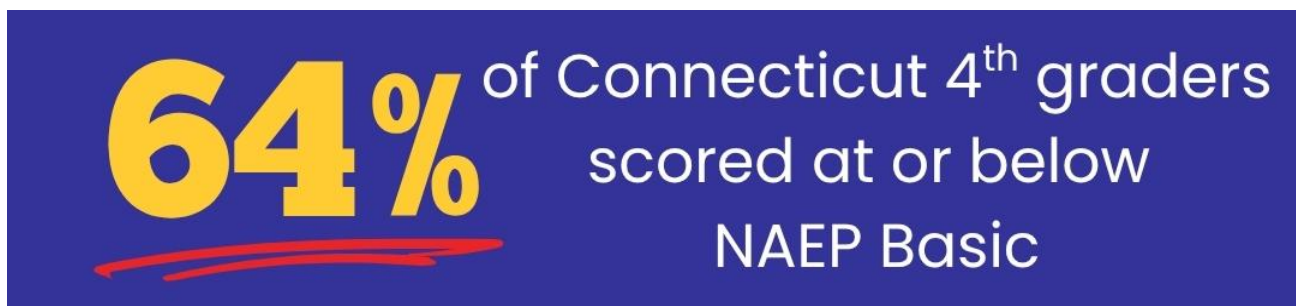
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How are Connecticut students performing?



How does the READ Act support Connecticut students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Connecticut's 2024 NAEP reading averages sit above the national average in both elementary and middle school, but that average hides one of the widest achievement gaps in the country. For years, the state has posted the nation's largest disparities between lower- and higher-income students, a divide local reporting calls "the two Connecticuts." A high statewide number is not the same as a policy that reaches every child, and the Right to Read Act left real holes.

For example, the law steers districts toward approved, evidence-based K–3 programs, but Connecticut never fully banned three-cueing, so districts can still teach children to guess at words with methods that have been proven ineffective. Currently, the literacy framework requires the principal of each elementary school to notify, in writing, the parent or guardian of any K-3 student identified as below proficient in reading, explaining why the student is below proficient and informing the parent that a remediation plan will be developed to provide supplemental instruction, including strategies for the parent to use at home. The READ Act would extend parental notification requirements through middle school, so that parents continue to be engaged in supporting their struggling readers throughout their full education.

Connecticut built much of Right to Read on one-time federal relief (roughly \$20 million in ARPA funds for Right to Read Grants in FY 2023–24). If Connecticut were to be awarded CLSD funds after the passage of the READ Act, dollars would have to go to evidence-based curricula, and reporting requirements would expand transparency not just for outcomes but for the number and demographics of children accessing the curricula, screenings, and interventions that make a difference.

The READ Act: HOW DELAWARE BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

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How are Delaware students performing?



How does the READ Act support Delaware students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Delaware has taken important steps to strengthen early literacy instruction. The state now requires districts and charter schools to adopt approved, evidence-based K–3 curricula, administer universal literacy screeners, and provide educators with professional development aligned to the science of reading. These reforms have laid the groundwork for stronger literacy instruction across the state, but most of them will not be implemented until 2027, so uncertainties remain regarding their impact. While K-3 students are screened three times a year for reading competency, **the only requirement for parental notification is that the results and any interventions will be communicated in writing, either through inclusion in periodic progress reports or report cards, or otherwise.** The READ Act would require clear communication to occur within 30 days of the screening, so that parents have the data quickly and are able to take action. The READ Act would also extend the notification to 8th grade following summative assessments, to ensure parental engagement is maintained through adolescence.

Delaware is precisely the type of state the READ Act was built to support. Its 4th grade reading scores have steadily declined over the past decade, and while state and local leaders have begun investing in early childhood literacy - allocating over \$8 million to strengthen reading instruction, educator training, and direct-to-classroom materials through the 2025-2028 Early Literacy Plan - these early efforts need sustained federal support to reverse the trend. Due to their persistent low performance, Delaware would receive absolute priority for the CLSD grant, providing them with guaranteed funding to implement comprehensive reform and requiring them to conduct a needs assessment that fully investigates the cause of their state's literacy crisis and identify any student groups that are particularly impacted.

These dollars could support literacy coaches, educator training, high-quality instructional materials, and interventions for struggling readers, while new reporting requirements would provide greater transparency into which students are receiving support and whether those investments are improving outcomes. For a state that has begun to embrace the science of reading but has yet to see meaningful gains, the READ Act offers both the resources and the structure needed to turn promising reforms into lasting results.

The READ Act: HOW FLORIDA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

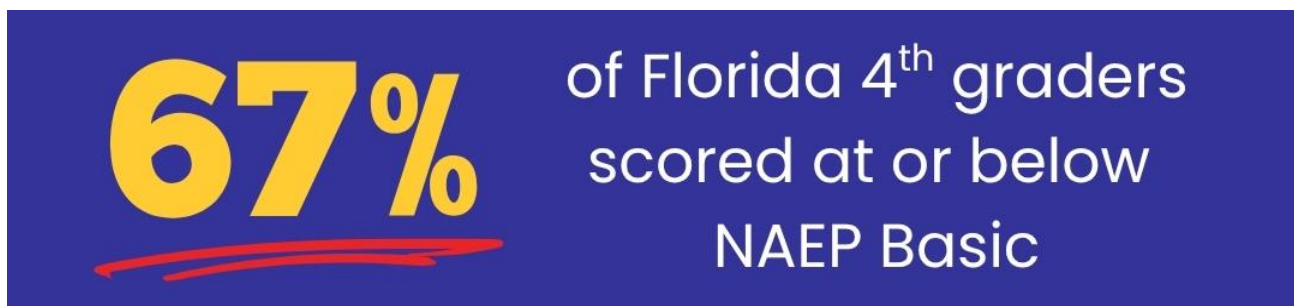
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How are Florida students performing?



