

2022 ANNUAL
REPORT ON THE
Colorado
READ Act



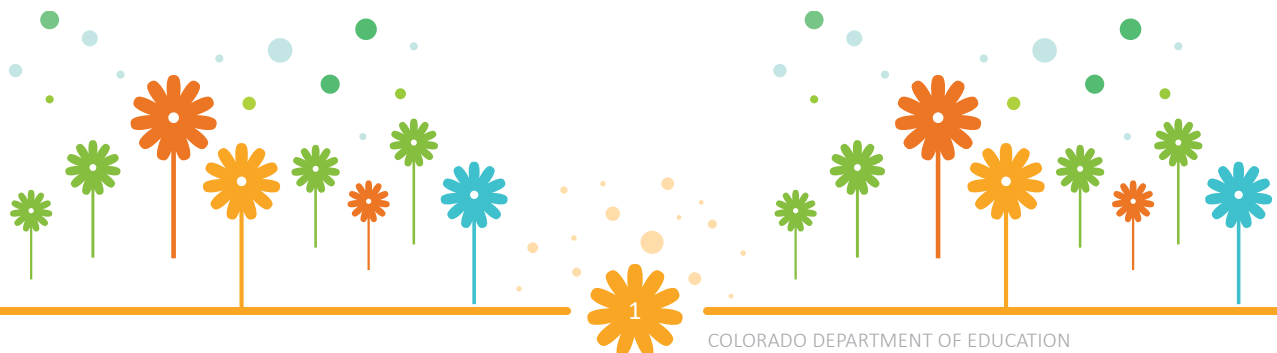
COLORADO
Department of Education



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Letter from the Commissioner of Education



The Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (the READ Act) passed 10 years ago and provided Colorado educators with a roadmap for grade level reading by third grade. Over the past decade, there have been many opportunities to learn and evolve the state's implementation of this key legislation.



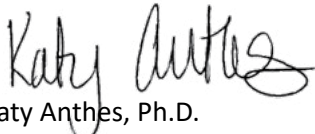
With an emphasis on early identification and intervention for significant reading deficiencies, the READ Act has changed assessment and instructional supports for students experiencing reading challenges in Colorado. The passage of Senate Bill 19-199 provided more implementation support for the state and educators to better achieve the intended outcomes of the READ Act. In 2022, we find significant progress in key aspects of S.B. 19-199: over 20,000 teachers are enrolled in CDE's free online training in evidence-based reading, districts are shifting to scientifically and evidence-based instructional programs in reading, and more accountability for use of READ per pupil intervention funds is in place.



This gives me hope as I consider the needs of Colorado's youngest learners in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is clear from state reading data that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the reading achievement of Colorado's elementary students. Now, more than ever, the reading assessment, instruction, and intervention practices supported under the READ Act are needed for Colorado's students.

I applaud the amazing efforts of our school and district leaders as they have led the implementation work for S.B. 19-199 despite the continued unprecedented challenges brought on by the pandemic. And I want to express my deepest gratitude for the continued commitment to Colorado's children shown each and every day by Colorado educators. Together, we can and will make a positive difference in the reading outcomes for our most treasured resource: our children.

Respectfully,


Katy Anthes, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education





Overview of the Colorado READ Act

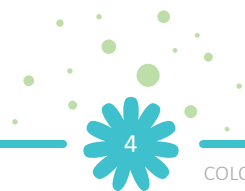
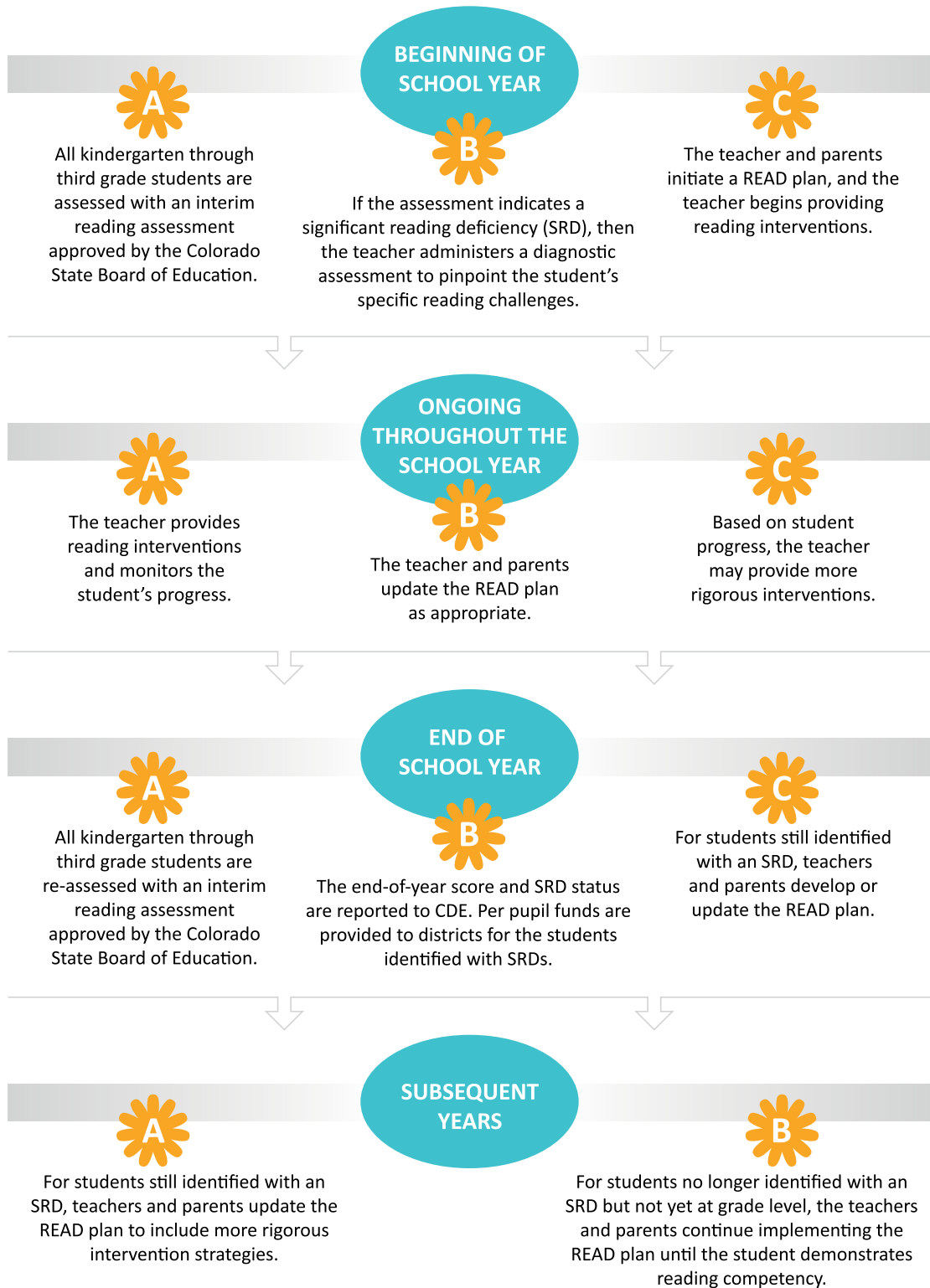
Reading proficiency is fundamental to academic success in K-12 education and beyond. The Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act, known as the READ Act, was passed by the Colorado State Legislature in 2012 and updated in 2019 to meet the goal of every Colorado student achieving reading proficiency by the end of third grade. The READ Act is an investment in the success of Colorado’s kindergarten through third grade students and their communities.

Under the READ Act, teachers in kindergarten through third grade administer an interim reading assessment to all students to determine whether they are making sufficient progress toward grade-level reading competency. When a student is identified as reading significantly below grade

level, called a “significant reading deficiency” or SRD, teachers administer a diagnostic assessment to determine specific reading challenges. Teachers use this information to develop an intervention plan, called a READ plan, collaboratively with the child’s parents to help bring the child up to grade level. Students continue to receive intervention supports and remain on a READ plan until the teacher determines that the child has met the reading skill competencies of their current grade level. Students who make enough reading growth to no longer be identified with an SRD, but who have not yet achieved grade-level competency, remain on a READ plan until they reach grade-level reading competency. Figure 1 illustrates the READ Act in action.



Figure 1: The READ Act in Action





In 2019, with the full support of the Colorado State Board of Education, the Colorado General Assembly re-doubled its efforts to prioritize early literacy by strengthening the READ Act through the unanimous passage of Senate Bill 19-199. This update to the READ Act initiated changes for Colorado districts including increased accountability for the use of READ per-pupil dollars, the requirement to use evidence-

based reading instructional and intervention programs, and a new requirement to ensure that teachers in kindergarten through third grade complete training in scientifically or evidence-based reading practices to support high quality reading instruction and interventions. S.B. 19-199 also required CDE to partner with an external evaluator to determine bright spots of implementation as well as areas for improvement.



