

**H.101 v. S.114 v. AOE proposal  
Literacy Grant Program**

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Subject	H.101	S.114/H.315	AOE Proposal
<p><b>Literacy grant program</b></p>	<p><b>Sec. 3. LITERACY GRANT PROGRAM</b></p> <p>(a) Definitions. As used in this section:</p> <p>(1) <u>“Eligible applicant” means a supervisory union, or, if multiple supervisory unions choose to collaborate in applying together for the grant funding, those supervisory unions.</u></p> <p>(2) <u>“Grant” means a grant provided under this section.</u></p> <p>(3) <u>“Participating supervisory union” means each supervisory union that applies for the grant funding under the same application.</u></p> <p>(4) <u>“Participating supervisory union leadership team” means the superintendent or designee of each participating supervisory union and two representatives of schools within each participating supervisory union appointed by its superintendent.</u></p> <p>(5) <u>“Program” means the Literacy Grant Program created by this section.</u></p>	<p>(1) <u>Literacy Training. \$3,000,000.00 for the Agency of Education to provide grants to supervisory districts and supervisory unions, on behalf of their member school districts, to provide professional development for teachers in methods of teaching literacy.</u></p> <p>(A) <u>The Agency shall administer the grant program and determine which supervisory districts and supervisory unions are eligible and the amount to be granted to each applicant based on its assessment of the relative need for this funding, taking into account the following factors across applicants:</u></p> <p>(i) <u>literacy assessments of students;</u></p> <p>(ii) <u>the number of literacy instructors per enrolled students;</u></p> <p>(iii) <u>the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals;</u></p> <p>(iv) <u>the percentage of students who are English language learners;</u></p>	<p><u>The Agency shall reserve not less than \$14,258,000 of the total amount of grant funds awarded to the State under Elementary and Secondary School Relief (ESSR) American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Section 2001(f) to carry out, directly or through grants or contracts, activities to address learning loss by supporting the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to students’ academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on at-risk student populations, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, including by providing additional support to local educational agencies to fully address such impacts.</u></p>

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	<p><u>(b) Program creation and grant authorization.</u></p> <p><u>(1) The Literacy Grant Program is created to enable supervisory unions to adopt best practices in teaching literacy instruction to students in prekindergarten through grade 3.</u></p> <p><u>(A) In recognition that literacy proficiency is a foundational learning skill, this Program is designed to assist supervisory unions implement 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173 by providing students with the literacy skills necessary to ensure that core instruction meets most needs of most students and that students who struggle receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers.</u></p> <p><u>(B) Supervisory unions are encouraged to work together in a sustained and targeted manner to improve literacy outcomes by applying together for the grant funding or otherwise working collaboratively in a manner that uses resources in an effective and efficient manner.</u></p>	<p><u>(v) discrepancies in outcome data on literacy for students from historically underserved populations, including, to the extent that data is available in compliance with privacy laws, students who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color and students on individualized education programs; and</u></p> <p><u>(vi) the extent to which teacher professional development is integrated with a multitiered system of supports.</u></p>	<p><u>(1) From the [ESSR] reserve the Agency shall allocate \$3,000,000 to provide grants to supervisory unions and supervisory districts on behalf of their member school districts, to provide professional development for teachers in methods of teaching literacy and to enable supervisory unions to adopt evidence-based practices in teaching literacy instruction to students in prekindergarten through grade 3. The Agency will determine which supervisory districts and supervisory unions are eligible and the amount to be granted to each applicant based on its assessment of the relative need for this funding, taking into account the following factors across applicants:</u></p> <p><u>(A) Two or more supervisory unions that plan, in a sustained and targeted manner to work together to improve literacy outcome;</u></p> <p><u>(B) The extent to which the eligible applicant’s plan aligns with their Agency-approved Recovery Plans and improves literacy</u></p>

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	<p><u>(C) Subject to the terms of the Program, grants shall be awarded to eligible applicants for three consecutive years.</u></p> <p><u>(2)(A) The Agency of Education shall inform supervisory unions of the availability of grants under this act and provide technical assistance to eligible applicants in applying for these funds.</u></p> <p><u>(B) The Agency, in providing information and technical assistance, shall focus on eligible applicants that have a relative higher percentage of:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>(i) students who have over recent years scored lower on literacy assessments;</u></li> <li><u>(ii) students who come from families eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch; or</u></li> <li><u>(iii) discrepancies in outcome data on literacy for students from historically underserved populations, including, to the extent that data is available in compliance with privacy laws, students who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; students who are English</u></li> </ul>		<p><u>teaching and outcomes, including how the proposed plan will strengthen the applicant’s process towards ensuring that:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>(i) core literacy instruction meets most needs of most students; and</u></li> <li><u>(ii) students who struggle with literacy proficiency receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers.</u></li> </ul>