How does the READ Act support Florida students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Former grantee in 2020

Florida requires universal literacy screening, evidence-based interventions, educator training, and has invested in instructional coaches to help teachers implement effective reading instruction. However, the Florida Teacher Certification Exam is not sufficient for testing educator proficiency in the science of reading. Parents of K-3 students who have been identified as having reading difficulties must be notified immediately, in writing, and consulted in the development of an intervention plan. These policies have contributed to strong early literacy outcomes: Florida consistently ranks among the highest-performing states on fourth-grade NAEP reading. However, challenges remain, particularly for students who enter the upper grades without foundational reading skills; while Florida is in the top 10 for fourth-grade reading, they rank in the bottom 10 for eighth-grade reading.

Florida's next literacy frontier is adolescent literacy, ensuring that middle and high school students receive evidence-based reading instruction across content areas, not just in early grades. The READ Act sustains CLSD requirements that 40% of subgrants are directed towards secondary schools, while encouraging states to invest in high-quality curricula, interventions, screenings, and educator coaching/training; if Florida were to be awarded competitive CLSD funds, the READ Act would provide the funding and supports for the state to scale their successes in early literacy into adolescent literacy - continuing to screen children in middle school for reading difficulties, require parental notification through 8th grade, and provide both students and teachers with the supports to fill these gaps.

The READ Act: HOW INDIANA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

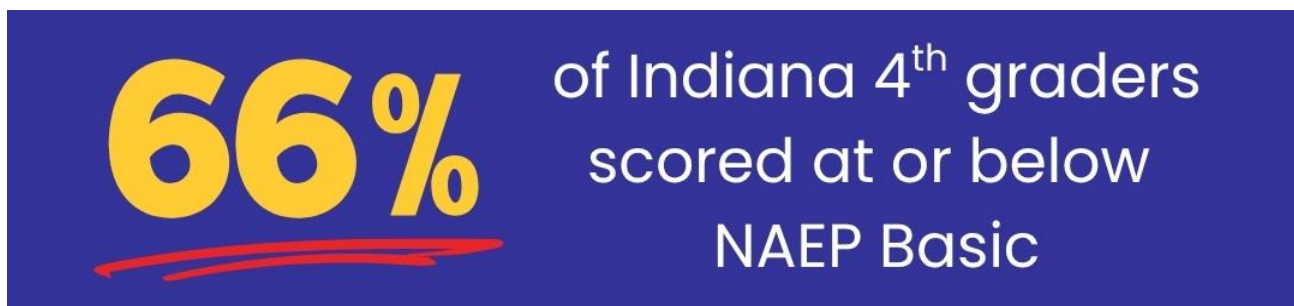
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How are Indiana students performing?



How does the READ Act support Indiana students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Indiana requires schools to use evidence-based literacy instruction, screen students for reading difficulties, and provide interventions for struggling readers. The current policy requires schools to intervene when a student is identified as having reading difficulties, and to notify and involve the student's parent or guardian in writing. However, there is no mandated timeframe for when this must happen, meaning some parents may not find out about their child's reading difficulties until it's too late. The READ Act would expand parent engagement by requiring notification within 30 days of the start of the school year as well as within 30 days following any through-year literacy screening.

Indiana is also recognized as a national exemplar for educator preparation accountability: state law requires regular review and annual reporting of every educator preparation program to ensure programs are preparing teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to deliver effective reading instruction. These policies provide a strong foundation, but implementation requires sustained resources, particularly for coaching, high-quality instructional materials, and intervention systems that reach every classroom.

Indiana is not currently a CLSD grant recipient, leaving an opportunity for the READ Act to provide the resources needed to fully realize the state's literacy vision. Currently, teachers can earn the Early Literacy Endorsement by completing an 80-hour course through the Indiana Department of Education. The course is fully funded, but only through 2027. The READ Act, co-sponsored by Senator Jim Banks, would help Indiana scale the infrastructure needed to fully support teachers and students, including evidence-based curricula, literacy coaching, and targeted interventions. The READ Act would also improve transparency through additional reporting requirements and parental notification requirements. For a state that has built one of the country's strongest literacy policy frameworks, READ Act funding would help bridge the gap between strong policy and consistent implementation.

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How are Kansas students performing?



How does the READ Act support Kansas students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Kansas has taken meaningful steps toward improving literacy instruction, including expanding professional development in the science of reading and strengthening educator preparation requirements. The state's Blueprint for Literacy provides a foundation for improving teacher knowledge and preparation, but Kansas has not yet built a comprehensive statewide literacy system with the full set of policy levers seen in leading states.

Parental notification is required *only* for 3rd grade students identified with reading difficulties through the state-approved universal literacy screening and/or dyslexia screening. Parents of these third graders must be informed about their child's literacy progress and any recommended interventions, and these communications are required at least once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester. The READ Act would expand that notification requirement to all students through 8th grade who were identified as behind grade level on the previous year's summative assessment, and require notification within 30 days of the screening or start of the school year.

Fourth-grade reading performance remains below the national average, and persistent achievement gaps demonstrate the need for stronger implementation supports, evidence-based materials, and targeted interventions. As a state still building its statewide literacy infrastructure, CLSD resources through the READ Act would provide an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, develop a statewide literacy plan, and invest in the implementation supports needed to translate policy into classroom practice. For instance, Kansas has not yet sufficiently invested in literacy coaches that help teachers translate new curricula and training into effective instruction; the READ Act would provide the resources to hire and train coaches at scale.

The READ Act: HOW KENTUCKY BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

What is the READ Act?

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How are Kentucky students performing?



How does the READ Act support Kentucky students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$55M, over five years. Also received an \$8M grant in 2019.

Kentucky has begun building a stronger literacy foundation, requiring early literacy screening, evidence-based interventions, and educator training aligned with the science of reading. The state's Reading Academies have helped expand teacher knowledge of evidence-based reading instruction, and Kentucky has taken steps to improve early literacy supports for students who are struggling.

Currently, if a Kentucky student doesn't score proficient or higher in reading on the required third-grade state assessment, the district must provide fourth-grade support. The support can be either an evidence-based reading enrichment program or intensive instructional services with progress monitoring, and parents are required to be given written notification of those interventions, including a reading improvement plan for grade 4.