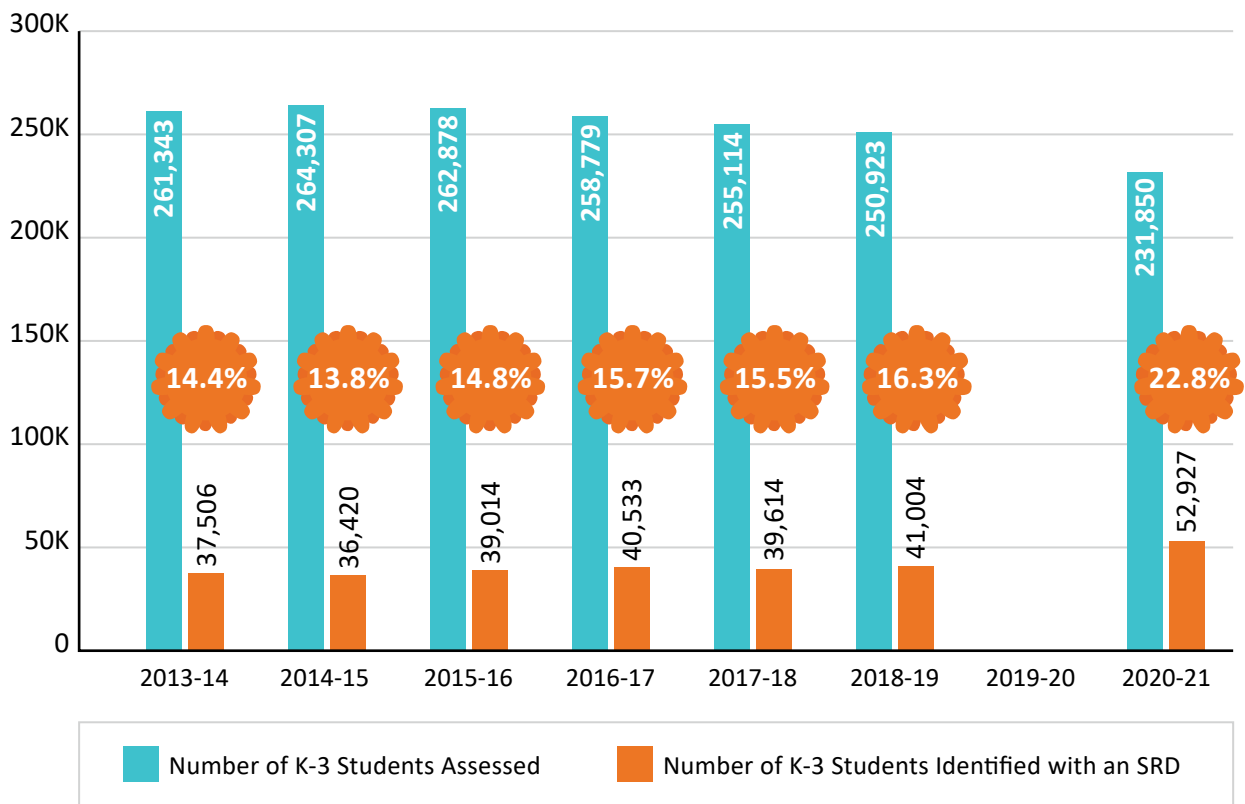
Prevalence of Significant Reading Deficiencies in Colorado



Each year districts report the number of students identified with an SRD to enable CDE to determine the per-pupil funding allocated to districts for reading interventions. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2019-20 spring assessments were canceled, and districts did not submit SRD data. Therefore data will not be available from the 2019-20 school year throughout this report.

In the 2020-21 school year, of 231,850 students who took interim assessments, 52,927 of those (22.8 percent) were identified with an SRD. Figure 2 follows the annual SRD rate since the 2013-14 school year.

Figure 2: Longitudinal SRD Rates from 2013-14 to 2020-21¹

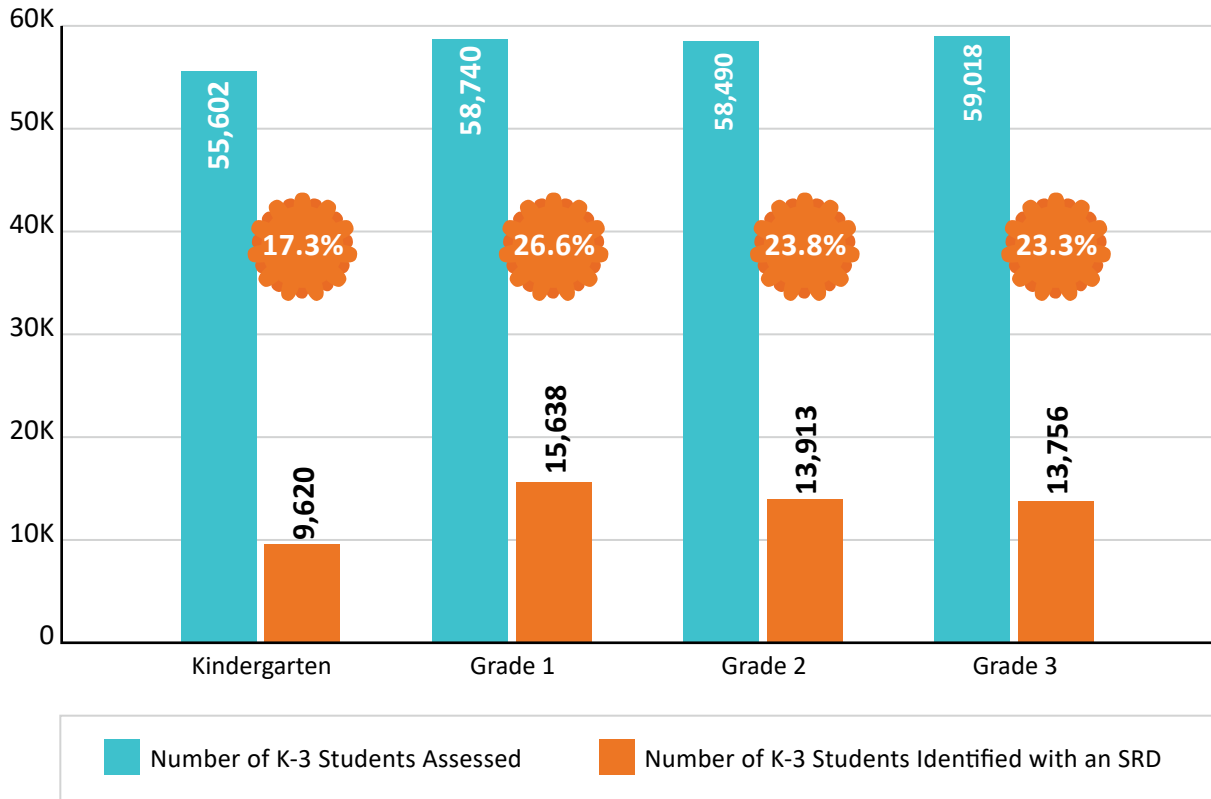


¹ The READ data collection does not include every K-3 student due to allowable exemptions as defined by the reporting guidelines. These exemptions include students who are non-English proficient and in a school in the United States less than one year and students not tested for reasons of attendance which may include part-time attendance, illness, discipline, or late enrollment.



Figure 3 illustrates the prevalence of SRD by grade level. In the 2020-21 school year, first grade had the highest prevalence of SRDs (26.6 percent), while kindergarten had the lowest prevalence (17.3 percent).

Figure 3: Students Identified as Having an SRD by Grade Level in 2020-21



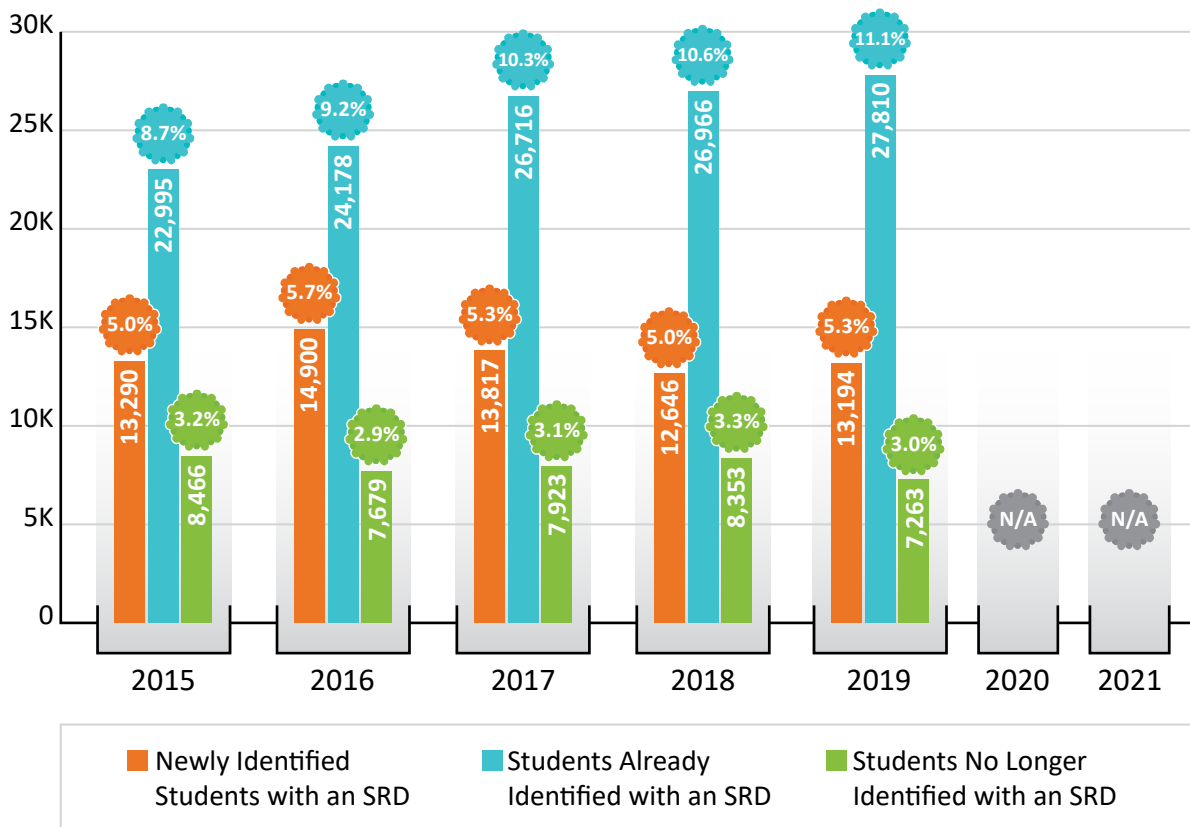
Unpacking the SRD Rate



Once a child is identified with an SRD, schools continue to track their SRD status in subsequent years until they no longer have an SRD and are reading at grade level. Each year, the SRD population can be disaggregated according to their status: (1) students newly identified with an SRD during that year, (2) students already identified with an SRD in a previous year, and (3)