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	<p><u>language learners; and students on individualized education programs.</u></p> <p><u>(C) The Agency of Education shall also advise supervisory unions of other sources of funding that may be available to advance the purpose of this act.</u></p> <p><u>(c) Application for, and approval of, grant funding.</u></p> <p><u>(1) On or before July 15, 2021, the Agency of Education shall develop the application for the grant program and post the application on the Agency’s website.</u></p> <p><u>(2) The application for the grant shall include:</u></p> <p><u>(A) the members of the participating supervisory union leadership team and a description of its governance structure;</u></p> <p><u>(B) the person or persons who will disperse the grant funds among the participating supervisory unions, a description of the fiscal controls to ensure proper accounting of these funds, and the eligible applicant’s Program budget;</u></p>		

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	<p><u>(C) the literacy indicators and outcomes the eligible applicant seeks to improve, which shall include each of phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and may include any other areas of current best practices in teaching literacy;</u></p> <p><u>(D) the priority problems of practice in teaching and improving literacy outcomes, including shared problems of practice across the participating supervisory unions;</u></p> <p><u>(E) the eligible applicant’s plan for improving literacy teaching and outcomes, including how the proposed plan will strengthen the applicant’s process towards ensuring that:</u></p> <p><u>(i) core literacy instruction meets most needs of most students; and</u></p> <p><u>(ii) students who struggle with literacy proficiency receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers;</u></p> <p><u>(F) how the eligible applicant will implement its plan for literacy teaching and</u></p>		

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	<p><u>outcomes and a description of how it will achieve the purpose of this act;</u></p> <p><u>(G) how literacy results and outcomes will be measured and reported;</u></p> <p><u>(H) how the eligible applicant will improve its Tier 1 education under 16 V.S.A. § 2902 through this process; and</u></p> <p><u>(I) how systems and processes developed through the grant funding will be sustained.</u></p> <p><u>(3) The Agency shall develop application scoring criteria that incorporate the factors under subdivision (b)(2)(B) of this section and are consistent with subdivisions (2)(A)–(I) of this subsection (c). On or before July 31, 2021, the Agency shall send a copy of the grant application and scoring criteria, review process, and selection criteria to the House and Senate Committees on Education.</u></p> <p><u>(4) Eligible applicants shall submit applications for grant funding to the Agency of Education, which shall review those applications. Following the application review</u></p>		

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	<p><u>process, the Agency shall recommend applications to the Secretary for funding based on the review scores, funding dollars available, and the Agency's view of the applicant's need for literacy instructional support as compared with other applicants. The Secretary shall make the final grant funding determination.</u></p> <p><u>(5) Based on the Secretary's determination, the Agency of Education shall, on or before September 1, 2021, award the first year of grant funding, up to \$100,000.00 per application, to successful applicants. The amount of this funding shall be based on the applicant's proposed budget, total availability of funds, and the applicant's need for literacy instructional support as compared with other applicants. If the amount appropriated for this purpose is insufficient to fully fund the grants under that section, then the grant amounts that are awarded shall be prorated.</u></p> <p><u>(6) The Agency of Education shall, on or before each of September 1, 2022 and 2023, award the second year and third year of grant</u></p>		

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	<p><u>funding, respectively, of up to \$100,000.00 per eligible applicant per year. The amount of this funding shall be based on the applicant's proposed budget, total availability of funds, and the Secretary's assessment of the eligible applicant's progress towards implementing its action plan to improve literacy teaching and outcomes under subdivision (2)(F) of this subsection. The Secretary may deny or reduce second- or third-year grant funding if the Secretary finds that the applicant has made insufficient progress towards implementing its action plan. If the amount appropriated for this purpose is insufficient to fully fund the grants under that section, then the grant amounts that are awarded shall be prorated.</u></p> <p>(d) <u>Use of grant funds.</u></p> <p>(1) <u>Grant funds shall be used to:</u></p> <p>(A) <u>establish the participating supervisory union leadership team and its governance structure;</u></p> <p>(B) <u>implement the eligible applicant's action plan to improve literacy teaching and</u></p>		