However, grade 4 is often too late for struggling readers to catch up to grade level. Kentucky already screens students in earlier grades, but parental engagement is relatively weak. The READ Act would encourage the state to engage parents and intervene earlier, before reading difficulties escalate and children are advanced to middle school without a strong foundation in literacy.

The READ Act would provide Kentucky with the resources and structure needed to continue to strengthen and scale its literacy efforts, while maintaining the state's autonomy to continue doing the good work already being implemented.

The READ Act: HOW MASSACHUSETTS BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

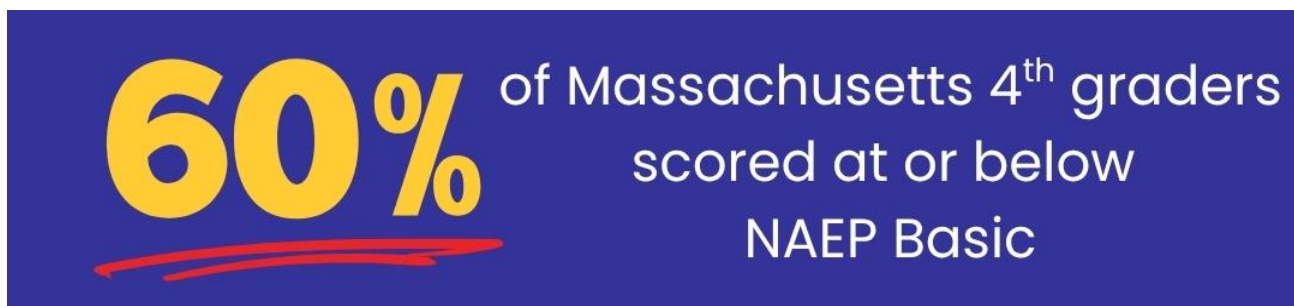
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How are Massachusetts students performing?



How does the READ Act support Massachusetts students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$38M over five years (FY24), smaller previous grants in 2020 and 2023

Massachusetts has long ranked first in the nation on fourth-grade NAEP reading, but those numbers mask serious challenges. Reading performance had been declining for nearly a decade before the pandemic accelerated learning loss, and the state continues to post some of the widest achievement gaps in the country. For too many students, particularly low-income students, Massachusetts's reputation as the nation's top-performing state has not translated into strong literacy outcomes. The passage of H.5511 reflects a growing recognition that strong average scores alone are not enough and that the state needs a more comprehensive literacy strategy.

The READ Act would help Massachusetts sustain and scale these reforms, particularly in the schools and communities that have historically been left behind. As Massachusetts implements its new literacy law, READ Act funding could support literacy coaching, high-quality instructional materials, interventions, and tutoring while strengthening transparency around implementation. Currently, Massachusetts school districts are required to assess each K-3 student's reading ability and progress twice per year, and to notify parents within 30 days of a screening result that is significantly below the relevant benchmarks. The READ Act would expand notification through 8th grade, so that parents of middle schoolers are identified at the start of each school year if their child was below grade level on the previous year's summative assessment.

Importantly, while H.5511 requires educator preparation programs to align with the science of reading, the READ Act's evaluation and reporting requirements would empower the state to audit whether that alignment is actually occurring and course-correct if it is not. For a state seeking to reverse years of declining performance and close persistent achievement gaps, the READ Act would provide both the resources and the accountability needed to turn ambitious policy into meaningful progress.

The READ Act: HOW MARYLAND BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

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How are Maryland students performing?



How does the READ Act support Maryland students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$40M over five years (FY24)

Maryland's reading outcomes present a mixed picture. While the state performs around the national average on fourth-grade NAEP reading, those results obscure troubling long-term trends: reading performance had been declining for nearly a decade before the pandemic accelerated learning loss, and Maryland has some of the widest socioeconomic achievement gaps in the country. For students in high-poverty communities, statewide averages offer little comfort. In response, Maryland has begun to strengthen its literacy framework, with State Superintendent Dr. Carrie Wright emerging as a leading advocate for evidence-based instruction, stronger educator preparation, and more coherent statewide guidance.

The READ Act would help Maryland accelerate legislative wins into meaningful classroom change. Additional guidance on allowable uses of federal funds would bolster the state's ongoing work to improve educator preparation programs and provide the support and resources needed to implement new literacy reforms. Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, students in grades PreK-3 who have been identified to have demonstrated reading difficulties shall receive a Student Reading Improvement Plan. However, each district must develop their own process and procedures for parental notification. The READ Act would require notification within 30 days, through grade 8. Just as importantly, the READ Act's transparency and evaluation requirements would allow Maryland to track whether districts, schools, and preparation programs are actually putting these policies into practice and whether students are benefiting from them.

The READ Act: HOW MAINE BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

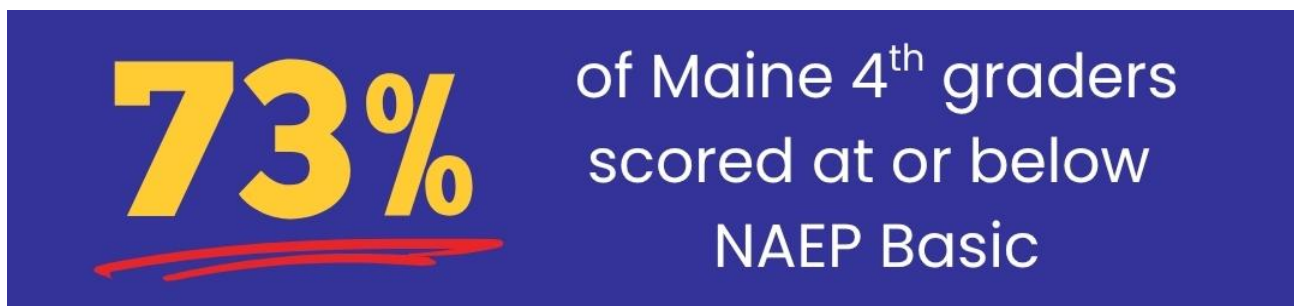
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How are Maine students performing?