students no longer identified with an SRD. Figure 4 shows this disaggregation from 2015 through 2021. While the rates fluctuate, on average, 5.3 percent of students are newly identified each year, while 10.0 percent of students continue with their identification, and 3.1 percent of students meet grade level and lose the SRD designation.

Figure 4: Disaggregated Annual SRD Rate 2015-2021²



² Data for 2020 and 2021 is not available, due to the cancellation of the READ Act assessments in the spring 2019-20 school year.

Early Detection is the Key to Reading Success



According to CDE data, early detection and intervention for an SRD result in better literacy outcomes. Students first identified with an SRD in kindergarten were much less likely to be continuously identified with an SRD by the end of their third-grade year than those first identified in second grade. Of the 5,245 students identified with an SRD in kindergarten in 2018, 44.9 percent were continuously identified with an SRD in third

grade. Of the 9,754 students identified with an SRD in second grade in 2018, 77.2 percent were continuously identified with an SRD in third grade.

This trend has remained constant for several years. It highlights the importance of early detection and the impact of early intervention on students reading significantly below grade level.

READ Plan Road Maps

Tracking Student Outcomes

The READ Act is designed to ensure effective interventions and support are provided to students with an SRD using their personalized READ plan, until the student reaches grade level proficiency. Figure 5 illustrates the intended progression towards grade level proficiency for students.

Figure 5: Illustration of the Path from SRD to Grade Level Competency

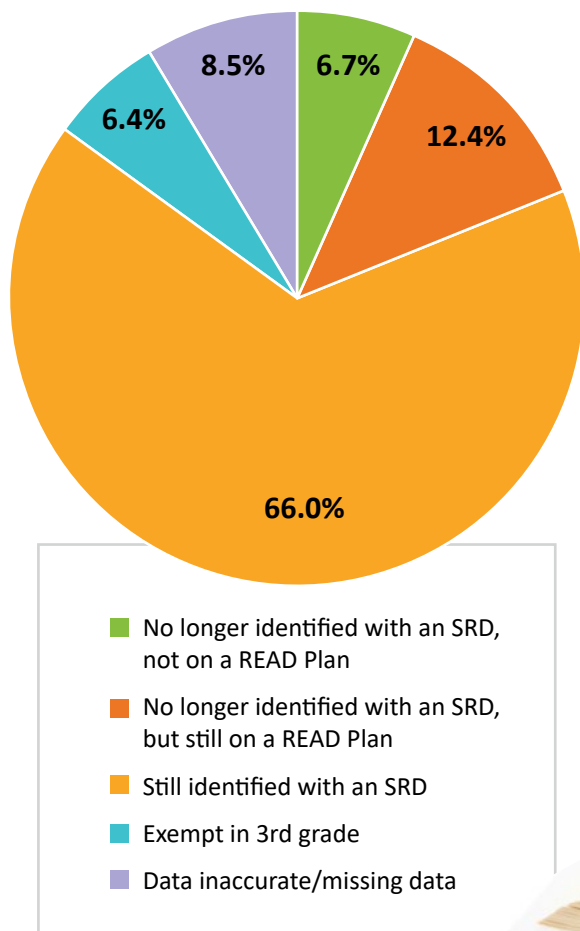




Figure 6 illustrates this progression with outcome data for students who were identified with an SRD in kindergarten during the 2017-18 school year, through the end of their third-grade year in 2020-21. Of the 4,489 students identified with an SRD in kindergarten, only 6.7 percent reached the ideal outcome of grade-level competency by the end of third grade. A total of 12.4 percent

no longer had a SRD but were not yet reading at grade level. Even though their competency and SRD status may have fluctuated throughout the years, 66 percent of students were identified with a SRD at the end of third grade. These data show a concerning trend in the need for greater acceleration in reading achievement for students identified with SRDs.

Figure 6: SRD Status at Third Grade (2020-21) of Students Identified with SRD as Kindergartners (2017-18)³

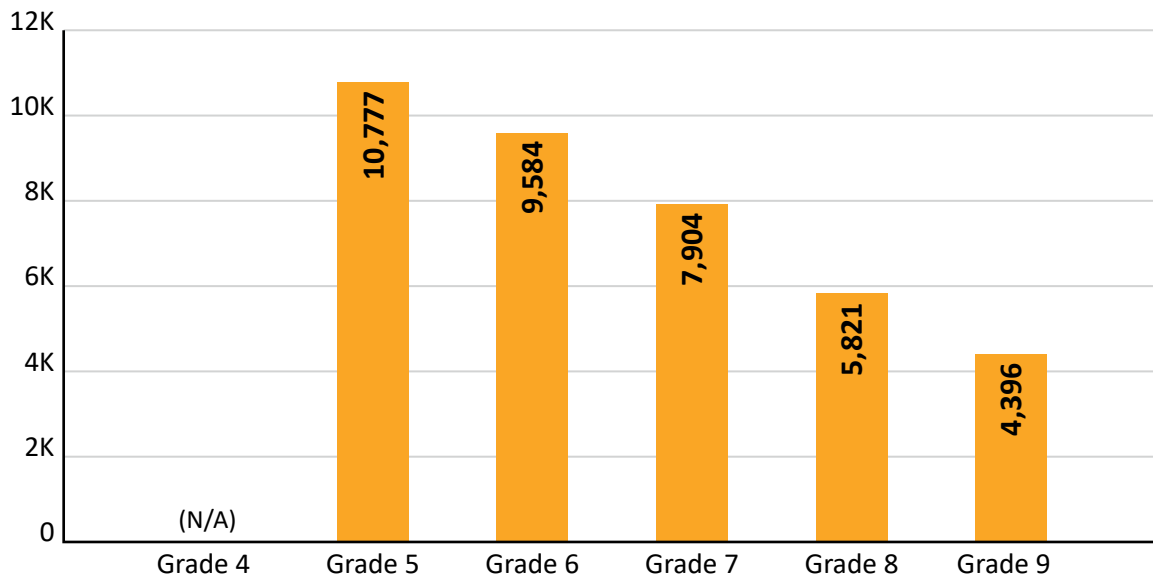


³ There were 4,489 students identified in kindergarten with an SRD who also had data for every data available collection point through 3rd grade in spring of 2021.



Any student, identified with an SRD, who is not yet reading at grade level by the end of third grade will continue to receive support, regardless of their SRD status. Figure 7 provides the 2021 counts of students who remained on a READ plan after third grade.

Figure 7: Number of Students Who Remain on READ Plans by Grade Level as Reported in 2021⁴



CDE received the federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant (CLSD) which enables Colorado to build on its K-3 reading initiative and expand support for literacy programs across the birth to grade 12 continuum. The grant program includes a focus on pre-literacy skills (birth to 5 years old) and expanded support for literacy beyond the READ Act in fourth through 12th grades.

Over the next four years through the CLSD Project, CDE will support nine districts, 163 schools, and dozens of early childhood partners in their advancement of literacy skills. The main goal is to expand knowledge and use of evidence-based practices in fourth through 12th grades and support early childhood educators deepening their understanding of language development and pre-reading skills in the early years. CDE will use this opportunity to develop guides on evaluating literacy systems and structures in grades four through 12, including providing support to the field on how to best support students who are on READ Plans beyond third grade.

⁴ Data for Grade 4 students is unavailable, due to the pandemic-related suspension of the 2020 READ Act Collection.

