STATE OF NEW YORK

6983

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

May 16, 2023

Introduced by Sen. CLEARE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to address the elementary literacy gap by empowering student and parental engagement with an evidence-based home reading program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. If equally matched by participating local education agencies, there is allocated from the state's Coronavirus relief funds an amount not to exceed $500,000 for fiscal year 2024 for grants to local education agencies for an eligible home reading program. Funds allocated under this section are grant funds and must be distributed by the department of education with a focus on economically disadvantaged households. A program is eligible for these grant funds if it is provided by a nonprofit organization and meets all of the following criteria:

(a) The program's objective is to deliver an evidence-based self-selected reading program consisting of independent reading level books that are individually mailed to the residences of kindergarten through fifth grade students on a weekly basis.

(b) The program incorporates at least weekly phone calls, texts or application notifications in multiple languages to a parent or guardian to drive parental and family engagement throughout the duration of the program.

(c) The program provides at least six and not more than nine student selected new books that students get to keep.

(d) The program builds on pedagogical and literacy principles to scaffold fluency to improve reading comprehension with student exercises.

(e) The program includes a customizable portal to generate individualized data reports for analysis of student progress.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(f) The nonprofit organization collects, disaggregates, and distributes detailed data on all metrics of the program, such as parental engagement, books read and allowable demographic data.

(g) The nonprofit organization provides summary data to the legislature and to the department of education for all students served by the program.

(h) The nonprofit organization agrees to secure the required district level matching funds and maintain auditable verification of their receipt.

(i) The combined total cost of the program, including district matching funds does not exceed $50 per student per semester.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.