How does the READ Act support Maine students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Maine's fourth-grade reading scores are in the bottom 10 nationwide, with scores plummeting over the past decade. If Maine continues to rank in the bottom quintile on the 2026 NAEP assessment, they will be eligible for guaranteed funding under the READ Act. Alongside this funding, Maine would be required to conduct a needs assessment and create a comprehensive literacy plan, finally spurring the state to tackle the proven literacy reforms that the rest of the country has begun.

Among these reforms, the READ Act would require the state to create a list of high-quality instructional materials, implement universal early literacy screenings with mandatory parental notification, notify parents within 30 days of receiving a result of reading deficiency, and ensure teacher preparation programs are aligned with the science of reading. The READ Act would also provide additional dollars for the state to fund interventions for struggling readers as well as coaching and professional development for educators. Ultimately, this legislation would be an essential turning point for Maine to finally embrace comprehensive literacy reform and turn around a decade of declining achievement.

The READ Act: HOW MISSOURI BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

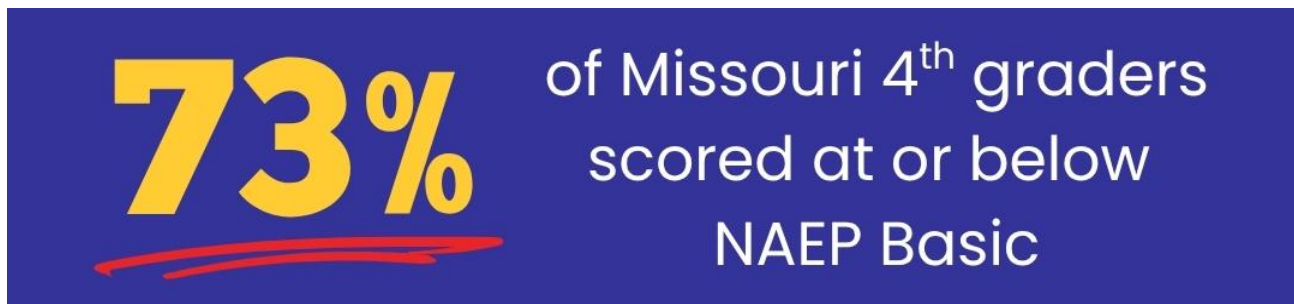
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How are Missouri students performing?



How does the READ Act support Missouri students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$49M over five years, also awarded small grants in 2020 and 2023

Missouri has made important investments in literacy infrastructure, particularly around universal literacy screenings. Yet the state continues to face significant challenges in reading achievement, with fourth-grade NAEP scores remaining below the national average and facing persistent declines over the past decade. While Missouri has successfully competed for substantial federal literacy funding during each CLSD grant cycle, it has not yet established some of the statewide accountability mechanisms that have distinguished the strongest literacy reform, including rigorous reviews of educator preparation programs.

The READ Act would help Missouri build on the progress it has already made by sustaining investments in literacy coaching, instructional materials, and interventions. Missouri already screens all K-3 students for reading proficiency at the start and end of each school year, updates parents on their child's progress at least four times a year, and gives every family a plan with guided at-home reading suggestions. The READ Act would strengthen the existing framework by requiring parental notification within 30 days of results, as well as expanding notification requirements through the 8th grade so that middle school parents are in the loop if their child was below-grade level on the previous year's assessment.

Additionally, by requiring states to evaluate whether preparation programs are actually equipping future teachers with evidence-based literacy practices – and to course-correct when they are not– the READ Act would strengthen Missouri's educator pipeline while increasing transparency around implementation. For a state that has already demonstrated its commitment to literacy through repeated CLSD awards, the READ Act would provide the accountability and infrastructure needed to translate those investments into stronger outcomes for students.

The READ Act: HOW NEW JERSEY BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

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How are New Jersey students performing?



How does the READ Act support New Jersey students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$50M over five years (FY24)

Despite remaining among the top five states on fourth-grade reading on NAEP, New Jersey has not enacted the kind of comprehensive literacy reforms adopted by many peer states. While the state has expanded access to early literacy screenings and professional development in recent years, it lacks a coordinated statewide strategy to align teacher preparation and ongoing educator support with the science of reading.

New Jersey's strong overall performance masks concerns trends. Fourth-grade reading scores have declined since 2017, and the state continues to post some of the nation's largest socioeconomic achievement gaps. For students in high-poverty communities, statewide averages tell a very different story. At the same time, New Jersey has lagged behind other high-performing states in building the infrastructure needed to fully prepare educators. The state does little to ensure teacher preparation programs are aligned with the science of reading, nor has it invested in coordinated coaching efforts to help teachers implement new curricula and translate the research into their classrooms.

The READ Act would provide New Jersey with both the resources and the framework needed to address these gaps. The READ Act's evaluation and reporting requirements would empower New Jersey to assess whether teacher preparation programs are equipping future educators with a strong understanding of the science of reading, and reporting requirements would improve transparency and help the state course-correct if investments fall short in implementation. Additionally, the READ Act would extend the parental notification requirements for students through eighth grade, so that parents are kept in the loop if their middle schoolers were below grade-level on the previous year's summative assessment. For a state seeking to reverse years of declining outcomes and narrow persistent achievement gaps, the READ Act would help turn strong aspirations into a coherent statewide literacy strategy.