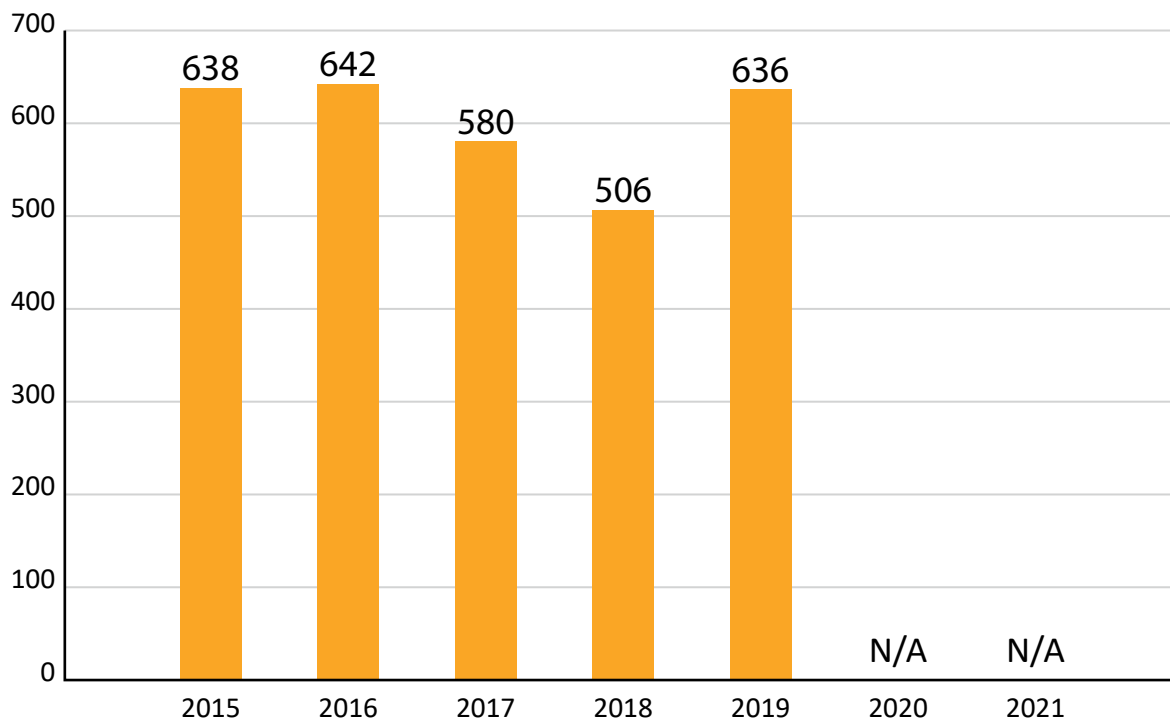


Advancement Decisions

Students with an SRD receive a variety of support, through their individual READ plans, intervention services from educators, and home reading strategies. When a student's SRD persists at the end of third grade, the READ Act requires the student's parents, teacher, and support personnel to decide whether the student should advance to the next grade level. Retention is not considered as the first strategy for intervention or support but is among the options available.

Retention has not been broadly used, as less than 2 percent of all students with an SRD were retained from 2015 to 2019 (Figure 8). Due to pandemic-related data availability constraints, data for 2020 and 2021 is not available.

Figure 8: Students Retained for SRD from 2015 to 2019⁵



⁵ Data for 2020 and 2021 is unavailable, due to the pandemic-related suspension of the 2020 READ Act Collection.

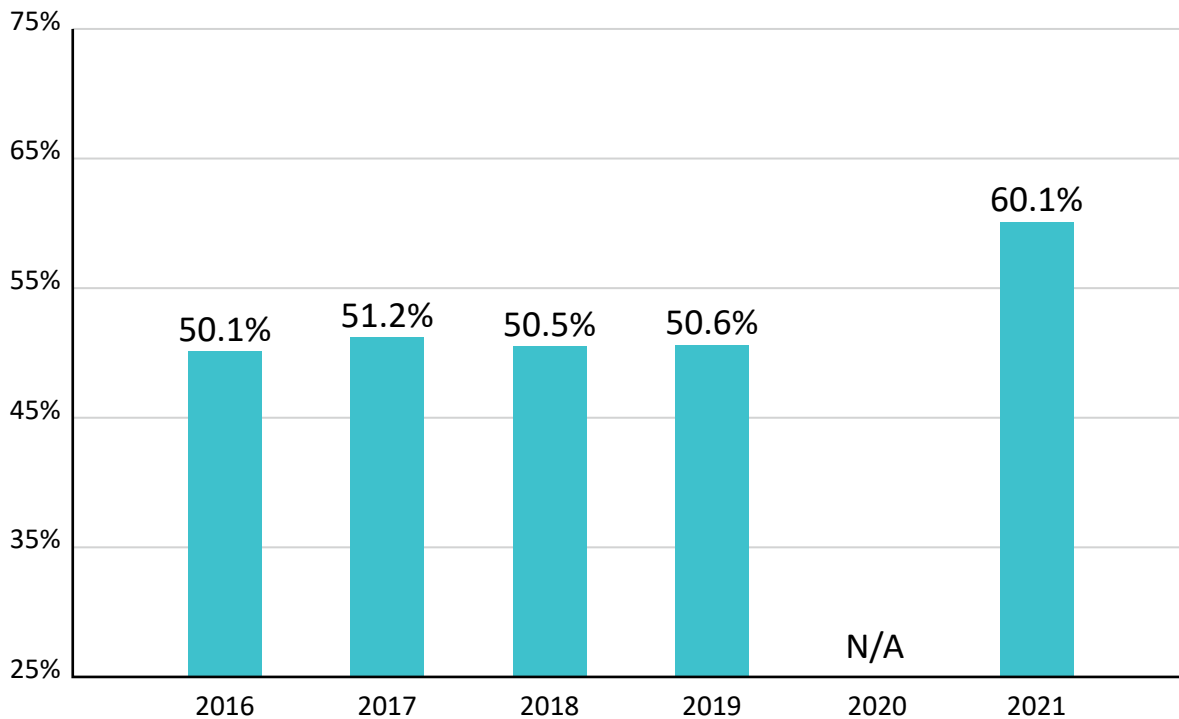
Trends Across Student Population Groups



Students Eligible for Special Education Services

Of the 52,927 children identified with an SRD in 2021, 60.05 percent also received special education services for an identified disability. This percentage is higher than the proportion seen in previous years as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Percentage of K-3 Students Eligible for Special Education Services with an SRD from 2016 to 2021^{6 7}



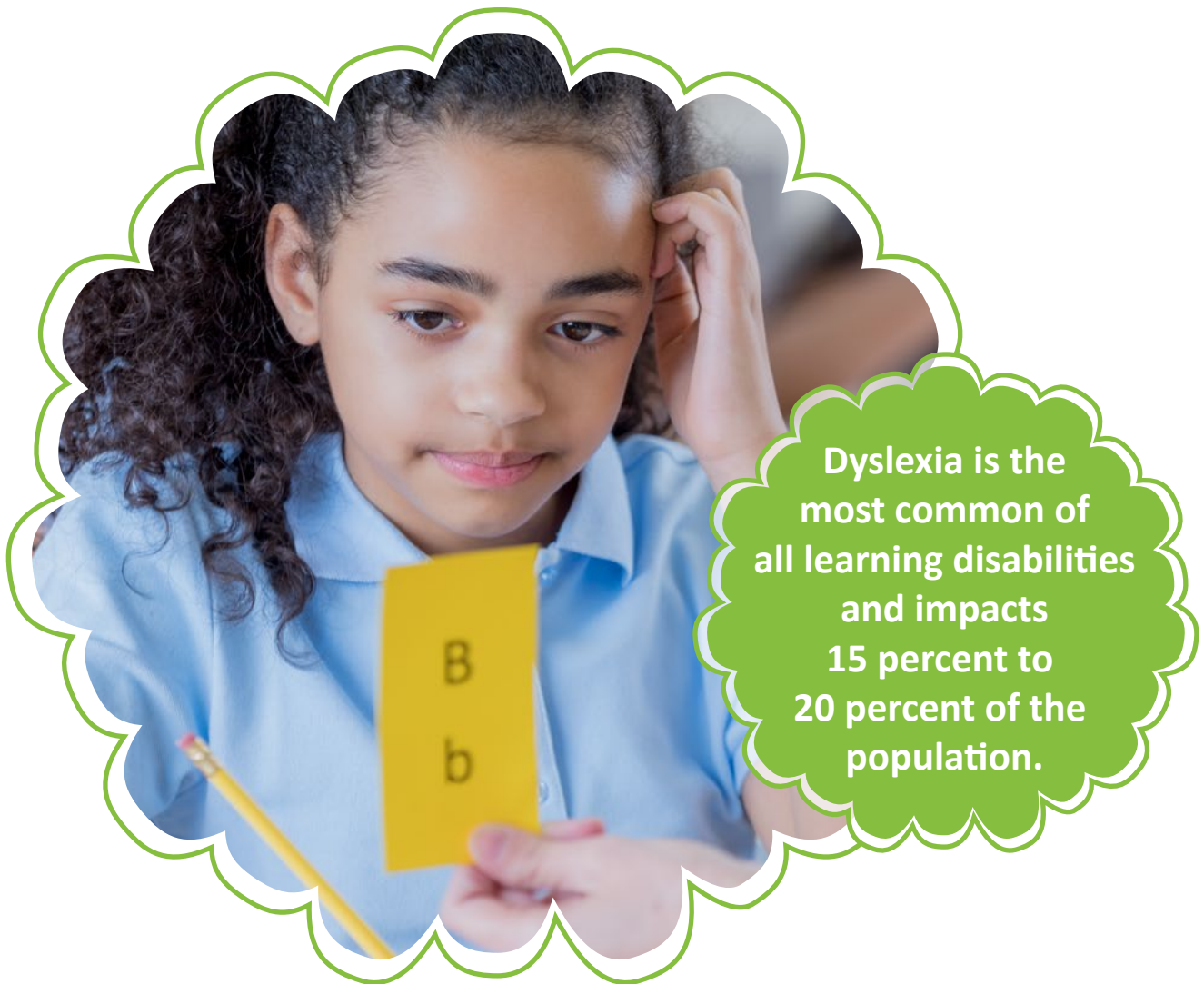
⁶ Alternative pathway for identification of SRD for students with low incidence disabilities was implemented in 2016. These students were previously exempt from taking READ assessments. See <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy> for more information.

