

House Bill 23-1231: Improving Mathematics Outcomes in Kindergarten Through Twelfth Grade Education



Implementation by the Colorado Department of Education

The Colorado General Assembly passed House Bill 23-1231 in April 2023. The legislation seeks to improve outcomes in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade mathematics by putting in place supports to accelerate achievement.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) must implement several pieces of House Bill 23-1231 beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, namely contracting for training in mathematics for elementary and secondary educators, identifying and publishing evidence-informed curricula, assessments and interventions, providing technical assistance for rural local education agencies, creating a grant program to accelerate learning, amending the existing Ninth-Grade Success Grant Program to prioritize mathematics and adding requirements for licensure endorsements in mathematics.

Training for Elementary and Secondary Educators

The legislation requires CDE to make available free optional trainings in evidence-informed practices in mathematics, including a training specifically designed for elementary school educators and a training specifically designed for secondary school mathematics educators. Each training must include interventions to help students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics, children with disabilities and students who are English language learners. The training will be available to relevant staff of school districts, related administrative units, district charter schools, institute charter schools, boards of cooperative services and community-based organizations.

Evidence-Informed Curricula, Assessments, and Interventions

Under the legislation, CDE must publish a list of evidence-informed curricula and assessment options for local education agencies, consult stakeholders in the process and revise the list every four years. In addition, the department must publish evidence-informed interventions for improving mathematics achievement, including intervention options that may be available to parents remotely.

Technical Assistance in Mathematics

Upon request, the CDE is required to provide technical assistance to local education providers in rural areas. Assistance must include best practices in mathematics, including interventions to assist students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics, students with disabilities and students who are multilingual learners.

Unified Improvement Planning

The legislation calls for key elements to be included in the school and district improvement plans with an improvement,

Similarities to and Differences from the Colorado READ Act

House Bill 23-1231 has some similarities to the Colorado READ Act in that the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) must publish lists of evidence-informed curricula, assessments, and interventions on their website. **However, different from the READ Act, there are no requirements for district adoption.**

In addition, the CDE must provide **free and optional training in mathematics to all elementary and secondary educators.** This is different from the READ Act in that training in literacy, specifically around the Science of Reading, is required by all K-3 teachers and will expand next year to include grades K-3 administrators and grades 4-12 reading interventionists.

The other similarities include additional requirements for endorsements for licensure and inclusion of mathematics strategies and targets during the improvement planning process (i.e., UIP).

priority improvement or turnaround rating in support of accelerating mathematics achievement and growth. Those specific elements include identifying strategies for students who are struggling with mathematics and setting targets for improvement. Specific information will be provided in the quality criteria for UIPs. These expectations for plan requirements elements go into effect immediately. The department is emphasizing awareness of the requirements in this initial year of implementation as the supports associated with the bill are developed.

Colorado Academic Accelerator Grant Program

The legislation creates the Colorado Academic Accelerator Grant Program, which will be administered by CDE. The purpose of the grant program is to create community learning centers that:

- Provide opportunities for academic enrichment and support activities during non-school hours, periods when school is not in session or during extended learning hours, including tutorial services; and
- Offer families opportunities for engagement in their students' education, including opportunities for mathematics literacy and related educational development.

Eligible entities that apply to the grant program are selected for a grant that runs for a period of three years. The department is required to prioritize applicants that:

- Adopt intervention strategies;
- Use evidence-informed programs that build student skills in STEM and mathematics;
- Use digital math accelerator programs;
- Serve high-needs students, as determined by the department;
- Have an established presence and relationship in the community; and
- Have demonstrated in the application how the eligible entity will meet the needs of diverse student populations.

Ninth Grade Success Grant Program

The legislation amends the current Ninth Grade Success Grant Program and requires CDE to prioritize applicants that propose programming focused on evidence-informed mathematics skills, acceleration strategies and intervention strategies, including a focus on students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics and applicants that have academic achievement levels in mathematics that are consistently ranked the lowest for public high schools in the state, as determined by the department.

Licensure Candidates for Mathematics Endorsements

The legislation includes a requirement that candidates for an elementary education endorsement, a middle school mathematics endorsement or a secondary mathematics endorsement be trained in evidence-informed practices in mathematics, including interventions to help students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics, children with disabilities and students who are English language learners. These requirements will be added to the regulations governing educator license endorsements.

Implementation by Local Education Agencies and Institute Charter Schools

House Bill 23-1231 strongly encourages school district boards of education and institute charter to adopt procedures for schools to provide support to students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade and students' families to improve mathematics outcomes. Procedures may include:

- Identifying students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics based on academic assessments;
- Notifying the parents, guardians or legal custodians if a student is below grade level or struggling in mathematics;

- Providing parents, guardians or legal custodians with a list of interventions and acceleration strategies to assist with mathematics at home, including any state-advisory list of curricula, referrals for mathematics tutoring or other intervention opportunities, when applicable;
- Publishing mathematics curricula annually, including supplemental curricula or interventions; and
- Implementing train-the-trainer or train-the-parent framework plans to improve mathematics achievements for students.

In addition, the bill requires school districts, public schools, the state charter school institute and institute charter schools that are on an improvement plan, priority improvement plan or a turnaround plan to identify strategies to address the needs of students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics and set or revise, as appropriate, ambitious but attainable targets to reduce the number of students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics and to increase the number of students who achieve grade-level expectations in mathematics. Schools and districts should document these requirements in the Unified Improvement Plan.

Implementation by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood

The bill includes developmentally appropriate early numeracy as part of the continuing professional development requirements for teachers employed by a preschool provider. The Colorado Department of Early Childhood is required to include developmentally appropriate early numeracy as a subject matter area in the resource bank of preschool curricula for use by preschool providers.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Colorado General Assembly: <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1231>

Colorado Department of Education: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/comath>

For questions, please contact Joanna Bruno, bruno_j@cde.state.co.us