

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 4689

To strengthen literacy outcomes for all students, to amend the comprehensive literacy State development grant program, and to ensure Federal accountability and investment in research, teacher preparation, and evidence-based instruction aligned with the science of reading.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 4, 2026

Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. BANKS, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. KELLY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To strengthen literacy outcomes for all students, to amend the comprehensive literacy State development grant program, and to ensure Federal accountability and investment in research, teacher preparation, and evidence-based instruction aligned with the science of reading.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Reading Excellence  
5       and Achievement for Development Act” or the “READ  
6       Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

2 The purposes of this Act are to—

3 (1) increase literacy proficiency among students  
4 in elementary schools and secondary schools through  
5 the use of science of reading-aligned instruction so  
6 that students graduate from high school with the  
7 reading and writing skills needed to succeed in the  
8 workforce and in life;

9 (2) support State educational agencies in imple-  
10 menting evidence-based policies aligned with the  
11 science of reading;

12 (3) improve teacher preparation and profes-  
13 sional development for school-based staff, including  
14 through coaching and deliberate, dedicated profes-  
15 sional collaboration, to support evidence-based lit-  
16 eracy instruction;

17 (4) promote early identification and interven-  
18 tion for students at risk of reading difficulties, in-  
19 cluding dyslexia;

20 (5) support data-driven literacy strategies to  
21 support all students and to close opportunity gaps  
22 across student subgroups; and

23 (6) protect and strengthen literacy research ca-  
24 pacity through comprehensive centers and the Insti-  
25 tute of Education Sciences.

1 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Literacy is a cornerstone for personal  
4 growth, economic opportunity, and a strong society.

5 (2) The 2024 National Assessment of Edu-  
6 cational Progress reported that—

7 (A) only 35 percent of the 8th grade class  
8 of 2024 were proficient in reading; and

9 (B) one-third of 8th graders performed  
10 below the National Assessment of Educational  
11 Progress basic level, the highest percentage ever  
12 recorded.

13 (3) The National Assessment of Educational  
14 Progress provides the only nationally representative,  
15 independent measure of student achievement over  
16 time, offering critical data on the readiness of  
17 United States students to compete in the global  
18 economy.

19 (4) The 2023 Program for the International  
20 Assessment of Adult Competencies estimates that 28  
21 percent of adults in the United States perform at  
22 the lowest proficiency level of literacy, meaning they  
23 have substantial difficulty with everyday reading  
24 tasks.

1           (5) Illiteracy costs taxpayers \$224,000,000,000  
 2           annually and costs United States companies nearly  
 3           \$40,000,000,000 annually.

4           (6) The interdisciplinary body of research  
 5           known as the “science of reading” demonstrates the  
 6           effectiveness of structured, evidence-based literacy  
 7           instruction.

8           (7) Federal literacy programs under the Ele-  
 9           mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20  
 10          U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), the Adult Education and Fam-  
 11          ily Literacy Act (29 U.S.C. 3271 et seq.), and the  
 12          Museum and Library Services Act (20 U.S.C. 9101  
 13          et seq.) provide important foundations, but are in-  
 14          sufficient to address the scale of the crisis.

15          (8) The United States is in the midst of a na-  
 16          tional literacy crisis, requiring strong Federal leader-  
 17          ship in partnership with State educational agencies  
 18          and local educational agencies to ensure that all stu-  
 19          dents have the foundational literacy skills to thrive.

20   **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

21       In this Act:

22           (1) **EVIDENCE-BASED.**—The term “evidence-  
 23          based” has the meaning given the term in section  
 24          8101(21) of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-  
 25          cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801(21)), except

1       that subclause (III) of subparagraph (A)(i) of such  
2       section shall not apply.

3               (2) SCIENCE OF READING.—The term “science  
4       of reading” means an interdisciplinary body of re-  
5       search from cognitive science, neuroscience, and edu-  
6       cation that—

7               (A) demonstrates the explicit, systematic  
8       use of the essential components of phonemic  
9       awareness, phonic decoding, fluency, language  
10      structure, oral language, vocabulary, back-  
11      ground knowledge, and literacy knowledge,  
12      which together lead to strong comprehension;

13              (B) recognizes the connection of reading  
14      and writing and the importance of strong writ-  
15      ing instruction;

16              (C) does not use a three-cueing model; and

17              (D) is inclusive of comprehensive literacy  
18      instruction.