⁷ Data for 2020 is unavailable, due to the pandemic-related suspension of the 2020 READ Act Collection.



National studies indicate that approximately one half of all students who qualify for special education are classified as having a learning disability. Further studies have shown that approximately 85 percent of those students have a primary disability in reading and language processing, including dyslexia.

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) along with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) adopted the following definition of dyslexia: “Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.”



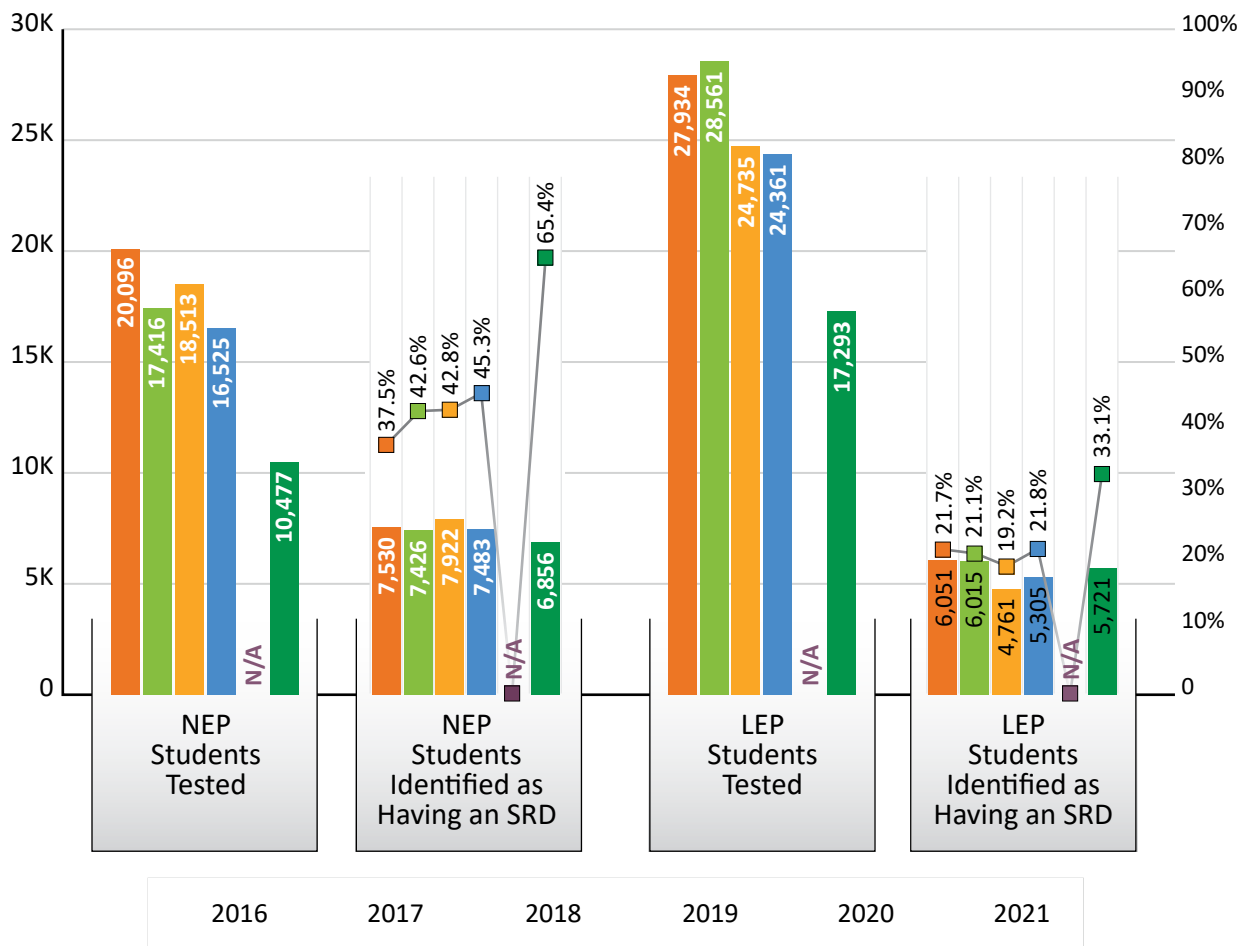
Dyslexia is the most common of all learning disabilities and impacts 15 percent to 20 percent of the population.



English Learners

Figure 10 illustrates the annual percent of English Learners designated as Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) who were also identified as having an SRD. The rate of SRD identification for NEP and LEP students held fairly steady from 2017-19 (37.5-45.3 percent and 19.2-21.8 percent respectively). Both rates saw a sharp increase in 2021, with the NEP SRD rate rising to 65.4 percent, and the LEP rate rising to 33.1 percent. This increase in identification was consistent with other student populations as a result of the effects from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 10: Percentage of K-3 English Learners Identified with an SRD from 2016 to 2021^{8 9}



⁸ Non-English Proficient are students who come from a language background other than English and are not yet fluent in English (speaking, listening, reading and/or writing). Limited English Proficient are students who comprehend, speak, read, or write some English, but whose predominant comprehension of speech is in a language other than English.

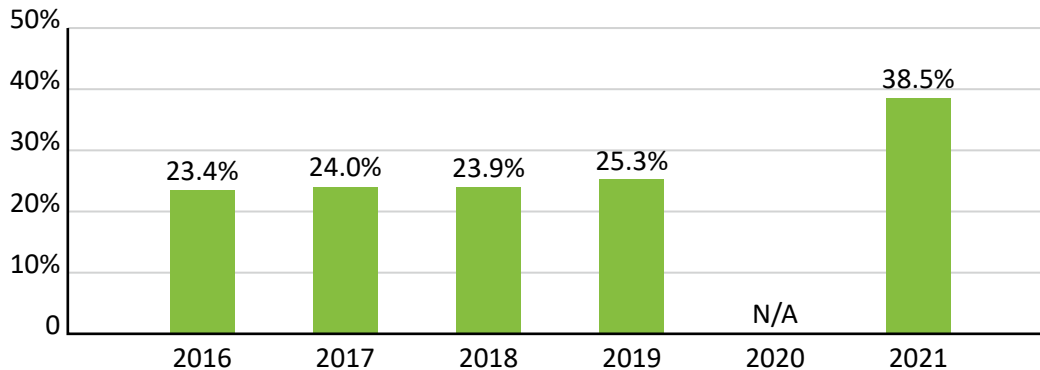
⁹ Data from 2020 is unavailable due to the pandemic-related suspension of the 2020 READ Act Collection.



Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch¹⁰

The rate of SRD identification for students eligible for free and reduced lunch (FRL) remained fairly steady from 2016 through 2019 (Figure 11). The rate jumped from 25.2 percent in 2019 up to 38.5 percent in 2021. The 2020 data collection was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

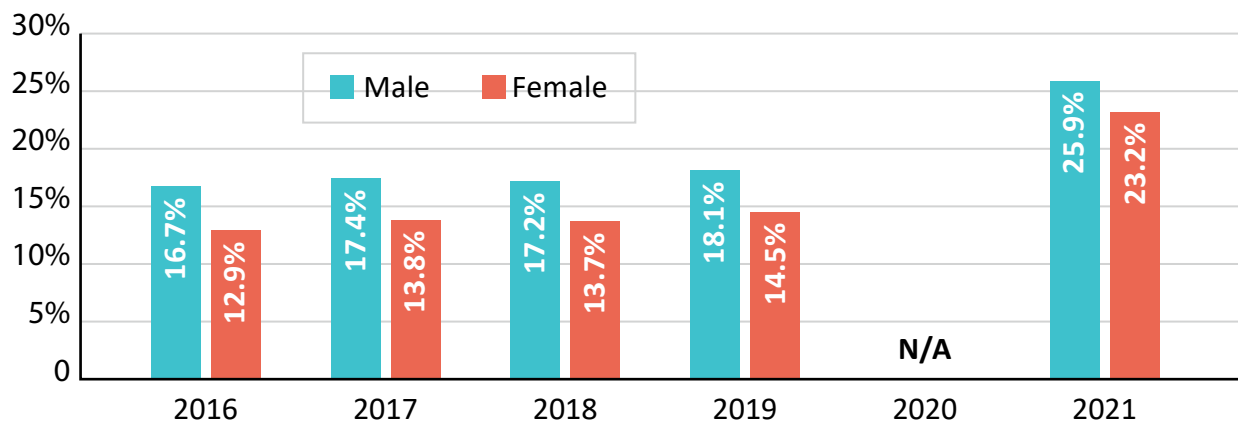
Figure 11: Percentage of K-3 Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch Identified with SRD from 2016 to 2021



Male and Female Students

Male students have consistently been identified with an SRD at higher rates than females (Figure 12). On average, males are identified with an SRD 3.4 percent more frequently than females.

