

# Colorado READ Act



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

**The Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act)**, passed by the Colorado legislature in 2012, focuses on early literacy development for all students and especially for students at risk to not read at grade level by the end of the third grade. The READ Act focuses on literacy development for kindergarteners through third-graders. Students are tested for reading skills, and those who are not reading at grade level are given individual READ plans.

In 2019, the legislature strengthened the READ Act, adding new emphasis on the importance of instruction that is scientifically proven to be effective in teaching all students to read at grade level.

**For successful implementation of the READ Act, it is important to understand and consider the following about early literacy:**



## **ELEMENTAL BUILDING BLOCKS**

Reading is an elemental building block to receive a quality education, and every child should read at grade level by the end of third grade.

## **PREVENTION IS KEY**

The Colorado READ Act is a legislative priority that focuses on early literacy development for all students, especially for students at risk for not reading at grade level by the end of third grade. Specific funding is allocated to help students who are struggling the most.

## **TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE ARE CRITICAL**

Teacher knowledge and practice are critical. Educators must have a deep understanding of the science of reading to help every child become a lifelong reader. In 2019, the legislature amended the READ Act to require all K-3 teachers to receive training in evidence-based reading instruction.

## **IT TAKES A COMMUNITY**

It takes collaborative partnerships between schools, educators, communities and families to improve literacy for all students.

## **WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?**

- To learn more visit the [Colorado READ Act website](#)
- Learn more about the [Colorado READ Act Assessments](#)
- [2019 Updates to the READ Act](#)
- View all [CDE fact sheets](#)

# READ ACT REQUIREMENTS CONT.

## ASSESSMENTS

The READ Act requires teachers to assess the literacy development of K-3 students in the areas of phonemic awareness; phonics; vocabulary development; and reading fluency, which includes mastery of oral skills and reading comprehension. In March 2013, the State Board of Education approved interim assessments for use in measuring reading competency skill levels for children in K-3.

## DEVELOPMENT OF READ PLANS

The READ Act requires the creation and implementation of an individual intervention plan, called a READ plan, for students identified with a significant reading deficiency. The law outlines specific components that must be included in a READ plan to ensure the effectiveness of the intervention strategies, but each READ plan must be tailored to meet the individual needs of each student.

## UNIFIED IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

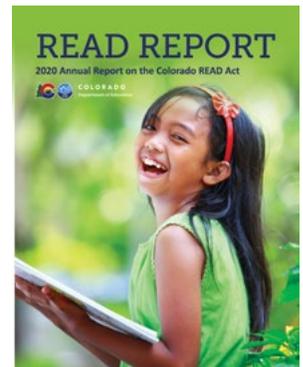
Unified improvement plans submitted by districts to the Department of Education must include information about the district's reading assessments, curriculum and instructional programs, as well as their intervention services.

## READ PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Throughout the READ plan implementation process, decisions should be made collaboratively between school personnel and parents. Parents should receive regular, ongoing updates from the student's teacher concerning results of the intervention instruction and the student's progress in achieving reading competency. The student's teacher must review the READ plan at least annually and update or revise the plan as appropriate to facilitate the student's progress in demonstrating reading competency. Although READ plans are established in grades K-3, a READ plan remains in place until he or she achieves grade level competency.

## ADVANCEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT READING DEFICIENCIES

The READ Act provides guidance for advancing students with significant reading deficiencies. It gives parents the option to choose retention as an intervention strategy for students who are significantly below grade level. For students completing third grade, the superintendent can work in partnership with families to determine retention for students who will still have significant reading deficiencies.



Please see the annual [READ Act Legislative Report](#) for data and funding information.

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# READ ACT REQUIREMENTS CONT.

## DISTRICT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The READ Act requires districts to report specific student-, school- and district-level data to CDE to determine and report the number of students identified with significant reading deficiencies and their progress.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Districts and schools will be held accountable for student progress in the District/School Performance Frameworks and are expected to use this data to inform the development and implementation of their Unified Improvement Plans.

## STATE SUPPORTS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

The Early Literacy Fund provides districts with per-pupil funding to help meet the needs of students with significant reading deficiencies. In 2019-20, the total allocation was approximately \$26 million. Per-pupil funds may be used to provide scientifically or evidence-based interventions, summer school and/or tutoring services. For districts to be eligible for the fund, they must use a state-approved evidence based reading curriculum.

In addition, the READ Act appropriates additional funds to the Office of Literacy at the Colorado Department of Education.

## K-3 TEACHER TRAINING

Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, each district that receives per-pupil or early literacy grant funding must ensure that all K- 3 teachers have completed evidence-based training in teaching reading.

Teachers have several options for completing the training, including a no-cost option provided by CDE. Districts must ensure their teachers complete the training requirements by Jan. 31, 2022.



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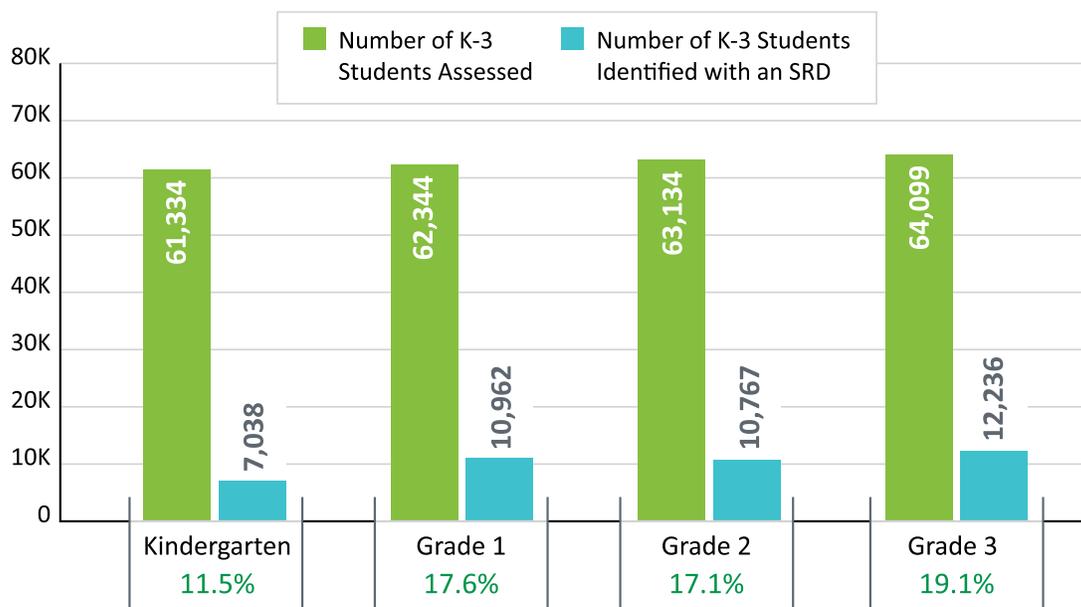


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## PREVALENCE OF SIGNIFICANT READING DEFICIENCIES IN COLORADO (2019)

End of the year assessment data from 2019 shows 16.34 percent, or 41,003, of K-3 Colorado students had a significant reading deficiency, meaning the student doesn't meet minimum reading competency skills in areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development and reading fluency – including oral skills and reading comprehension.



Note: These data do not include students who were exempt from taking a READ Act assessment.

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