19              (3) THREE-CUEING MODEL.—The term “three-  
20      cueing model” means an instructional approach  
21      that—

22              (A) uses meaning drawn from context, pic-  
23      tures, or syntax as the primary basis for teach-  
24      ing word recognition (commonly referred to as

1 “meaning, structure and syntax, and visual  
2 cues” or “MSV”); or

3 (B) teaches visual memory as the primary  
4 basis for word recognition.

5 **SEC. 5. LITERACY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.**

6 Section 2222 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-  
7 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6642) is amended—

8 (1) in subsection (a)—

9 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “and”  
10 after the semicolon;

11 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking the pe-  
12 riod at the end and inserting “; and”; and

13 (C) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(3) implement statewide policies and systems  
15 of support to assist local educational agencies and  
16 educator preparation programs in improving literacy  
17 instruction and outcomes.”;

18 (2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the  
19 following:

20 “(b) RESERVATION.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—From the amounts reserved  
22 to carry out this subpart for a fiscal year, the Sec-  
23 retary shall reserve—

24 “(A) not more than a total of 5 percent for  
25 national activities, which—

1 “(i) shall include funding for a na-  
2 tional independent evaluation—

3 “(I) that shall be conducted in  
4 accordance with high-quality, rigorous  
5 research standards; and

6 “(II) that may not be canceled or  
7 deferred, unless the entity funded to  
8 conduct the evaluation violates the  
9 terms of the contract, has been given  
10 written justification for the contract’s  
11 termination, and has been provided an  
12 opportunity to appeal the termination  
13 within 30 days of receiving the notice  
14 of termination; and

15 “(ii) may include support for the re-  
16 gional educational laboratories (described  
17 in section 174 of the Education Sciences  
18 Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9564))  
19 and comprehensive centers (established  
20 pursuant to section 203 of the Educational  
21 Technical Assistance Act of 2002 (20  
22 U.S.C. 9602)) to support literacy research  
23 and technical assistance;

24 “(B) not more than 10 percent for grants  
25 to eligible States, as described in paragraph (2);

1           “(C) one half of 1 percent for the Sec-  
 2           retary of the Interior to carry out a program  
 3           described in this subpart at schools operated or  
 4           funded by the Bureau of Indian Education; and

5           “(D) one half of 1 percent for the outlying  
 6           areas to carry out a program under this sub-  
 7           part.

8           “(2) GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE LOW-PERFORMING  
 9           STATES.—

10           “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall  
 11           allot funds reserved under paragraph (1)(B)  
 12           among eligible States described in subpara-  
 13           graph (B) in proportion to the number of stu-  
 14           dents enrolled in public elementary schools and  
 15           secondary schools in each such eligible State,  
 16           except that no eligible State shall receive less  
 17           than 0.5 percent of the amount reserved under  
 18           paragraph (1)(B).

19           “(B) ELIGIBLE STATES.—A State is de-  
 20           scribed in this subparagraph for a fiscal year if  
 21           the State for the 2 most recent consecutive as-  
 22           sessment cycles, ranks within the lowest quintile  
 23           based on the percentage of students performing  
 24           at or above the ‘basic’ achievement level in 4th



1 grade reading, as measured by the National As-  
2 sessment of Educational Progress.

3 “(C) NEEDS ASSESSMENT.—A State re-  
4 ceiving funds under this paragraph shall, not  
5 later than 1 year after receiving such funds,  
6 conduct a needs assessment that analyzes lit-  
7 eracy needs across the State and complete a  
8 comprehensive literacy instruction plan based  
9 on the results of such assessment.