Figure 12: Percentage of K-3 Male and Female Students Identified with SRD from 2016 to 2021



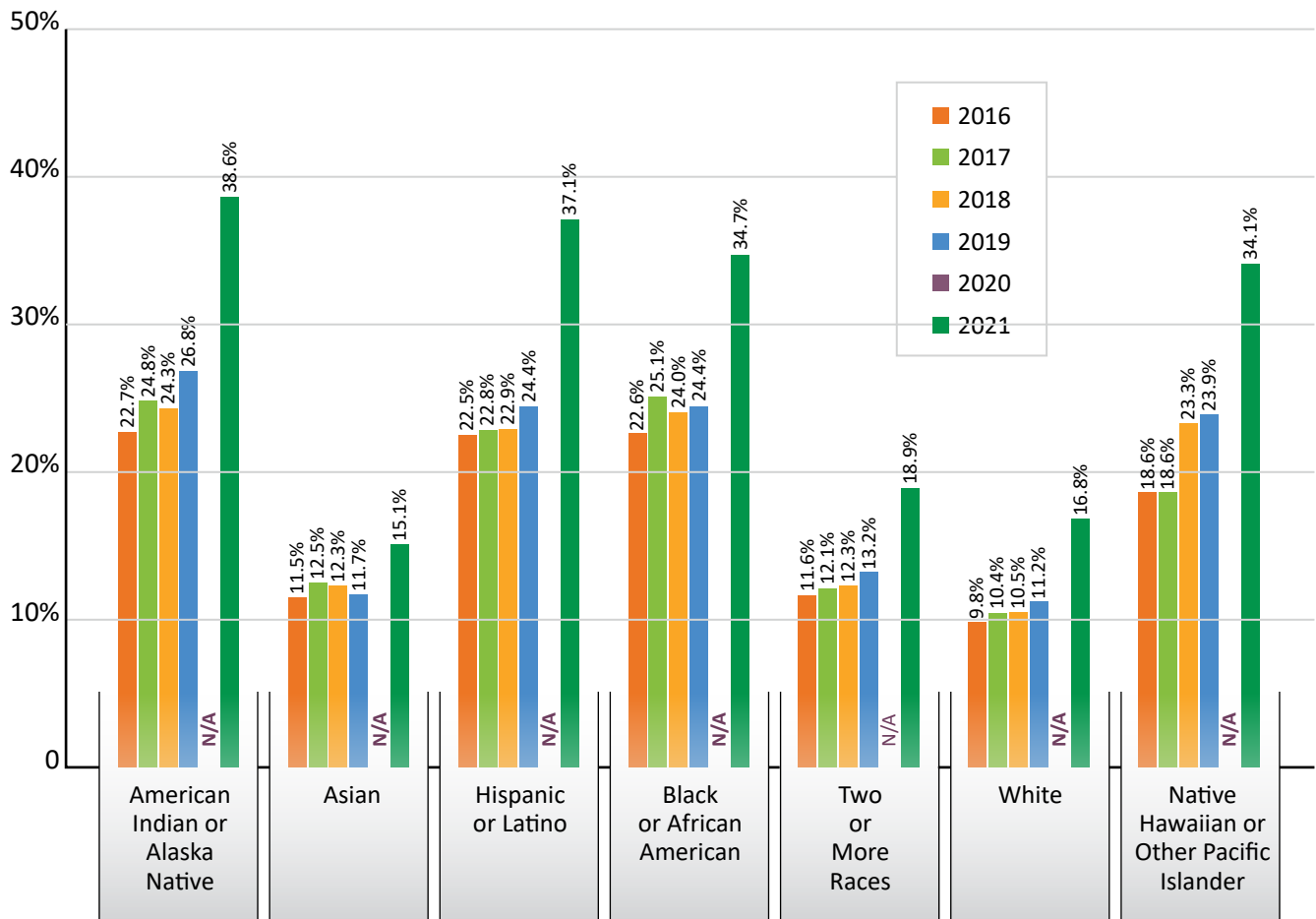
¹⁰Data from 2020 is unavailable due to the pandemic-related suspension of the 2020 READ Act Collection.



Racial/Ethnic Groups

The SRD rate has varied annually for all racial and ethnic groups in Colorado since 2016. All groups saw an increase in their SRDs in 2021 when compared to all previous years (Figure 13). The largest increase in SRD rate from 2019 to 2021 was seen in Hispanic or Latino, followed by American Indian or Alaska Native, then Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, two or more races, White and finally Asian.

Figure 13: Percentage of Students Identified with an SRD within Racial/Ethnic Groups from 2016 to 2021



READ Per-Pupil Funds



Per-Pupil Distribution of Funds

In 2020-21 the legislature allocated approximately \$26 million in READ Act funds to local education providers on a per-pupil basis for children identified with an SRD. Per-pupil intervention funds are calculated by dividing the amount of money available by the total number of kindergarten through third grade students identified with an SRD in the preceding budget year.

The 2020 READ Act data collection was paused due to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. To account for this absence of data, the 2020-21 READ funds were calculated based on the SRD count reported during the 2018-19 school year (40,976). The per-pupil funding for the 2020-21 school year was \$640.40.

To ensure funds are used to best meet the needs of students, the READ Act requires Local Education Providers to submit a detailed budget for CDE approval, that consists of allowable uses (Figure 15). CDE is required to monitor the use of READ money, and if necessary, audit fund usage.





Figure 14: 2020-21 Allowable Uses for Per-Pupil Intervention Funds

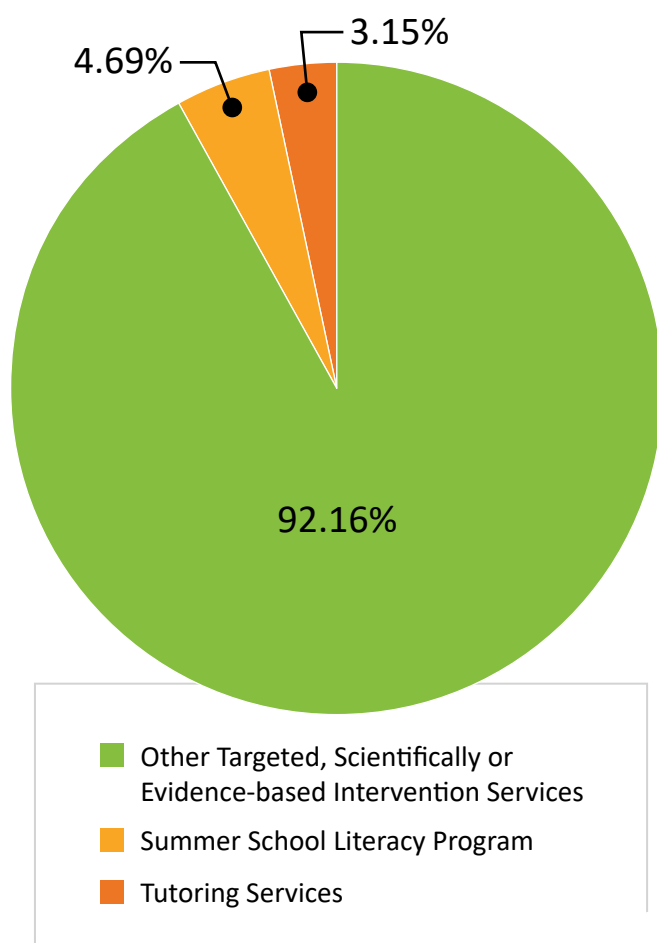
Intervention	Examples of Allowable Uses of Funds	Examples of Non-Allowable Uses of Funds
Purchased Tutoring Services	Contracted services for tutoring, instructional materials to support tutoring in reading	General classroom instruction
Summer School Literacy Program	Reading intervention programming and materials, teacher salaries for summer school contract, transportation costs for eligible students	General summer school that is not focused on literary/reading interventions. General classroom supplies and materials, transportation for all students, non-reading, intervention materials, teacher professional development
Other Targeted Interventions Approved by the Department	Reading intervention programming and materials, salaries for staff providing intervention services outside the classroom or diagnostic assessments. This may include the funding for services of a BOCES reading specialist or reading interventionist	General classroom supplies and materials, general teacher professional development, non-evidence based or scientifically based instructional programming
Literacy Specialist (small rural schools only)	Contracted services of Literacy Specialist	
Purchase of reading instructional programs	Core reading instructional programs that are included on the READ Act advisory list	Instructional programs not included on the advisory list of programs
Technology	Provide technology, including software, that is on the advisory list. This may include professional development for use of technology.	General classroom technology, or items not included on the CDE advisory list
Professional Development	Provide professional development programming to support K-3 educators in teaching reading	General education professional development that is not focused on literary / reading interventions

Based on changes to the READ Act in S.B. 19-199, districts submitted their budgets for the 2020-21 school year in the spring of 2020 for CDE approval. The department collaborated with districts to ensure the funds would be spent on allowable uses.



Figure 15 illustrates how READ Act funds were expended. The chart shows that funds were spent primarily on other targeted, scientifically or evidence-based intervention services (92.6 percent). This is followed by summer school literacy programs (4.7 percent), and tutoring services (3.2 percent).

Figure 15: 2020-21 Use of Per-Pupil Intervention Funds as Reported in the READ Data Collection¹¹



¹¹ Some students identified as having a significant reading deficiency were not reported as receiving intervention services.