The READ Act: HOW OHIO BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

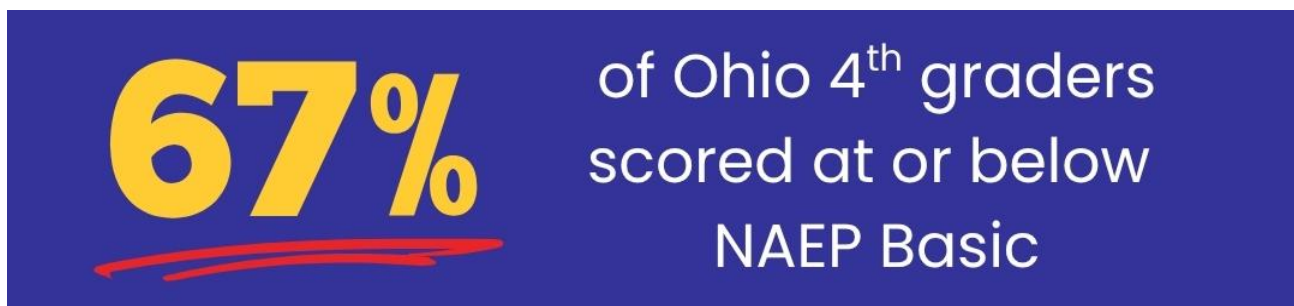
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How are Ohio students performing?



How does the READ Act support Ohio students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$60M over five years (FY24), with previous awards in 2019 and 2023

Ohio has emerged as a national leader in literacy reform under Governor DeWine's ReadOhio initiative, pairing executive leadership with major statutory changes to reading instruction. The state requires districts to adopt high-quality instructional materials aligned with the science of reading, has strengthened educator preparation requirements, and has built a robust system of literacy coaches, professional development, and model implementation sites. Students in grades K-3 are screened for reading proficiency at the beginning of each school year and parents are notified in writing *as soon as possible* if their child is identified as having reading difficulties. In addition, the communication must include a statement that connects the child's proficiency level in reading to long-term outcomes of success related to proficiency in reading.

Ohio helped inspire the READ Act's educator preparation provisions: the state has been at the forefront of efforts to ensure that teacher preparation programs are actually equipping future educators with the knowledge and skills needed to teach reading effectively.

The READ Act would help Ohio sustain and expand this progress, require parental notification within 30 days and expand it to eighth grade, while encouraging other states to scale the successes pioneered in Ohio.

The READ Act: HOW OKLAHOMA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

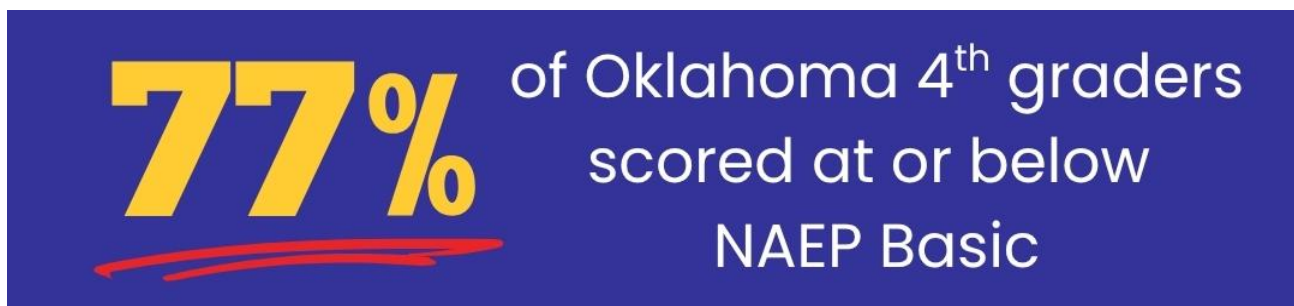
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How are Oklahoma students performing?



How does the READ Act support Oklahoma students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$59M over five years (FY24)

Oklahoma has passed several literacy reforms over the past decade, most recently the Strong Readers Act in April 2026. The law requires universal K–3 literacy screening three times each year and guarantees that every student reading below grade level receives an Individual Program of Reading Instruction developed by a team that includes the student’s parents. Combined with earlier investments in reading instruction and educator training, these reforms represent a significant commitment to improving literacy outcomes.

Oklahoma continues to rank in the bottom quintile of states on fourth-grade NAEP reading, making it eligible for guaranteed funding under the READ Act. The state’s experience also illustrates why stronger guardrails around evidence matter. According to the 2019 AIR evaluation of the CLSD program, just 36 percent of Oklahoma’s federal literacy funds were spent on instructional materials backed by strong or moderate evidence. As Oklahoma begins to prioritize and vet high-quality instructional materials, the READ Act would support the state in directing federal dollars toward evidence-based curricula, interventions, and professional development. New reporting requirements would also provide greater transparency into implementation, including how many schools are adopting state-vetted instructional materials and which students are receiving evidence-based literacy supports. Currently, parents of K-3 students are notified within 30 days when their child is found to have a reading deficiency. The READ Act would expand the current parent notification requirement to grade 8, so that parents are aware and engaged if their middle schooler was identified as behind grade level on the previous year’s summative assessment.

Additionally, the READ Act would help Oklahoma fully implement the Strong Readers Act by supporting the universal screening systems it mandates alongside literacy coaching, interventions, and other evidence-based practices. For Oklahoma, the READ Act would provide both the resources and accountability needed to accelerate promising reforms into stronger reading outcomes for students.

The READ Act: HOW VIRGINIA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

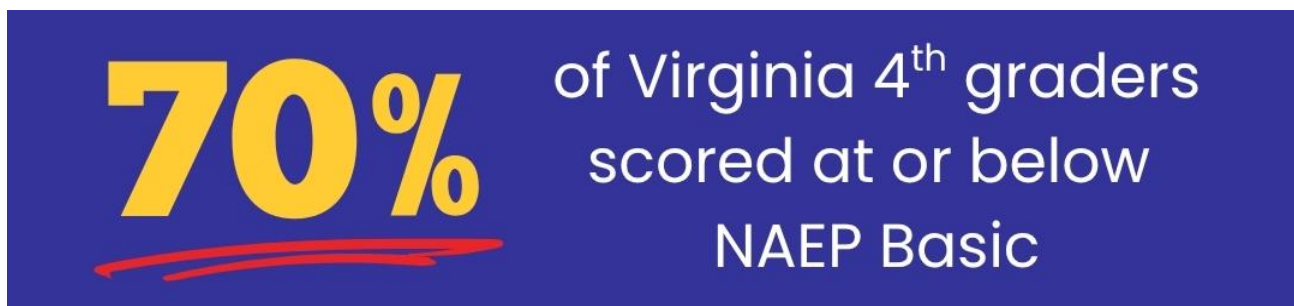
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How are Virginia students performing?



