



Legislative  
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*Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature*

**SB 19-199**

**FINAL  
FISCAL NOTE**

**Drafting Number:** LLS 19-0962      **Date:** August 20, 2019  
**Prime Sponsors:** Sen. Todd; Rankin      **Bill Status:** Signed into Law  
Rep. McCluskie; Wilson      **Fiscal Analyst:** Josh Abram | 303-866-3561  
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**Bill Topic:** READ ACT IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

**Summary of Fiscal Impact:**

<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School District

The bill makes modifications to the READ Act, the annual appropriation for the Early Literacy Grant Program, and distributions of per-pupil intervention money. The bill modifies expenditures and allocations of READ Act funding on an ongoing basis.

**Appropriation Summary:** The bill requires an appropriation of \$39.4 million to the Colorado Department of Education. See State Appropriations Section for details.

**Fiscal Note Status:** This fiscal note reflects the enacted bill.

**Table 1  
New State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 19-199\***

		FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
<b>Revenue</b>		-	-
<b>Total Appropriation Required*</b>		<b>\$39,378,678</b>	<b>\$39,000,000</b>
<b>New Expenditures</b>	Cash Funds	\$4,277,126	\$4,288,239
	Centrally Appropriated	\$47,952	\$52,521
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,325,078</b>	<b>\$4,340,760</b>
	<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>3.2 FTE</b>	<b>3.5 FTE</b>
<b>Transfers</b>		-	-
<b>TABOR Refund</b>		-	-

\* Total appropriations required for READ Act are \$39.4 million in FY 2019-20. New expenditures in Table 1 are part of this total appropriation. See Background section, State Expenditures section, and State Appropriations section for details.

## **Summary of Legislation**

The bill makes several statutory changes to the Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ act) and its implementation by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), public schools, and school districts.

**Local education providers.** Under current law, each local education provider (LEP) must ensure that early grade learners receive the instructional programming and services necessary to ensure the required reading skills for academic success in later grades. This bill requires that the programming and services be evidence-based and focus on reading competency in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. If a student's reading skills are below grade-level expectations or the student is identified as having a significant reading deficiency, LEPs must employ multi-tiered systems of support, which at a minimum must include a daily literacy block of research-based instruction.

No later than July 1, 2020, the bill requires that LEPs include additional information, including designated curriculum and intervention programs, in the annual READ plan the LEP submits to CDE. No later than the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, each LEP that receives per-pupil intervention money or grants from the Early Literacy Grant Program, must ensure that each early grade teacher successfully completes evidence-based training in teaching reading. The specified training may be included in a teacher preparation or literacy program at an institution of higher education, provided by the CDE, or provided by the LEP. If requested by an LEP, the CDE must provide the training at no cost. LEPs must submit evidence to the CDE that teachers have successfully completed the training.

**State Board of Education (SBE).** The SBE must adopt additional rules for the READ Act that address time frames and procedures for LEPs to submit specified information to the CDE concerning the use of per-pupil intervention money.

**Colorado Department of Education.** The CDE must add technology tools to an existing advisory list of evidence-based instructional programming and professional development for reading instruction. The bill adds selection criteria for professional development programs included in the advisory list. Under current law, the CDE provides technical assistance related to READ Act implementation to LEPs upon request. The bill requires that CDE provide evidence-based training in teaching reading at no cost to LEPs that request it, and provides up to \$2,750,000 for this purpose. The CDE must provide this assistance to LEPs that are accredited with a turnaround plan, or are required to adopt a turnaround plan.

**Public information campaign.** Beginning in FY 2019-20, the CDE must contract with an outside entity to develop and implement a public information campaign related to the importance of reading and to highlight LEPs that are achieving success. The bill limits this expense to \$500,000 annually.

**Professional evaluation.** No later than October 1, 2019, the CDE must issue a request for proposals to contract with an entity to act as an independent evaluator of the use of per-pupil intervention money and money received through the Early Literacy Grant Program, and to conduct a multi-year evaluation to determine whether the student outcomes achieved by LEPs meet the goals of the READ Act. The bill specifies criteria for selecting the evaluator and components that must be included in the performance evaluation. The evaluation must be completed by July 1, 2021, and included in the CDE's 2021 SMART Act report. The bill limits this expense to \$750,000 annually.

