

STATE OF NEW YORK

7579

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

April 22, 2025

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:

1 Section 1. If equally matched by participating local education agen-
2 cies, there is allocated from the state's Coronavirus relief funds an
3 amount not to exceed \$500,000 for fiscal year 2026 for grants to local
4 education agencies for an eligible home reading program. Funds allocated
5 under this section are grant funds and must be distributed by the
6 department of education with a focus on economically disadvantaged
7 households. A program is eligible for these grant funds if it is
8 provided by a nonprofit organization and meets all of the following
9 criteria:

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

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

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

20 (d) The program builds on pedagogical and literacy principles to scaf-
21 fold fluency to improve reading comprehension with student exercises.

22 (e) The program includes a customizable portal to generate individual-
23 ized 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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1 (f) The nonprofit organization collects, disaggregates, and distrib-
2 utes detailed data on all metrics of the program, such as parental
3 engagement, books read and allowable demographic data.

4 (g) The nonprofit organization provides summary data to the legisla-
5 ture and to the department of education for all students served by the
6 program.

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

10 (i) The combined total cost of the program, including district match-
11 ing funds does not exceed \$50 per student per semester.

12 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.