



Legislative Council Staff

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Revised Fiscal Note

(replaces fiscal note dated February 2, 2022)

Drafting Number:
Prime Sponsors:

LLS 22-0568
Sen. Rankin; Bridges
Rep. McCluskie

Date: March 28, 2022
Bill Status: Senate Appropriations
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Bill Topic:

EVIDENCE-BASED TRAINING IN SCIENCE OF READING

Summary of Fiscal Impact:

- State Revenue
- State Expenditure
- State Transfer
- TABOR Refund
- Local Government
- School District

The bill requires that elementary school administrators and reading specialists be trained in scientifically and evidence-based reading instruction. The bill increases state and local expenditures beginning in FY 2023-24.

Appropriation Summary:

No appropriation is required.

Fiscal Note Status:

The revised fiscal note reflects the introduced bill, as amended by the Senate Education Committee.

**Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 22-004**

		Budget Year FY 2022-23	Out Year FY 2023-24	Out Year FY 2024-25
Revenue		-	-	-
Expenditures	Cash Fund	-	\$251,139	\$88,165
	Centrally Appropriated	-	\$13,621	\$8,372
	Total Expenditures	-	\$264,760	\$96,537
	Total FTE	-	0.8 FTE	0.5 FTE
Transfers		-	-	-
Other Budget Impacts		-	-	-

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, local education providers (LEPs) that receive per-pupil intervention money or grants under the Early Literacy Grant Program (READ Act) must ensure that all early grade teachers successfully complete evidence-based training in the science of reading instruction. If requested, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) must provide the training at no cost.

Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, this bill requires that reading specialists and principals in schools serving kindergarten through third grade, and any administrator with responsibility for early grade programs, also receive similar training. Beginning in FY 2024-25, LEPs that receive READ Act funding must submit verification that they are in compliance with the new training requirements. If requested, the CDE must provide the training to LEPs at no cost.

The bill encourages the directors of public libraries to work with the CDE to offer evidence-based training in the science of reading instruction to librarians working with early grade readers. If requested, the CDE must provide the training at no cost. Public libraries may also make evidence-based materials and activities available to improve reading.

Background

The Colorado READ Act currently requires all K-3 teachers to be trained in scientifically and evidence-based reading instruction by the 2022-23 school year. School districts are required to submit evidence that its teachers fulfilled the requirement to receive Early Literacy Grant or READ Act per-pupil intervention funds. The CDE has an annual vendor contract to develop the training content. The contract also includes an online delivery platform, allowing a self-paced learning experience for teachers. The platform tracks teachers' progress through the training and includes testing components. The completed module for teachers takes about 45 hours to complete.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures in the CDE by about \$264,760 in FY 2023-24, and by \$96,537 in FY 2024-25. Appropriations are from the Early Literacy Cash Fund and are ongoing. New costs are displayed in Table 2 and described below.

**Table 2
 Expenditures Under SB 22-004**

Cost Components	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
Department of Education			
Personal Services	-	\$62,484	\$37,490
Operating Expenses	-	\$1,080	\$675
Capital Outlay Costs	-	\$6,200	-
Course Development	-	\$160,000	-
Platform Maintenance	-	-	\$50,000
READ Act Data Reporting	-	\$21,375	-
Centrally Appropriated Costs ¹	-	\$13,621	\$8,372
Total	-	\$264,760	\$96,537
Total FTE	-	0.8 FTE	0.5 FTE

¹ Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill's appropriation.

Personal services. Under current law, CDE devotes 6.5 FTE to manage the 23,000 teachers who are required to meet the current training requirement. The department will add 0.8 FTE (Senior Consultant) in FY 2023-24, which reduces to 0.5 FTE in FY 2024-25 and ongoing to manage the additional administrators and librarians who may complete the training. This work includes rulemaking to determine course criteria, managing the vendor contract for new course development, approving standards for successful completion and verification, and developing a system to track and report ongoing need and completions.

Online course development and platform. The existing READ Act training was created for delivery to early grade elementary teachers. This platform will be modified to create two additional trainings, one for principals and other early grade administrators, and one for reading intervention specialists, customized with content, knowledge and skills relevant to those populations. Based on the existing vendor contract, it is estimated that \$160,000 is required in FY 2023-24 to develop separate training courses for administrators and librarians. The annual contract maintenance cost for these online platforms is estimated at \$50,000 beginning in FY 2024-25.

Data collection. In order to collect the necessary information on training for principals and administrators, the current READ Act data collection system must be modified to include additional fields. A one-time cost of \$21,375 in FY 2023-24 is required.

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 shown in Table 2.

School Districts and Local Governments

The bill requires that administrators and reading specialists in public schools complete evidence-based training in the science of reading and pass the end of course test. Assuming all these professionals avail themselves of the free course provided by CDE, local costs include the paid time to obtain the additional professional development, verification of completion, and reporting to the CDE.

For example, there are over 3,500 school administrators and the average salary is about \$93,838. If 60 percent are elementary school administrators, 2,133 would complete the new training at an average salary cost of \$45 an hour. The precise number and location of school district professionals who require additional training is unknown.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties

Education

Higher Education

Municipalities

School Districts