10 “(D) COMPETITIVE GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE  
11 STATES.—The Secretary may award grants, on  
12 a competitive basis, to eligible States under  
13 subsection (a) from amounts that are in addi-  
14 tion to the amounts reserved under paragraph  
15 (1)(B).”;  
16 (3) in subsection (d)(2)—

17 (A) by striking subparagraph (B) and in-  
18 serting the following:

19 “(B) A description of how the State edu-  
20 cational agency, in collaboration with the State  
21 literacy team, if applicable, will develop a State  
22 comprehensive literacy instruction plan or will  
23 revise and update an already existing State  
24 comprehensive literacy instruction plan, includ-  
25 ing how the State will—

1 “(i) implement universal early literacy  
 2 screenings and intervention services for  
 3 students at-risk of falling behind in becom-  
 4 ing proficient in reading by third grade,  
 5 which may include high-impact tutoring  
 6 and summer learning programs;

7 “(ii) increase access for educators to  
 8 high-quality instructional materials aligned  
 9 with the science of reading;

10 “(iii) deliver professional development  
 11 and instructional coaching for educators,  
 12 with the input of educators, in high-needs  
 13 schools with the lowest literacy outcomes;

14 “(iv) update State licensure or certifi-  
 15 cation standards for teachers and evaluate  
 16 teacher preparation programs to assess  
 17 alignment with the science of reading; and

18 “(v) meaningfully engage educators  
 19 from across the State to provide early and  
 20 ongoing input on how to effectively support  
 21 educators in improving instructional prac-  
 22 tice and educational outcomes.”; and

23 (B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “sub-  
 24 section (f)(1)” and inserting “subsection  
 25 (f)(2)”;

1 (4) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the  
 2 following:

3 “(e) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-  
 4 tion, the Secretary shall give priority—

5 “(1) to State educational agencies that will use  
 6 the grant funds for evidence-based activities, defined  
 7 for the purpose of this subsection as activities meet-  
 8 ing the requirements of section 8101(21), except  
 9 that subclause (III) of subparagraph (A)(i) of such  
 10 section shall not apply; and

11 “(2) to States that demonstrate, based on the  
 12 needs assessment described in subsection (d)(2)(A),  
 13 that the State has not yet implemented, on a state-  
 14 wide basis, a comprehensive approach to the re-  
 15 quired activities described in subsection (f)(1)(A).”;

16 (5) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the  
 17 following:

18 “(f) STATE ACTIVITIES.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—

20 “(A) REQUIRED USES.—Each State that  
 21 receives a grant under this section shall use  
 22 grant funds not allocated under paragraph (2)  
 23 to carry out the following:

24 “(i) Ensure pre-service training and  
 25 in-service training are aligned between

1           them and with the science of reading and  
 2           designed, in collaboration with teachers  
 3           and institutions of higher education, to  
 4           support teachers in understanding the evi-  
 5           dence base on how students learn to read  
 6           and in using evidence-based instructional  
 7           materials and practices in their classrooms,  
 8           which may include—

9                       “(I) creating statewide and re-  
 10                      gional literacy coaching networks;

11                     “(II) evaluating teacher prepara-  
 12                     tion programs to strengthen  
 13                     coursework and training in the science  
 14                     of reading;

15                     “(III) updating State licensure or  
 16                     certification standards to reflect the  
 17                     science of reading; and

18                     “(IV) providing pre-service and  
 19                     in-service training for educators on  
 20                     evidence-based screening, assessment,  
 21                     and progress monitoring and instruc-  
 22                     tion for students with dyslexia.

23                     “(ii) Implement evidence-based inter-  
 24                     ventions aligned with the science of read-  
 25                     ing and designed to prepare students for

1 success with grade-level work in their core  
2 classes, which may include high-impact tu-  
3 toring and summer learning programs.

4 “(iii) Provide universal early literacy  
5 screening, including for dyslexia, at least  
6 once before the third grade, with more reg-  
7 ular literacy screenings encouraged as a  
8 tool to help identify reading difficulties  
9 early and ensure support is provided to  
10 struggling readers.

11 “(iv) Develop, incentivize, and support  
12 the adoption and implementation of a rec-  
13 ommended list of high-quality instructional  
14 materials aligned with the science of read-  
15 ing.

16 “(v) Convene and solicit input from  
17 educators as collaborative, expert partners  
18 to advise on improving pre-service training,  
19 in-service training, and identify other sup-  
20 ports that they may need to successfully  
21 implement the science of reading in class-  
22 rooms.

