



requested the entirety of the FY23 appropriation of \$19.5 million be allocated to provide educators in grades kindergarten through grade five with Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) professional development, which focuses on the science of reading.

The 2022 GAA allocated \$8 million from the general fund and \$3.5 million from the public education reform fund to PED. The remaining \$8 million for FY23 was allocated from the general fund directly to districts and charter schools through the state equalization guarantee (SEG) funding formula. Because these allocations are through the SEG, the funds directly go to school districts and charter schools and do not necessarily have to be spent in alignment with enabling legislation that established criteria for structured literacy initiatives in the state.

## **SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

**Structured Literacy and the Science of Reading.** As noted in PED’s [Statewide Literacy Framework](#), New Mexico is on a strategic path to ensure all literacy instruction is evidence-based that began with the passage of Laws 2019, Chapter 256 (SB398) which required universal dyslexia screening for first-grade students, early interventions for students displaying characteristics of dyslexia, and school districts to develop and implement a literacy professional development plan to implement structured literacy training for all elementary school teachers.

Structured literacy is an umbrella term coined by the International Dyslexia Association in 2016 to describe a science-based, explicit, systematic, cumulative approach to reading and writing instruction. The language in HB481 that requires elementary literacy materials from the reading materials fund to be “aligned with explicit, systematic, diagnostic, cumulative instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, syllable types, morphology, semantics and syntax” means these materials must be aligned with structured literacy and the science of reading. Structured literacy is an approach to reading instruction where teachers carefully structure important literacy skills, concepts, and the sequence of instruction, to facilitate children’s literacy learning and progress as much as possible. This approach is helpful for all students and can be beneficial not only for students with reading disabilities, but also for other at-risk students including English learners and struggling adolescents ([IDA, 2019](#)).

**Structured Literacy Instructional Materials.** HB481 requires a school district to request materials on the advisory list of instructional programming created by the Colorado Department of Education to apply for funding from the reading materials fund. It is important to note that the New Mexico PED’s Instructional Materials Bureau created an adopted supplemental instructional materials list for kindergarten through second grade structured literacy; the adopted supplementary materials can be found by clicking on the appropriate tab in the [Adopted Multiple List-All Subjects](#) and approved publishers can be found [on this list](#).

## **RELATED BILLS**

Relates to SB3, Family Income Index Distributions Flexibility, which removes one-third spending limitations for schools that receive \$40 thousand or more in family income index funding: at least one-third of funding for evidence-based structured literacy interventions, at least one-third for evidence-based mathematics instruction and interventions, and no more than one-third for other interventions.

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files
- Higher Education Department

**MCA/eh/cf/mb**