



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

SB2244

Introduced 2/10/2023, by Sen. Kimberly A. Lightford

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.51

from Ch. 122, par. 2-3.51

Amends the School Code. With respect to the Reading Improvement Block Grant Program, removes language that provides that the State Board of Education may distribute an amount not to exceed 2% of the moneys appropriated for the Program for the purpose of providing teacher training and re-training in the teaching of reading. Provides that if the appropriation for the Program for a given fiscal year is less than \$15,000,000, then the State Board shall limit eligibility to certain school districts and shall impose additional eligibility criteria to limit the number of approved applicants to a cohort sufficient for each selected district to provide adequate training and ongoing coaching support to each teacher of students in grades K through 2 and special education teachers and evidence-based curriculum investments. Removes language that provides that programs provided with grant funds shall not replace quality classroom reading instruction. Provides that Program funds may be used for grades K through 6 to provide both evidence-based, high-quality core literacy curriculum materials that consider the unique needs of English learners for concurrent oral language practice and high-quality screening assessments designed to inform instruction in English language arts and literacy for students (instead of classroom reading materials for students). Sets forth other provisions concerning if the appropriation is less than \$15,000,000 or is at least \$15,000,000.

LRB103 25645 RJT 51994 b

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section
5 2-3.51 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/2-3.51) (from Ch. 122, par. 2-3.51)

7 Sec. 2-3.51. Reading Improvement Block Grant Program. To
8 improve the reading and study skills of children from
9 kindergarten through sixth grade in school districts. The
10 State Board of Education is authorized to administer a Reading
11 Improvement Block Grant Program. As used in this Section:

12 "School district" includes those schools designated as
13 "laboratory schools".

14 "Scientifically based reading research" means the
15 application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures
16 to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development,
17 reading instruction, and reading difficulties. The term
18 includes research that employs systematic, empirical methods
19 that draw on observation or experiment, involves rigorous data
20 analysis that is adequate to test the stated hypotheses and to
21 justify the general conclusions drawn, relies on measurements
22 or observational methods that provide valid data across
23 evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and

1 observations, and has been accepted by peer-reviewed journal
2 or approved by a panel of independent experts through a
3 comparably rigorous, objective and scientific review.

4 (a) Funds for the Reading Improvement Block Grant Program
5 shall be distributed to school districts on the following
6 basis: 70% of monies shall be awarded on the prior year's best
7 3 months average daily attendance and 30% shall be distributed
8 on the number of economically disadvantaged (E.C.I.A. Chapter
9 I) pupils in the district, ~~provided that the State Board may~~
10 ~~distribute an amount not to exceed 2% of the monies~~
11 ~~appropriated for the Reading Improvement Block Grant Program~~
12 ~~for the purpose of providing teacher training and re-training~~
13 ~~in the teaching of reading.~~ Program funds shall be distributed
14 to school districts in 2 semi-annual installments, one payment
15 on or before October 30, and one payment prior to April 30, of
16 each year. The State Board shall promulgate rules and
17 regulations necessary for the implementation of this program.

18 If the appropriation for the Reading Improvement Block
19 Grant Program for a given fiscal year is less than
20 \$15,000,000, then the State Board shall limit eligibility to
21 school districts that have been placed in Tier 1 or Tier 2
22 pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (g) of Section 18-8.15
23 of this Code and shall impose additional eligibility criteria
24 to limit the number of approved applicants to a cohort
25 sufficient for each selected district to provide adequate
26 training and ongoing coaching support to each teacher of

1 students in kindergarten through grade 2 and special education
2 teachers and evidence-based curriculum investments. ~~Programs~~
3 ~~provided with grant funds shall not replace quality classroom~~
4 ~~reading instruction, but shall instead supplement such~~
5 ~~instruction.~~

6 (a-5) Reading Improvement Block Grant Program funds shall
7 be used by school districts in the following manner:

8 (1) to hire reading specialists, reading teachers, and
9 reading aides in order to provide early reading
10 intervention in kindergarten through grade 2 and programs
11 of continued reading support for students in grades 3
12 through 6;