**READ Act funding.** Under current law, the CDE uses \$1.0 million of the annual READ Act appropriation to provide professional development to LEPs, up to \$5.0 million for grants from the Early Literacy Grant Program, and up to one percent for administrative overhead. Of the amount that remains after all required expenditures, the CDE must use 10 percent to award grants through the Early Literacy Grant Program, and 90 percent for per-pupil intervention funding to LEPs.

For FY 2019-20, the bill requires that CDE spend up to \$500,000 for the public information campaign, up to \$750,000 for an independent evaluator, and up to \$2,750,000 to provide evidence-based training in teaching reading. If the actual demand for training exceeds the anticipated demand, the CDE may request a supplemental appropriation for this purpose. Of the amount that remains after these FY 2019-20 allocations, the CDE must allocate \$2,500,000 for early literacy grants and the remaining amount to LEPs as per-pupil intervention money.

Beginning with FY 2020-21, the CDE must use funding for the READ Act to implement the public information campaign, to pay an independent evaluator, to implement the grant program, to allocate per-pupil intervention money, to pay for training and technical assistance to LEPs, and to fulfill administrative requirements. The specific amount for each purpose will be determined by the General Assembly in the Long Bill.

**Per-pupil intervention money.** To receive per-pupil intervention money, LEPs must annually report specified information to the CDE, including a budget with a narrative explanation for the use of per-pupil intervention money. In order to receive the per-pupil intervention money, an LEP must submit to the CDE evidence that the LEP is in compliance with teacher training requirements and, subject to approval by the CDE, the specified uses of intervention funding. Throughout the fiscal year, the CDE must monitor and, if necessary, audit each LEPs' use of per-pupil intervention money. The bill specifies the approved uses of per-pupil intervention money by LEPs. LEPs may retain up to 15 percent of annual per-pupil intervention money for use in the following budget year; if the LEP retains more than this amount, the CDE must reduce the following budget year allocation to the LEP by the excess amount retained.

**Early Literacy Grant Program.** Finally, this bill modifies the Early Literacy Grant Program to permit the State Board of Education to award a grant to a school district or to individual schools in a district. The bill also modifies award criteria used to select grant recipients. The SBE may renew a grant award only if an independent evaluator determines that the program has been effective, and the LEP requests an extension. If the evaluation determines the program is not effective, the SBE may not extend or renew the grant. The bill expands some of the reporting requirements for LEPs receiving an early literacy grant.

## **Background**

The READ Act is currently funded with an annual transfer of \$34.0 million from the State Education Fund to the Early Literacy Cash Fund, and a direct appropriation of \$5.4 million from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund. Of this amount, the CDE retains about \$340,000 for administrative purposes, which supports 9.0 FTE. With the additional FTE required to implement this bill, total FTE for administration increases to 12.2 FTE beginning with FY 2019-20. See State Expenditures section for details.

Funding for the READ Act is typically provided in the annual appropriations act (the Long Bill). For FY 2019-20, the Long Bill does not contain READ Act funding, which instead must be appropriated either in this bill, or another bill. New state expenditures identified in this fiscal note are assumed to be part of the total appropriation.

**State Expenditures**

The bill requires the entire amount of READ Act funding totaling \$39,378,678 in FY 2019-20. Of that total appropriation, about \$4.3 million and 3.5 FTE are new expenditures as a result of this bill, which change the allocation of the remaining appropriation in per-pupil intervention funding and grants from the Early Literacy Grant Program. New state expenditures are displayed in Table 2 and described below. New allocations of the full appropriation are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 2  
 New Expenditures Under SB 19-199**

	<b>FY 2019-20</b>	<b>FY 2020-21</b>
<b>Colorado Department of Education</b>		
Personal Services	\$264,198	\$289,781
Operating & Capital Outlay	\$16,959	\$3,325
CDE Evidence-Based Training	\$2,702,557	\$2,702,557
Travel and Expense Reimbursements	\$43,413	\$42,577
Public Information Campaign	\$500,000	\$500,000
External Program Evaluator	\$750,000	\$750,000
Centrally Appropriated Costs*	\$47,952	\$52,521
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$4,325,079</b>	<b>\$4,340,761</b>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>3.2 FTE</b>	<b>3.5 FTE</b>

\* Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill's appropriation.