READ Act Implementation Supports



As noted in the introduction, the Colorado General Assembly and the Colorado State Board of Education collaborated to strengthen the READ Act through the passage of S.B. 19-199 to address implementation challenges with the READ Act. The updates to the READ Act promote teacher training in evidence-based instructional practices in reading and alignment of reading instructional programs to the science of reading. Despite the pandemic, significant progress is being made implementing these important initiatives.





K-3 Teacher Training Requirements

School districts, charter schools, and BOCES must ensure that all K-3 teachers have completed evidence-based training in teaching reading by the start of the 2022-23 school year to receive per-pupil READ funding or early literacy grant funding.¹²

According to State Board of Education rules, the evidence-based training in teaching reading must:

1

Consist of a minimum of 45 hours of content.

2

Address the content of the educator preparation literacy standards referenced in the state board's Rules for the Administration of Educator License Endorsements, 1 CCR 301-101, section 4.02(5) through 4.02(12).

3

Include an end-of-course assessment that teachers can provide as evidence of passing.



¹² HB²¹⁻¹¹²⁹ extended the deadline to complete the training until the start of the 2022-23 school year



Statute and state board rules allow teachers to fulfill the training requirement through the completion of any of the following options:

Teacher Training Options	Examples of Allowable Uses of Funds
An Endorsement as a Reading Teacher or Reading Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers who have a Colorado Reading Teacher or Reading Specialist endorsement meet the training requirement.
The State Board Approved Assessment of Knowledge of Teaching Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers who have completed one of the approved evidence-based training options but lack proof of an end-of-course assessment may take and pass an alternative assessment authorized by the Colorado State Board of Education.• The state board has approved the Praxis Teaching Reading: Elementary 5205 exam with the passing score of 159 as the alternative assessment.
An Approved Undergraduate or Graduate University Course in Teaching Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers may submit evidence of successfully completing an undergraduate or graduate course in teaching reading for CDE to review to determine whether it meets the statutory requirements.• Educator Preparation Program staff may submit a course for CDE to review to determine whether it meets the statutory requirements.
CDE-Provided Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers will have the option to successfully complete a CDE-provided training (online course or face-to-face) at no cost to the teacher.
An Approved District- or BOCES-provided Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers will have the option to successfully complete a district- or BOCES-provided training approved by CDE.
A Training Program from the CDE Advisory List of Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers can successfully complete a training program included on the CDE Advisory List of Professional Development.



Literacy Curriculum Transparency

The READ Act requires local education providers to report the scientifically or evidence-based curricula that they use to support literacy instruction. These instructional programs are publicly reported on the Literacy Curriculum Transparency and READ Data dashboards on the [CDE website](#) and the information enables CDE to collaborate with districts to ensure their programs meet statutory requirements. All local education providers and schools must publish on their websites a link to CDE where this information can be found.

While districts are not required to use reading instructional programs on CDE's advisory list, there is a trend in districts adopting these high-quality programs. In the initial submission of instructional program data in the spring of 2020, 40.1 percent of districts were using core instructional programs from CDE's advisory list. Six months later, 62.6 percent of districts reported using these programs.

Early Literacy Grants

The Early Literacy Grant (ELG) Program was created in 2012 through the READ Act to support schools to implement early literacy programs based in the science of reading. Since the 2013-14 school year, the Comprehensive ELG Program has distributed over \$30 million in funding to local education providers (LEPs) to reduce the number of students reading below grade level.

Through amendments to the READ Act, the ELG Program has expanded to include a professional development program and sustainability program.

The Colorado Department of Education supports Comprehensive ELG grantees to:

Establish instructional systems based on scientifically based reading research for all kindergarten through third grade students.

Launch a multi-tiered support system to improve the quality of reading instruction.

Provide professional development on effective instructional practices and the underlying teaching infrastructures.

Administer and interpret approved interim and diagnostic assessments for the READ Act.

Implement school-wide literacy programs and programs designed for targeted and intensive instructional interventions.

Develop testing schedules and interpret assessment data.



To receive funds, participating LEPs are required to select evidence-based reading instructional programming from the CDE advisory list, use Acadience Reading for their assessment and progress monitoring tool, engage in monthly consulting with an approved ELG Implementation Consultant, and work toward annual achievement and growth goals based on interim assessment data.

Starting in 2018, the grant program changed to a four-year grant cycle (updated from the previous three-year cycle). The first year of the program serves as a planning and initial implementation year and the following three years focus on operationalizing the grant. Upon completion of the four-year cycle, eligible grantees have the opportunity to apply for an additional one-year Sustainability Grant. As of the 2021-22 school year, three cohorts have completed the Comprehensive and Sustainability Grant years, Cohort Four participants are in their fourth year, and Cohort Five participants are in their second year. Figure 16 provides an overview of the ELG cohorts since the inception of the program” with “of the current ELG cohorts.

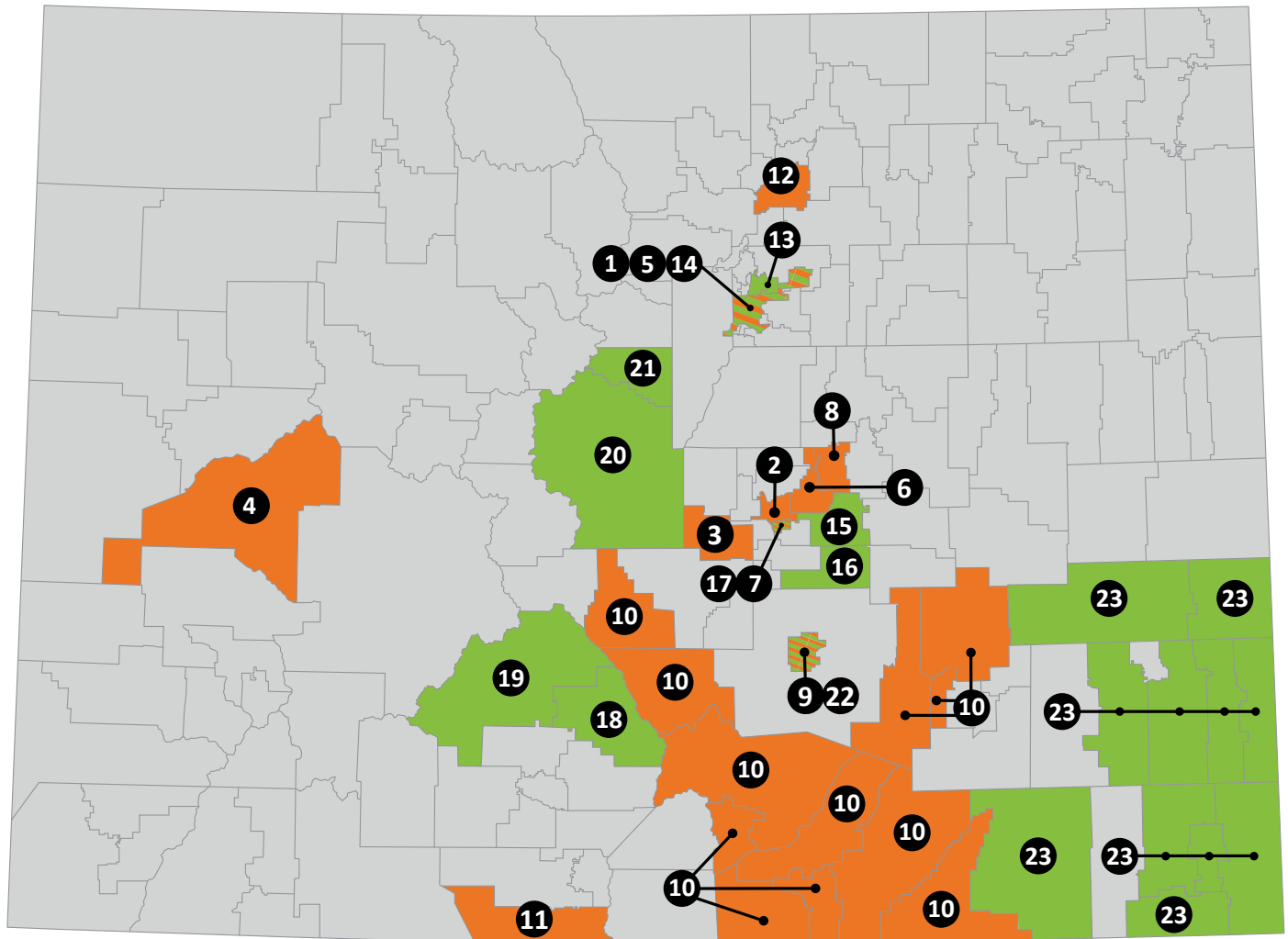
Figure 16: Current ELG Cohorts, 2018 to 2024

COHORT	SCHOOL YEARS	PARTICIPANTS
Cohort 4	2018-19 through 2021-22	30 schools from 19 districts
Cohort 5	2020-21 through 2023-24	32 schools from 22 districts





Figure 17: Colorado's ELG Districts by Cohort



- Cohort 4**
- 1 Charter School Institute
 - 2 Colorado Springs School District 11
 - 3 Cripple Creek Victor School District RE1
 - 4 Delta County School District
 - 5 Denver Public Schools
 - 6 Falcon School District 49
 - 7 Harrison School District 2
 - 8 Peyton School District 23JT
 - 9 Pueblo City Schools 60
 - 10 South Central BOCES
 - 11 South Conejos School District
 - 12 Weld County School District RE-1

- Cohort 5**
- 13 Adams County 14
 - 14 Denver Public Schools
 - 15 Ellicott 22
 - 16 Hanover 28
 - 17 Harrison School District 2
 - 18 Moffat 2
 - 19 Mountain Valley RE-1
 - 20 Park County RE-2
 - 21 Platte Canyon 1
 - 22 Pueblo City Schools 60
 - 23 Southeastern BOCES



Early Literacy Assessment Tool Project

With funding from the School Finance Act, CDE offers the Early Literacy Assessment Tool (ELAT) Project. Through ELAT, districts may apply to receive funding for licenses for an available early literacy assessment tool that teachers may use to assess the reading skill levels of students in kindergarten through third grade. ELAT is designed to assist teachers in meeting the assessment requirements of the READ Act. The available online tools allow teachers to access real-time reading skill assessments. Based on assessment results, the online tools generate intervention plans and materials to support students.

