

Title I, Part B Subpart 1

Reading First

Purpose:

This program focuses on putting proven methods of early reading instruction in classrooms. Through Reading First, states and districts receive support to apply scientifically based reading research—and the proven instructional and assessment tools consistent with this research—to ensure that all children learn to read well by the end of third grade.

How Funding is Distributed to Schools:

The program provides formula grants to states that submit an approved application. SEAs award subgrants to eligible LEAs on a competitive basis. SEAs fund those proposals that show the most promise for raising student achievement and for successful implementation of reading instruction, particularly at the classroom level. States may reserve up to 20% of their funds for professional development, technical assistance, and planning, administrative and reporting activities.

How Funds May Be Spent:

Only programs that are founded on scientifically based reading research are eligible for funding through Reading First. Funds support increased professional development to ensure that all teachers have the skills they need to teach these programs effectively.

In addition, Reading First provides funds to train teachers, including special education teachers, in the essential components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) and to select and administer assessments to identify those children who may be at risk of reading failure.

The program also supports the use of screening and diagnostic tools and classroom-based instructional reading assessments to measure how well students are reading and to monitor their progress.

Annual Reports:

States must submit an annual report showing districts and schools making the greatest gains in reading achievement, their progress in reducing the number of children in grades 1-3 reading below grade level, and their progress in increasing the percentage of children in disaggregated groups reading at grade level and above.

Allocations:

The US Department of Education provides tables showing allocations for Reading First State Grants at <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/08stbystate.pdf> and for the program nationwide at <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/08stbyprogram.pdf>

US Department of Education Web site:

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/index.html>