**Personal services.** The bill increases personal service costs and related operating and capital outlay for the CDE to provide evidence-based training in teaching and technical assistance to LEPs accredited with a turnaround plan. The CDE must also monitor the creation and implementation READ Act plans, receive and process additional data collected from LEPs, and review and approve plans for all school districts, charter schools, and boards of cooperative educational services. Additional program staff are required to manage an expanded Early Literacy Grant Program, and to manage two additional external contracts for a public information campaign and a professional program evaluator.

**Evidence-based training.** The bill requires that the CDE offer evidence-based training in teaching reading at no cost to LEPs that request it and provides up to \$2,750,000 for this purpose. There are about 21,500 teachers in kindergarten through third grade that must successfully complete an evidence-based training in teaching reading. Some districts will use institutions of higher education or arrange for this professional development out of existing district budgets. This analysis assumes that 25 percent (5,375) of these teachers will receive evidence-based training from the CDE, increasing state costs to purchase training materials, compensate trainers, reimburse participants for travel and expenses, rent venues and provide catering, and reimbursing LEPs for substitute teachers. These expenses are assumed to be spread evenly across FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21.

**Public information campaign and professional evaluator.** The bill requires that an outside contractor implement a public information campaign, and that the CDE contract with a professional evaluator. The bill limits the public information contract at \$500,000 annually. The CDE will have some additional expenses related to procurement, and staff support of these contracts. Those expenses are assumed to be paid within these amounts.

**Centrally appropriated costs.** Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. These costs, which include employee insurance and supplemental employee retirement payments, are estimated to be \$47,952 in FY 2019-20, and \$52,521 in FY 2020-21.

**Total READ Act funding distribution.** Table 3 displays the total appropriation for READ Act implementation, including the new expenditures under this bill, and the resulting distribution of funding between grants, training, administration, evaluation, public information, and per pupil intervention funding. This bill adds 3.5 FTE to the existing 9.0 FTE for a total ongoing personal services cost of 12.0 FTE.

**Table 3  
Total Expenditures and Allocations READ Act Funding FY 2019-20**

Early Literacy Competitive Grants	\$7,876,155
Evidence-Based Training	\$2,702,557
Department Administration, Technical Assistance, and Monitoring	\$1,664,570
Independent Evaluation	\$750,000
Public Information Campaign	\$500,000
Per Pupil Intervention Funding	\$25,885,396
<b>Total Appropriation FY 2019-20</b>	<b>\$39,378,678</b>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>12.0 FTE</b>

### **School District Impact**

The bill increases workload and costs for all LEPs. The bill requires that LEPs prepare and submit additional information in their annual READ Act plan, report data to the CDE related to student reading competency and uses of per-pupil intervention funding, and provide a minimum amount of reading intervention services to students who are reading below grade level. These provisions increase staff needs in most districts, charter schools, and boards of cooperative educational services that run public schools.

Although the bill requires that CDE provide a evidence-based training for reading education, some LEPs will chose to provide this training without state assistance, increasing costs for LEPs to provide this training or arrange for outside professional development for their early grade educators.

**Effective Date**

The bill was signed into law by the Governor and took effect May 10, 2019.

**State Appropriations**

Consistent with this final fiscal note, for FY 2019-20, the bill includes a total appropriation of \$39,378,678 to the Colorado Department of Education from the following sources and in the following amounts shown below:

- \$5,378,678 from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund;
- \$2,121,322 from the Early Literacy Cash Fund;
- \$2,702,557 from the Early Literacy Cash Fund;
- \$1,664,570 from the Early Literacy Cash Fund;
- \$750,000 from the Early Literacy Cash Fund;
- \$500,000 from the Early Literacy Cash Fund; and
- \$26,261,551 from the Early Literacy Cash Fund.

**State and Local Government Contacts**

Education            School Districts