How does the READ Act support Virginia students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$30M over five years (FY24)

Over the past several years, Virginia has enacted major literacy reforms, including the Virginia Literacy Act and the adoption of statewide literacy screeners, evidence-based interventions, and science-of-reading-aligned professional development. The state has also invested in literacy coaching, educator preparation, and high-quality instructional materials to help schools implement these changes.

Virginia has made significant progress in building a statewide literacy framework, but student outcomes underscore the need to sustain that momentum. Fourth-grade reading scores have declined since before the pandemic, and the Commonwealth continues to face some of the largest achievement gaps in the country between white and Black students. While Virginia has established many of the building blocks of a strong literacy system, ensuring that those reforms reach all students equitably remains a challenge.

The READ Act would help Virginia build on the investments it has already made. Federal funding could expand literacy coaching, strengthen educator preparation, and support the implementation of high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based interventions. Parental notification would have a clear timeline and be required within 30 days of a screening for any student identified as having reading difficulties. The bill's evaluation and reporting requirements would also provide greater transparency into how literacy reforms are being carried out, including how many educators are receiving training and coaching and which students are accessing literacy supports. For Virginia, the READ Act would reinforce recent reforms and provide the long-term resources and accountability needed to ensure that every student benefits from evidence-based reading instruction.

The READ Act: HOW VERMONT BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

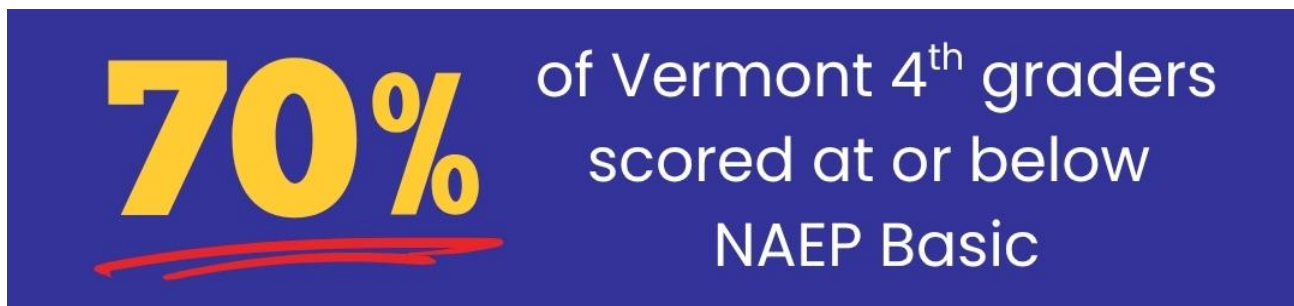
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How are Vermont students performing?



How does the READ Act support Vermont students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

While many states have enacted sweeping literacy reforms over the past decade, Vermont has largely relied on local decision-making and general education funding rather than adopting a comprehensive statewide literacy strategy. The state has not established statewide literacy coaching networks, does not vet or recommend high-quality instructional materials, and has not dedicated significant funding specifically to literacy reform efforts. Additionally, schools are required to conduct a literacy screening of students in grades K-3 at least once per year, and are required to notify parents within 30 days if reading difficulties are identified. However, there is no system in place to notify parents of students who continue to struggle after grade 3, and implementation is inconsistent across the state.

Vermont's reading outcomes illustrate the cost of inaction. In 2015, Vermont ranked among the top three states in the nation on fourth-grade NAEP reading. Today, after a decade of decline, the state performs below the national average. Although Vermont continues to invest heavily in education overall, it has not matched that commitment with targeted investments in evidence-based literacy instruction, educator support, or implementation infrastructure. As other states have embraced the science of reading through statewide coaching models, teacher preparation reform, and curriculum reviews, Vermont has fallen behind.

The READ Act is designed to support states facing precisely this challenge. Because the bill gives competitive priority to states that have experienced significant declines in NAEP performance, Vermont would be well positioned to compete for additional federal resources. Those funds could help the state build the literacy infrastructure it currently lacks, including statewide coaching networks, stronger educator preparation, high-quality instructional materials, and evidence-based interventions for struggling readers. The READ Act would also expand parent notification through eighth grade, so that parents continue to be informed and engaged if their middle schoolers are identified as below grade level on the previous year's summative assessment. Just as importantly, the READ Act's planning and reporting requirements would help Vermont develop a coherent statewide strategy, maintain transparency around implementation, and ensure that literacy investments are translating into better outcomes for students.

The READ Act: HOW WASHINGTON BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

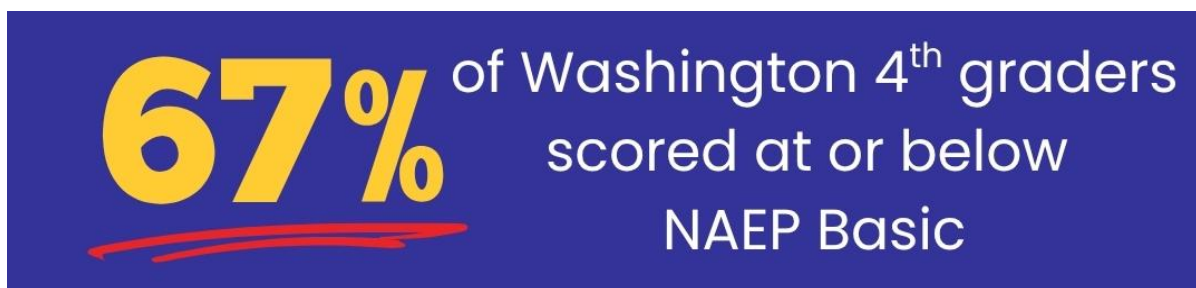
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How are Washington students performing?