A portion of the ELAT contract payment to each approved vendor is based on a 15percent reduction in SRD rates in participating schools from the beginning of the year to the end of the year and a customer satisfaction rating of at least 75percent. The ELAT Project has met these deliverables every year of the program.

The 2018 competitive selection process for ELAT assessment tools selected Amplify and Istation. The contract duration is through June 2023.

Figure 18: Number of Districts, Schools and Students Participating in the ELAT Program from 2013-14 through 2020-21

Year	Participating Local Education Providers	Participating Schools	Participating Student Count	Percentage of Total Colorado K-3 Students Participating
2013-14	123 Districts/CSI	417	91,565	34%
2014-15	126 Districts/CSI	482	112,232	40%
2015-16	132 Districts/CSI	132	119,204	44%
2016-17	137 Districts/CSI	574	127,604	47%
2017-18	146 Districts/CSI	579	126,055	47%
2018-19	141 Districts/CSI	587	127,858	49%
2019-20	141 Districts/CSI	597	127,000	50%
2020-21	147 Districts/CSI	635	127,873	52%

Independent Evaluation of the READ Act



S.B. 19-199 requires an independent evaluation of the implementation of the READ Act at the state, district, and school level. Through a competitive process, WestEd was selected to conduct the evaluation after a request for proposals in 2019. The legislative goals for this multi-year evaluation are as follows:



Help state policymakers and district leaders understand the impacts of READ Act funding and support on students, families, schools, and districts.



Learn and share successes and best practices across districts and schools.



Inform improvements to the READ Act by understanding how funds were used.



Get direct feedback from school and district leaders about how the Colorado Department of Education can best support further improvement in READ Act implementation.



Understand how the current COVID-19 pandemic has impacted district- and school-level strategies for delivering K-3 reading programs, and how READ Act funding and the Colorado Department of Education can best support districts and schools delivering such reading programs during the pandemic.






Evaluation Key Findings in 2021¹³

The focus of the first year of the READ Act evaluation was a review of the materials CDE has approved for assessments, instructional programming, and professional development using READ Act funds in 2020.

The first year of the evaluation consisted of a statewide inventory of core, supplemental and intervention programs, virtual site visits at 28 schools and districts between October 2020 and January 2021, and an analysis of student achievement and financial data held by CDE.








The first year evaluation report identified the following strengths with implementation of the READ Act:

-  There has been an increase in the amount of time allocated toward reading.
-  There has been growth in a data-informed, multi-tiered approach to literacy instruction.
-  CDE's review of instructional programs, professional development programs, interventions, and assessments provided valuable information used by schools and districts to select quality materials.
-  School staff now have common terminology to support the implementation of high-quality instructional practices in reading.
-  ELG grants made a significant and positive change in schools' approach to literacy instruction through the support of external literacy consultants, internal literacy experts, teacher training, and updated literacy materials.

¹³ McCrary, J., Grogan, K., Allender, S., Nabors, A., Tripathy, R., DeCesare, D., & Reichardt, R. (2021). [Independent Evaluation of the Colorado READ Act: Per-pupil Funding](#). WestEd.









The evaluation report identified the following challenges with implementation of the READ Act:

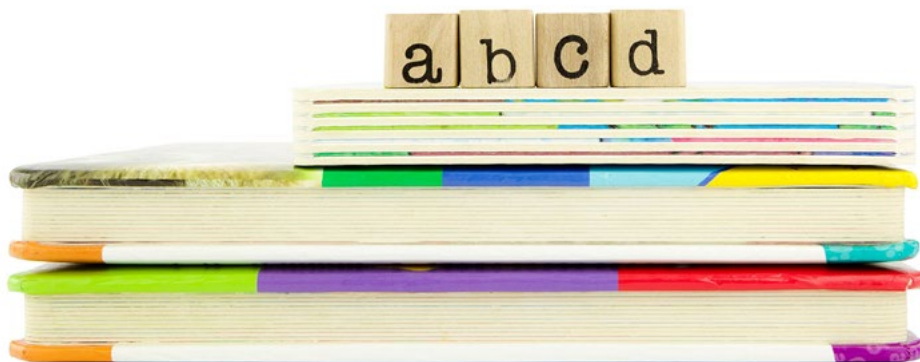
-  The READ per-pupil funding is viewed as insufficient to independently cover the costs associated with meeting the goal of third grade reading proficiency.
-  Schools and districts face difficulty training current staff and hiring new staff who meet Colorado’s K-3 teacher training requirements.
-  English Learners may be incorrectly identified as having an SRD.
-  The requirement to change to a CDE-approved instructional program can be expensive and difficult.
-  The process of creating the individual READ Plans can be viewed as time consuming and burdensome.





Finally, the evaluation report provided the following “lessons learned” from the COVID-19 Pandemic:

-  Students must be provided with a personal, reliable computer at home to facilitate remote learning.
-  Online instruction is not viewed as an effective environment to teach reading for K-3 students.
-  The academic disparities existing pre-pandemic have been exacerbated.
-  The pandemic has had a pronounced negative impact on English Learners due to challenges with remote learning.
-  Data collected from assessments administered to students at home during the pandemic are viewed as less reliable.
-  The evaluation reports are provided annually to the State Board of Education and Joint Education Committee for the Colorado legislature..



Public Information Campaign Update



Senate Bill 19-199 required the creation of a public awareness campaign that emphasizes the important role parents and caregivers play in helping children learn to read. The campaign theme “Food. Water. Shelter. Love. Reading.” emphasizes the importance of early literacy as a fundamental need for children to thrive. In the first year of the campaign, the focus was on reaching families of children ages 0 to 5. In the second year, the campaign expanded to include families of children ages 6 to 9.

Video advertisements in English and Spanish have been developed to inspire parents and caregivers to read with their children and connect parents to resources through the campaign website ReadWithMe.Today. The advertisements are running on TV, radio and social media as well as online streaming platforms.

The ReadWithMe.Today website provides families with quality information and resources to foster early literacy development in English and Spanish. Parents can access educational literacy apps, guidance for at-home literacy instruction, hands-on activities, audio activities, and educational videos. The website’s community toolkit provides outreach materials, such as flyers, and posters. Many of those materials are also distributed to key libraries throughout the state.

“Food. Water. Shelter. Love. Reading.” will reach communities across Colorado to highlight the importance of reading, and connect families with quality resources.

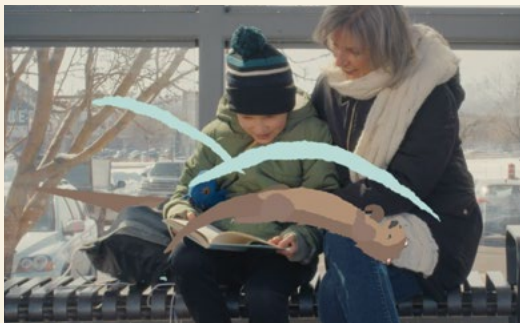


FOOD. WATER. SHELTER. LOVE. READING.



As parents we want to give our children the world and prepare them to thrive in it.

And while that sometimes feels like a tall ask, reading makes this possible. Story time untaps the potential of everything.



Through it we swim with sea otters, encounter queens on quests and take flight over new lands and ancient ruins.

These precious pages unlock one more thing, a passion for the vital skill of reading.

When we read to our children and when we encourage them to read to us we give them the gift of endless possibilities and a skill as essential as the food, water, shelter and love we provide them with every day.



Watch the full video, visit [ReadWithMe.Today](https://www.ReadWithMe.Today).

What's on the Horizon?



The Colorado READ Act continues to affect positive change in Colorado schools. The requirements from the 2019 revision to the READ Act are being implemented after initial delays brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- By the start of the 2022-23 school year, districts will need to submit evidence that their kindergarten through third grade teachers have completed training in evidence-based reading instruction.
- As of spring 2022 CDE will provide additional oversight of district budgets to ensure READ funds focus on the most effective resources. This will create a greater impact per dollar spent.

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic Colorado's educators exhibited outstanding resilience and ingenuity in challenging circumstances. The impact of the pandemic has been illustrated in a dramatic increase in the number of students identified with SRDs. The need for the READ Act has never been more clear as our schools and communities continue to navigate these uncharted waters in order to respond to the learning needs of Colorado's children.





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