13 (2) in kindergarten through grade 2, to establish
14 short-term tutorial early reading intervention programs
15 for children who are at risk of failing to learn to read;
16 these programs shall (i) focus on scientifically based
17 research and best practices with proven long-term results,
18 (ii) identify students in need of help no later than the
19 middle of first grade, (iii) provide ongoing training for
20 teachers in the program, (iv) focus instruction on
21 strengthening a student's phonemic awareness, phonics,
22 fluency, and comprehension skills, (v) provide a means to
23 document and evaluate student growth, and (vi) provide
24 properly trained staff;

25 (3) to continue direct reading instruction for grades
26 3 through 6;

1 (4) in grades 3 through 6, to establish programs of
2 support for students who demonstrate a need for continued
3 assistance in learning to read and in maintaining reading
4 achievement; these programs shall (i) focus on
5 scientifically based research and best practices with
6 proven long-term results, (ii) provide ongoing training
7 for teachers and other staff members in the program, (iii)
8 focus instruction on strengthening a student's phonics,
9 fluency, and comprehension skills in grades 3 through 6,
10 (iv) provide a means to evaluate and document student
11 growth, and (v) provide properly trained staff;

12 (5) in grades K through 6, to provide both
13 evidence-based, high-quality core literacy curriculum
14 materials that consider the unique needs of English
15 learners for concurrent oral language practice and
16 high-quality screening assessments designed to inform
17 instruction in English language arts and literacy
18 ~~classroom reading materials~~ for students; each district
19 may allocate up to 25% of the funds for this purpose; and

20 (6) to provide a long-term professional development
21 program for classroom teachers, administrators, and other
22 appropriate staff; the program shall (i) focus on
23 scientifically based research and best practices with
24 proven long-term results, (ii) provide a means to evaluate
25 student progress in reading as a result of the training,
26 (iii) and be provided by approved staff development

1 providers.

2 If the appropriation for the Reading Improvement Block
3 Grant Program for a given fiscal year is less than
4 \$15,000,000, then grant recipients shall prioritize
5 evidence-based curricula and materials, training, and ongoing
6 coaching support for kindergarten through grade 3 teachers and
7 special education teachers.

8 (a-10) If the appropriation for the Reading Improvement
9 Block Grant Program for a given fiscal year is at least
10 \$15,000,000, then Reading Improvement Block Grant Program
11 funds shall be made available to each eligible school district
12 submitting an approved application developed by the State
13 Board ~~beginning with the 1998-99 school year~~. Applications
14 shall include a proposed assessment method or methods for
15 measuring the reading growth of students who receive direct
16 instruction as a result of the funding and the impact of staff
17 development activities on student growth in reading. Such
18 methods may include the reading portion of the assessments
19 required under Section 2-3.64a-5 of this Code. At the end of
20 each school year the district shall report performance of
21 progress results to the State Board. Districts not
22 demonstrating performance progress using an approved
23 assessment method shall not be eligible for funding in the
24 third or subsequent years until such progress is established.

25 If the appropriation for the Reading Improvement Block
26 Grant Program for a given fiscal year is less than

1 \$15,000,000, then the State Board may establish additional
2 eligibility criteria and shall select a cohort of school
3 districts that have been placed in Tier 1 or Tier 2 pursuant to
4 paragraph (3) of subsection (g) of Section 18-8.15 of this
5 Code to participate.

6 (a-15) The State Superintendent of Education, in
7 cooperation with the school districts participating in the
8 program, shall annually report to the leadership of the
9 General Assembly on the results of the Reading Improvement
10 Block Grant Program and the progress being made on improving
11 the reading skills of students in kindergarten through the
12 sixth grade.

13 (b) (Blank).

14 (c) (Blank).

15 (d) Grants under the Reading Improvement Block Grant
16 Program shall be awarded provided there is an appropriation
17 for the program, and funding levels for each district shall be
18 prorated according to the amount of the appropriation for any
19 fiscal year in which at least \$15,000,000 has been
20 appropriated.

21 (e) (Blank).

22 (f) (Blank).

23 (Source: P.A. 98-972, eff. 8-15-14.)