How does the READ Act support Washington students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Washington state's new 2026 literacy law is an important step toward improving early reading instruction by requiring that, beginning in September 2027, districts must adopt structured literacy practices when they next purchase or replace K–4 reading and writing curriculum. The law also strengthens supports by expanding educator training, updating parent and teacher guidance through a statewide dyslexia handbook, and building on the state's existing K–2 literacy screening requirements. It also includes a family engagement component intended to support parents of students with reading challenges.

At the same time, the legislation illustrates exactly why the READ Act is needed to help states strengthen and accelerate implementation of evidence-based literacy policies. While well-intentioned, Washington's law does not require districts to adopt evidence-based curricula on a specific timeline, meaning implementation could take years as districts replace materials on their own purchasing cycles. The family engagement provisions are also relatively broad and do not establish clear, explicit parental notification requirements that ensure families are informed when their children are identified as struggling readers or receive literacy interventions.

Additionally, the legislation does not include statewide literacy coaches or comprehensive coaching infrastructure, an allowable use of funds under the READ Act and a strategy that has contributed to improved reading outcomes in other states. By providing dedicated federal support for evidence-based curriculum implementation, literacy coaching, professional development, and stronger family engagement practices, the READ Act would empower Washington to build on its existing policy, accelerate implementation, and strengthen statewide literacy systems so that more students receive effective reading instruction sooner.

The READ Act: HOW WISCONSIN BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

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How are Wisconsin students performing?



How does the READ Act support Wisconsin students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

Wisconsin has one of the nation's strongest state literacy laws through Act 20, enacted in 2023. The law requires all public and participating private schools to use science-based, phonics-focused reading instruction for students in kindergarten through third grade and explicitly prohibits the use of the ineffective "three-cueing" method. It established a state Office of Literacy, created a Council on Early Literacy Curricula to annually recommend evidence-based instructional materials, strengthened teacher licensure requirements aligned with the science of reading, launched a statewide literacy coaching program, and requires universal early literacy screening at least twice each school year beginning in 4-year-old kindergarten. The law also requires schools to develop Personal Reading Plans for students identified as needing additional support and includes clear parental notification requirements to ensure families are informed and engaged throughout the intervention process.

The READ Act would strengthen, accelerate, and resource this work even further. If the state applied for the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant program improved by the READ Act, Wisconsin could expand and sustain its literacy coaching infrastructure, deepen professional development, support continued implementation of high-quality evidence-based instructional materials, strengthen family engagement efforts, and ensure long-term statewide capacity. The READ Act would provide the federal resources necessary to help the state build on its leadership and continue improving reading outcomes for every child.

The READ Act: HOW LOUISIANA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

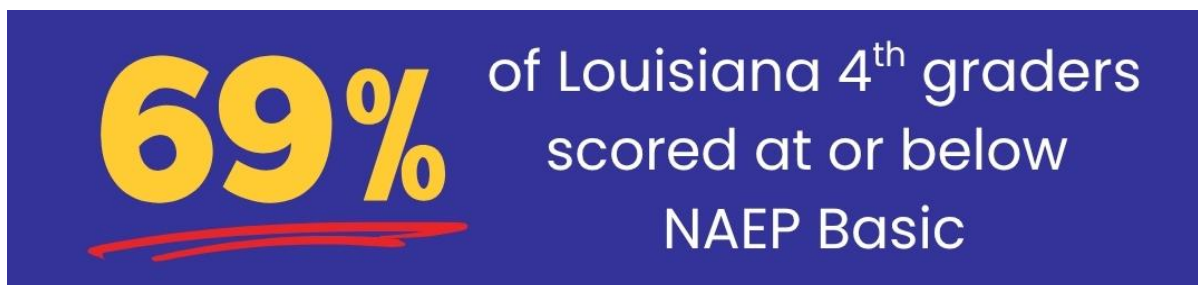
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How are Louisiana students performing?



How does the READ Act support Louisiana students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: \$70 million (2024) over 5 years

Louisiana is now recognized as the national leader in literacy growth, but its success underscores why strong implementation and evidence-based guardrails matter. Prior to its literacy reforms, a national evaluation by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and the American Institutes for Research (AIR) found that the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program too often funded literacy programs with little or no evidence of effectiveness. In Louisiana, only 5% of the literacy programs districts purchased with federal CLSD funds in 2019 had strong or moderate evidence supporting their effectiveness. Most purchased programs had no evidence base, and 10% had null or negative evidence, meaning they had been shown to be ineffective—or even harmful—to students' reading development.

At the time, Louisiana ranked 49th in the nation in fourth-grade reading on the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Rather than continuing to fund unproven approaches, the state enacted a comprehensive literacy strategy that has since become the national model. Louisiana required districts to implement statewide literacy screeners, develop individual reading improvement plans, and provide timely parental notification when students needed additional support. The state also identified high-quality, evidence-based reading curricula aligned with the science of reading, provided free or subsidized professional learning to support implementation, and invested heavily in literacy coaching and ongoing educator support through its Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

The results have been extraordinary. On the 2024 NAEP, Louisiana was the only state to post statistically significant gains in fourth-grade reading, rising from 49th to 15th in the nation and demonstrating that sustained investment in evidence-based instruction can dramatically improve student outcomes.

Louisiana's experience is exactly why the READ Act modernizes and strengthens the federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program. Rather than allowing federal dollars to support literacy programs with little or no evidence, the READ Act requires investments in evidence-based instructional materials, professional development, literacy coaching, family engagement, and statewide implementation strategies grounded in the science of reading. It builds on the lessons learned from Louisiana's transformation by ensuring that federal literacy funding helps states replicate what works, accelerate implementation, and improve reading outcomes for children nationwide.

The READ Act: HOW NEW HAMPSHIRE BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

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How are New Hampshire students performing?