23 “(vi) On an annual basis, collect and  
24 publicly report implementation data, which  
25 shall include—

1 “(I) the number and percent of  
 2 students receiving screenings and  
 3 interventions for learning difficulties,  
 4 disaggregated by grade level and  
 5 disaggregated by each of the sub-  
 6 groups of students, as defined in sec-  
 7 tion 1111(c)(2);

8 “(II) the number and percent of  
 9 pre-service and in-service teachers re-  
 10 ceiving professional development and  
 11 coaching grounded in the science of  
 12 reading; and

13 “(III) the number of local edu-  
 14 cational agencies using high-quality  
 15 instructional materials aligned with  
 16 the science of reading as rec-  
 17 ommended by the State.

18 “(B) PROHIBITION OF INCLUSION OF PER-  
 19 SONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—A  
 20 State shall not include any personally identifi-  
 21 able information in data reported under sub-  
 22 paragraph (A)(vi).

23 “(2) SUBGRANTS.—Each State that receives a  
 24 grant under this section shall allocate not less than  
 25 75 percent of the grant funds to award subgrants to

1 local educational agencies to enable the local edu-  
2 cational agencies to carry out activities to improve  
3 literacy, such as—

4 “(A) strengthening literacy instruction  
5 aligned to the science of reading in elementary  
6 schools and secondary schools, including  
7 through in-service training for educators;

8 “(B) employing and training literacy in-  
9 structional coaches and interventionists;

10 “(C) purchasing and adopting high-quality  
11 instructional materials aligned with the science  
12 of reading;

13 “(D) conducting universal early literacy  
14 screenings, including for dyslexia;

15 “(E) providing direct services to students,  
16 which may include high-impact tutoring and  
17 summer learning programs, designed to help  
18 students reach proficiency in grade-level literacy  
19 standards;

20 “(F) conducting outreach to parents and  
21 families to help them support their child’s  
22 learning at home with strategies grounded in  
23 the science of reading;

1           “(G) supporting evidence-based bilingual  
2 literacy instruction, including biliteracy develop-  
3 ment aligned with the science of reading; and

4           “(H) convening and soliciting early and  
5 ongoing input from educators as collaborative,  
6 expert partners to advise on improving in-serv-  
7 ice training and identify other supports that  
8 they may need to successfully implement the  
9 science of reading in classrooms.

10          “(3) GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS.—Each State  
11 that receives a grant under this section shall—

12           “(A) comply with a biennial evaluation by  
13 the Secretary assessing the impact of the activi-  
14 ties funded under this grant program; and

15           “(B) ensure that funds provided under this  
16 section are used to supplement, and not sup-  
17 plant, any State or local funds that would oth-  
18 erwise be used for literacy instruction, teacher  
19 preparation, or interventions.

20          “(4) TEACHER PREPARATION REQUIRE-  
21 MENTS.—

22           “(A) ALIGNMENT WITH THE SCIENCE OF  
23 READING.—Each State that receives a grant  
24 under this section shall complete and publish,  
25 not later than 2 years after receiving the grant



1 funds, a review of all teacher preparation pro-  
 2 grams in the State to assess alignment with the  
 3 science of reading and make recommendations  
 4 to programs, as appropriate, for better aligning  
 5 course offerings to the science of reading.

6 “(B) LICENSURE OR CERTIFICATION RE-  
 7 QUIREMENTS.—Each State that receives a  
 8 grant under this section shall update or estab-  
 9 lish licensure or certification standards for pub-  
 10 lic school teachers in grades kindergarten  
 11 through 8, which reflect competency in instruc-  
 12 tional practices aligned with the science of read-  
 13 ing.”; and

14 (6) by adding at the end the following:

15 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

16 “(1) the terms ‘evidence-based’ and ‘science of  
 17 reading’ have the meanings given the terms in sec-  
 18 tion 4 of the Reading Excellence and Achievement  
 19 for Development Act;

20 “(2) the term ‘high-impact tutoring’ means a  
 21 form of teaching that—

22 “(A) is conducted 1-on-1 or in small  
 23 groups;

