

AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION; IMPROVING STUDENT READING  
PROFICIENCIES; CREATING A STATEWIDE READING INITIATIVE;  
CREATING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL READING PROFICIENCY FUND.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. READING INITIATIVE--DESIGN.--

A. The state department of public education shall design and implement a statewide reading initiative to improve reading proficiency in the state. The design of the reading initiative shall be based upon quality, research-based reading programs shown to improve reading proficiency and shall include the following:

(1) consistent assessment and evaluation of student reading levels;

(2) appropriate professional staff development to assist classroom certified instructional staff in the instruction of reading programs;

(3) extra time in the student's day or year for implementation of reading programs; and

(4) rewards provided to certified school instructors in schools that improve student reading proficiency.

B. The state department of public education shall use national experts to work with the department

to develop an immediate reading initiative and a long-term plan for sustained reading improvement.

C. The state department of public education shall involve local school district personnel, especially certified elementary reading specialists, parents and other interested persons in the design of the reading initiative.

Section 2. PUBLIC SCHOOL READING PROFICIENCY FUND--CREATED.--The "public school reading proficiency fund" is created in the state treasury. The fund shall consist of appropriations, gifts, grants and donations. The fund shall be administered by the state department of public education, and money in the fund is appropriated to the department to distribute awards to local schools that implement innovative, research-based reading programs. The state department of public education shall develop procedures and rules for the application and award of money from the fund, including criteria upon which to evaluate innovative, research-based reading programs. Disbursements of the fund shall be made by warrant of the department of finance and administration pursuant to vouchers signed by the superintendent of public instruction. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year shall not revert