How does the READ Act support New Hampshire students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

In 2024, New Hampshire passed legislation requiring elementary schools to provide evidence-based literacy instruction beginning in the 2027–28 school year. But while many states have paired similar laws with statewide curriculum reviews, literacy coaching, and teacher preparation reforms, New Hampshire has largely left those decisions to local districts. The state does not maintain a process for vetting or recommending literacy curricula aligned with the science of reading.

In 2026, lawmakers introduced HB 1828, which would have required the state to review educator preparation programs to ensure that future teachers are being trained in the science of reading. The bill was ultimately tabled in the Senate, leaving New Hampshire without one of the strongest levers for preparing educators from the start. At the same time, the state lacks the coordinated literacy coaching networks that have been highly successful in other states and remain critical to continue preparing educators to implement new curricula and improve classroom instruction every day.. Across the country, high-quality instructional materials and teacher preparation have emerged as two of the most important drivers of lasting literacy gains, yet New Hampshire has not meaningfully invested in either.

If New Hampshire were to win competitive funding for CLSD under the READ Act, the program would provide both the resources and the political cover needed to close these gaps. The bill would require the state to develop stronger guidance around HQIM - an essential component of successful literacy initiatives nationwide. CLSD funding could also support the hiring and training of literacy coaches who help teachers translate the science of reading into the classroom, while the READ Act's educator preparation requirements would create a framework for reviewing whether institutes of higher education are equipping future educators with the skills they need. For New Hampshire, the READ Act would not simply fund literacy programs; it would help build the statewide infrastructure and fill the gaps that drive meaningful improvement.

The READ Act: HOW SOUTH CAROLINA BENEFITS

How S. 4689 would support state literacy policies

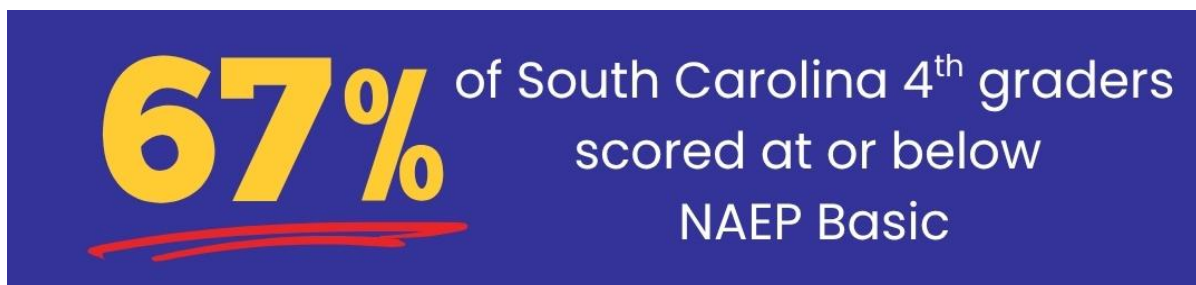
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 - **Raises the bar for evidence.** Redefines “evidence-based” to exclude the third and fourth tiers, limiting funded activities to strong or moderate evidence.
 - **Empowers states to build capacity.** Lowers the district pass-through floor from 95 percent to 75 percent - increasing the share states can keep for statewide coaching networks, literacy screenings, teacher preparation reform, and high-quality instructional materials: the exact levers Mississippi and Louisiana pulled to achieve success.
 - **Targets the lowest performers.** Priority goes to states that are consistently in the lowest quintile of 4th-grade reading on NAEP, providing guaranteed funding for states to develop and implement literacy plans. Currently, Alaska, DC, Delaware, Michigan, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, and West Virginia would be eligible for priority. All states will remain eligible for competitive funding.
 - **Fixes the educator pipeline.** Requires states to evaluate their teacher preparation programs and align certification with the science of reading, so that all teachers arrive ready on Day One in the classroom. Right now, too many future teachers take on debt for a credential that never actually prepares them to teach kids how to read, only to be retrained the moment they walk into a classroom - a monumental waste of their money and students' time.
 - **Screens kids early, and tells parents the truth.** Requires schools to assess all children for learning difficulties at least once before third grade, catching reading struggles before it's too late. Right now, 90% of parents believe their children are reading on grade level when only about a third actually are. The READ Act would also require schools to notify parents of the screening results within 30 days and explain how the school will help them catch up and what parents can do to support at home.
 - **Encourages states and districts to invest in what works.** Requires states to develop a list of high-quality, evidence-based curricula so that districts aren't left guessing about what works. The READ Act also encourages states and districts to invest in proven strategies, such as literacy coaches, tutoring, and summer learning programs.
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How are South Carolina students performing?



How does the READ Act support South Carolina students, families, & educators?

CLSD Award: Never awarded funding

South Carolina has pursued literacy reform for more than a decade through the Read to Succeed Act (2014, updated in 2024), which established statewide reading coaches, summer reading camps, literacy screenings, and professional development requirements for educators. In recent years, the state has strengthened its commitment to the science of reading through additional investments in structured literacy training, universal literacy screenings, and evidence-based instruction.

South Carolina has built many of the core components of a strong literacy system, yet the state continues to face significant challenges: NAEP reading scores remain near the national average, and large achievement gaps persist for students from low-income families and historically underserved communities. While Read to Succeed created an important foundation, implementation has varied across districts, and the state is still working to ensure that every educator has access to high-quality instructional materials and training aligned with the science of reading.

The READ Act would help South Carolina sustain and strengthen the literacy infrastructure it has spent years building. Federal funding could expand literacy coaching, educator preparation, and evidence-based interventions while providing greater support for the summer reading and tutoring programs that many students rely on. Just as importantly, the bill's reporting requirements would increase transparency around implementation, helping the state track how many educators are receiving coaching and professional development and whether students are gaining access to the high-quality curricula and interventions they need. Additionally, while South Carolina has strong parental notification and engagement mechanisms in early literacy, many of these efforts fall short in adolescence; the READ Act would extend parental notification requirements into the 8th grade, so that parents remain informed and involved if their middle schooler is identified as below grade level in the previous year's summative assessment.

For South Carolina, the READ Act would reinforce existing reforms while providing the accountability and transparency necessary to translate changes in policy into the classroom.