24 “(B) is intended to complement core class-  
 25 room instruction; and

1 “(C) includes—

2 “(i) substantial time each week en-  
3 gaged in tutoring with trained personnel;

4 “(ii) a sustained and strong relation-  
5 ship between the student and tutor;

6 “(iii) progress monitoring of student  
7 knowledge and skills attainment;

8 “(iv) an alignment with core class-  
9 room instruction; and

10 “(v) supportive coaching for the tutor  
11 to ensure quality interactions; and

12 “(3) the term ‘universal early literacy screen-  
13 ing’ means the systematic and periodic assessment  
14 of all students’ foundational reading skills, including  
15 phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, flu-  
16 ency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as develop-  
17 mentally appropriate, to identify those at risk for  
18 reading difficulties and to provide timely, evidence-  
19 based interventions.

20 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
21 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
22 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2026  
23 through 2035.”.

1 **SEC. 6. PARENT REPORTING.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart 2 of part F of title VIII  
3 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965  
4 (20 U.S.C. 7901 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end  
5 the following:

6 **“SEC. 8549D. PARENT REPORTING.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each school receiving as-  
9 sistance under this Act that includes any of kinder-  
10 garten through grade 8 shall provide notification to  
11 the parent of any student who is identified as at risk  
12 of reading difficulties or performing below grade  
13 level in reading.

14 “(2) NOTIFICATION.—The notification de-  
15 scribed in paragraph (1) shall—

16 “(A) be provided not later than 30 days  
17 after the beginning of the school year, for stu-  
18 dents in any of grades 4 through 8 who were  
19 identified as below grade level in reading on the  
20 previous year’s summative assessment required  
21 under section 1111(b)(2)(B);

22 “(B) be provided not later than 30 days  
23 after a student is identified as at risk for read-  
24 ing difficulties on any universal early literacy  
25 screening (as defined in section 2222(g)(1)(C))

1 administered at any point during the school  
2 year; and

3 “(C) include—

4 “(i) the results of the assessment or  
5 screening;

6 “(ii) the supports that will be pro-  
7 vided to the student to reach proficiency;  
8 and

9 “(iii) ways that the parent can sup-  
10 port learning at home.

11 “(3) MORE REGULAR NOTIFICATIONS.—A  
12 school may provide more regular notification to a  
13 parent than that required under paragraph (2) and  
14 contain additional information in the notification to  
15 assist the parent in understanding and supporting  
16 the educational needs of their child.

17 “(b) REPORTS AND NOTICES IN PRIMARY LAN-  
18 GUAGES.—A school shall provide each report and notifica-  
19 tion described in subsection (a) in the primary language  
20 of the parent, to the extent practicable.

21 “(c) MODEL NOTIFICATION TEMPLATES.—The Sec-  
22 retary shall develop user-tested parental notification tem-  
23 plates and other materials, as determined appropriate by  
24 the Secretary, for optional use by schools to help them  
25 fulfill the requirements under this section. These tem-

1 plates and materials must be made publicly available on  
 2 the Department’s website.”.

3 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in  
 4 section 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act  
 5 of 1965 is amended by inserting after the item relating  
 6 to section 8549C the following new item:

“Sec. 8549D. Parent reporting.”.

7 **SEC. 7. GENERAL PROVISIONS.**

8 (a) APPLICABILITY.—This Act and the amendments  
 9 made by this Act shall apply with respect to funds award-  
 10 ed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act  
 11 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 note et seq.) on or after the  
 12 date of enactment of this Act.

13 (b) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act  
 14 or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed  
 15 to—

16 (1) limit or alter the rights, protections, and in-  
 17 dividualized instructional requirements under the In-  
 18 dividuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.  
 19 1400 et seq.), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act  
 20 of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), or the Americans with  
 21 Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.);  
 22 or

23 (2) authorize any officer or employee of the  
 24 Federal Government to mandate, direct, or control a  
 25 State, local educational agency, or school’s specific

- 1 instructional content, academic standards and as-
- 2 sessments, curricula, or program of instruction.

