SENATE BILL 74

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2020

INTRODUCED BY

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FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; CREATING THE VOLUNTARY EARLY
READING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM; CREATING THE EARLY
READING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 22-13-1.3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2000
(2nd S.S.), Chapter 14, Section 1, as amended) is amended to
read:

"22-13-1.3. READING INITIATIVE--DESIGN.--

A. The department shall design and implement a
statewide reading initiative to improve reading proficiency in
the state. The design of the reading initiative shall be based
upon quality, scientifically based reading research that has
been shown to improve reading proficiency and shall include the
following:

.216205.2
(1) consistent assessment and evaluation of student reading levels; and

(2) appropriate professional staff development to assist licensed school employees in the instruction of reading;

(3) extra time in the student's day or year for implementation of reading programs;

(4) rewards provided to teachers and other applicable licensed school employees in public schools that improve student reading proficiency; and

(5) criteria for public schools to establish an individualized reading plan for students who fail to meet grade level reading proficiency standards.

B. The department shall use national experts to work with the department to develop an immediate reading initiative and a long-term plan for sustained reading improvement.

C. The department shall involve school district personnel, especially licensed elementary reading specialists, parents and other interested persons in the design of the reading initiative.

C. The department shall design and implement a statewide, voluntary early reading professional development summer program by a licensed and accredited or credentialed teacher preparation provider that includes a detailed framework.
for structured literacy training as well as evidence-based
training for working with students who demonstrate
characteristics of reading disabilities, including dyslexia.
Funds shall be prioritized for elementary schools in which
eighty percent or more of the students are eligible for free or
reduced-fee lunch.

D. The department shall adopt rules for the
statewide voluntary early reading professional development
program that shall include the following:

(1) scientifically researched and evidence-based instructional reading strategies that improve reading
performance for all students, including explicit, systematic
and sequential approaches to teaching phonemic awareness,
phonics, vocabulary, fluency and text comprehension and
multisensory intervention strategies;

(2) strategies appropriate for the instruction
of English language learners; and

(3) strategies appropriate for instruction of
students with disabilities."

SECTION 2. A new section of the Public School Code is
enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] EARLY READING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FUND--CREATED--PURPOSE.--The "early reading professional
development fund" is created as a nonreverting fund in the
state treasury. The fund consists of appropriations, gifts,
grants and donations. Money in the fund is subject to
appropriation by the legislature to implement a statewide
voluntary early reading professional development program for
kindergarten through second grade teachers. Disbursements from
the fund shall be made by warrant of the secretary of finance
and administration pursuant to vouchers signed by the secretary
of public education or the secretary's authorized
representative."

SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.--Three million dollars
($3,000,000) is appropriated from the public education reform
fund to the early reading professional development fund for
expenditure in fiscal year 2021 for the public education
department to develop and implement the voluntary early reading
professional development program. Any unexpended or
unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year
shall not revert to the public education reform fund.