

SENATE BILL NO. 273—SENATORS
SEEVERS GANSERT AND KIECKHEFER

MARCH 18, 2021

Referred to Committee on Education

SUMMARY—Revises provisions relating to education.
(BDR 34-941)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: May have Fiscal Impact.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to education; creating the Account to Promote Pupil Literacy; requiring the Department of Education to distribute grants to school districts and charter schools to support programs concerning pupil literacy; requiring the board of trustees of a school district or governing body of a charter school that receives such a grant to prepare and submit a report to the Department concerning the programs and services for which grant money was used; requiring the Department to submit a biennial report to the Governor and Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau concerning programs for which grant money was used; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

- 1 Senate Bill No. 391 (S.B. 391) of the 78th Legislative Session requires the
- 2 Department of Education, the board of trustees of each school district and
- 3 governing body of each charter school to take certain actions concerning the
- 4 improvement of pupil literacy. (Chapter 334, Statutes of Nevada 2015, at page
- 5 1857) This bill creates the Account to Promote Pupil Literacy in the State General
- 6 Fund and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to administer the
- 7 Account. This bill requires that the money in the Account be distributed to carry out
- 8 certain provisions enacted by S.B. 391 through a noncompetitive grants program.
- 9 This bill requires schools that receive such a grant to use the money for literacy
- 10 programs in elementary schools and to support school-based efforts to ensure that
- 11 all pupils are proficient in reading.
- 12 This bill requires the board of trustees of a school district or governing body of
- 13 a charter school that receives such a grant to: (1) set measurable performance



14 objectives; (2) prepare and submit an annual report to the Department that includes
15 a description of the programs or services for which the money was used by each
16 school and the number of pupils who participated in a program or received services;
17 and (3) not use the money to supplant other budgets in the school. This bill requires
18 the Department to prepare a biennial report concerning the programs for which the
19 money is used and submit the report to the Governor and Director of the Legislative
20 Counsel Bureau for transmittal to each session of the Legislature.

1 WHEREAS, Nevada has invested heavily in early literacy since
2 2015 by funding and implementing the Read by Grade 3 grant
3 program; and

4 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Education assesses
5 performance in reading of pupils in grade 4 every 2 years through
6 the National Assessment of Educational Progress and Nevada
7 performed in line with national peers for the first time in 2019; and

8 WHEREAS, Before the Read by Grade 3 grant program, pupils in
9 grade 4 in Nevada were performing approximately 1 year behind
10 national peers; and

11 WHEREAS, Literacy is a fundamental pillar of academic,
12 personal and professional development, now, therefore,

13
14 THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
15 SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:
16

17 **Section 1.** Chapter 387 of NRS is hereby amended by adding
18 thereto a new section to read as follows:

19 *1. The Account to Promote Pupil Literacy is hereby created*
20 *in the State General Fund, to be administered by the*
21 *Superintendent of Public Instruction.*

22 *2. The Department shall distribute the money that is*
23 *appropriated to the Account to carry out the provisions of NRS*
24 *388.157, 388.159 and 392.750 to 392.775, inclusive, through a*
25 *noncompetitive grants program. The Department shall award*
26 *grants to school districts and to charter schools approved by the*
27 *State Public Charter School Authority using a weighted formula*
28 *based on the demonstrated need and the pupil population of each*
29 *school district and the charter schools sponsored by the State*
30 *Public Charter School Authority. Grants must be used for literacy*
31 *programs for pupils enrolled in elementary school established*
32 *pursuant to NRS 388.157 and to support other school-based*
33 *efforts to ensure that all pupils are performing at a level*
34 *considered by the school district or charter school to be within the*
35 *average range for pupils enrolled in each grade level. Such*
36 *school-based efforts may include, without limitation:*

37 *(a) Hiring literacy specialists;*



1 (b) Training literacy specialists;
2 (c) Entering into contracts with vendors for the purchase of
3 evidence-based reading assessments, textbooks, computer software
4 or other materials;

5 (d) Providing professional development for school personnel;
6 (e) Providing evidence-based programs to pupils before and
7 after school and during intercessions or summer school; and

8 (f) Providing other evidence-based literacy initiatives for
9 pupils enrolled in elementary school.

10 3. The board of trustees of a school district or the governing
11 body of a charter school that receives a grant pursuant to
12 subsection 2 shall:

13 (a) Set measurable performance objectives based on
14 aggregated pupil achievement data;

15 (b) Prepare and submit to the Department, on or before July 1
16 of each even-numbered year, a report that includes, without
17 limitation:

18 (1) A description of the programs or services for which the
19 money was used by each school; and

20 (2) The number of pupils who participated in a program or
21 received services; and

22 (c) Not use the money to supplant other budgets in the school.

23 4. The Department shall, to the extent that money is available
24 for that purpose, hire an independent consultant to evaluate the
25 programs or services paid for by a grant awarded to a school
26 district or charter school pursuant to subsection 2.

27 5. The Department shall prepare a report that includes,
28 without limitation:

29 (a) Identification of the schools that received an allocation of
30 money by the school district or grant of money from the
31 Department, as applicable;

32 (b) The amount of money received by each school;

33 (c) A description of the programs or services for which the
34 money was used by each school;

35 (d) The number of pupils who participated in a program or
36 received services;

37 (e) The average expenditure per pupil for each program or
38 service;

39 (f) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the program or
40 service, including, without limitation, data regarding the academic
41 and linguistic achievement and proficiency of pupils who
42 participated in such a program or received such services; and

43 (g) Any recommendations for legislation, including, without
44 limitation, legislation to continue or expand programs or services



1 *that are identified as effective in improving the reading*
2 *proficiency of pupils in kindergarten through grade 5.*

3 *6. On or before August 31 of each even-numbered year, the*
4 *Department shall publish and make available the report prepared*
5 *pursuant to subsection 5 to the State Board of Education and the*
6 *Legislative Committee on Education. On or before November 15*
7 *of each even-numbered year, the Department shall submit the*
8 *final report prepared pursuant to subsection 5 and any*
9 *recommendations made by the State Board or the Legislative*
10 *Committee on Education to the Governor and to the Director of*
11 *the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Legislature.*

12 *7. Any money awarded to a school district or charter school*
13 *from the money appropriated to the Account to Promote Pupil*
14 *Literacy pursuant to subsection 2:*

15 *(a) Must be accounted for separately from any other money*
16 *received by the school district or charter school, as applicable, and*
17 *used only for the purposes specified in this section.*

18 *(b) May not be used to settle or arbitrate disputes between a*
19 *recognized organization representing employees of a school*
20 *district and the school district or to settle any negotiations.*

21 *(c) May not be used to adjust the district-wide schedules of*
22 *salaries and benefits of the employees of a school district.*

23 **Sec. 2.** The provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 218D.380 do
24 not apply to any provision of this act which adds or revises a
25 requirement to submit a report to the Legislature.

26 **Sec. 3.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2021.