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	<p><u>outcomes under subdivision (c)(2)(F) of this section; and</u></p> <p><u>(C) measure the literacy results and outcomes under subdivision (c)(2)(G) of this section.</u></p> <p><u>(2) Grant funds may be used to:</u></p> <p><u>(A) build literacy instructional leadership capacity to lead the improvement of the quality of literacy teaching and for the improvement of student learning;</u></p> <p><u>(B) implement an instructional coaching model, as described in the guidelines for implementing effective coaching systems issued by the Agency of Education in March 2016 (Coaching Guidelines);</u></p> <p><u>(C) implement a systems' coaching model, as described in the Coaching Guidelines;</u></p> <p><u>(D) support educators in using collaborative data systems to promote continuous improvement of literacy teaching and outcomes;</u></p> <p><u>(E) provide focused training on the literacy indicators and outcomes the eligible</u></p>		

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	<p><u>applicant seeks to improve, which, if offered, shall include each of phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and any other areas of focus in teaching literacy;</u></p> <p><u>(F) employ universal design for literacy learning, which is a framework to improve teaching and learning for all students based on scientific research on how people learn;</u></p> <p><u>(G) employ evidence-based structured literacy instruction, including for students at risk for dyslexia or diagnosed with dyslexia; and</u></p> <p><u>(H) employ any other proven method that builds sustainable systemwide improvement in literacy delivery and outcomes.</u></p> <p><u>(3) Required activities shall not be duplicative of existing programs and activities.</u></p> <p><u>(4) Grant funds may be used for hiring additional staff, providing additional compensation to existing staff, or contracting with another entity or entities to aid in the</u></p>		

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	<p><u>implementation activities under subdivision (1) of this subsection.</u></p> <p><u>(e) Evaluation and reporting.</u></p> <p><u>(1) Not later than 30 calendar days after the one-year anniversary of receiving a grant award under this section, the eligible applicant shall submit to the Agency of Education a report that describes progress and concerns with the implementation of the eligible applicant's action plan to improve literacy teaching and outcomes under subdivision (c)(2)(F) of this section.</u></p> <p><u>(2) On or before January 15, 2025, the Agency of Education shall report to the General Assembly and the Governor on the impact of the grant program. The report shall be made publicly available on the Agency of Education's website.</u></p> <p><b>Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS</b></p> <p><u>(a) The sum of \$3,090,000.00 is appropriated from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 pursuant to Section 2001(f)(1), Pub. L. No. 117-2 to the Agency of Education for fiscal year 2022 for the literacy grants to be funded on or</u></p>		

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	<p><u>before September 1 of each of 2021, 2022, and 2023 under Sec. 3 of this act.</u></p> <p><u>(b) The Agency of Education may set aside:</u></p> <p><u>(1) not more than one percent of the funds appropriated under subsection (a) of this section for each of fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for informational and technical assistance for eligible applicants as defined under Sec. 3(a)(2) of this act; and</u></p> <p><u>(2) not more than two percent of the funds appropriated under subsection (a) of this section for each of fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for the evaluations required under Sec. 3(e)(1) of this act.</u></p>		
New Position at AOE	<p><b>Sec. 5. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; STAFFING</b></p> <p><u>(a) The following position is created in the Agency of Education: one full-time, director level, classified position to serve as the Statewide Literacy Coordinator in the Office of the Secretary. The person hired as the Statewide</u></p>	<p>(B) There is established one limited service position, Education Programs Manager, within the Agency of Education for the literacy training program established by this section. The Agency of Education may utilize funds appropriated in this subdivision (1) for this position.</p>	<p><u>(2) The Agency shall use funds in subsection (1) to contract for an Education Project Manager to administer the literacy training program grant established by this section</u></p>

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	<p><u>Literacy Coordinator shall hold a masters' level degree, or have equivalent expertise based on work experience, in the field of evidenced-based literacy instruction.</u></p> <p><u>(b) There is appropriated to the Agency of Education from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 pursuant to Section 2001(f)(4), Pub. L. No. 117-2 for fiscal year 2022 the amount of \$450,000.00 for salary, benefits, and operating expenses for fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for this position.</u></p>		