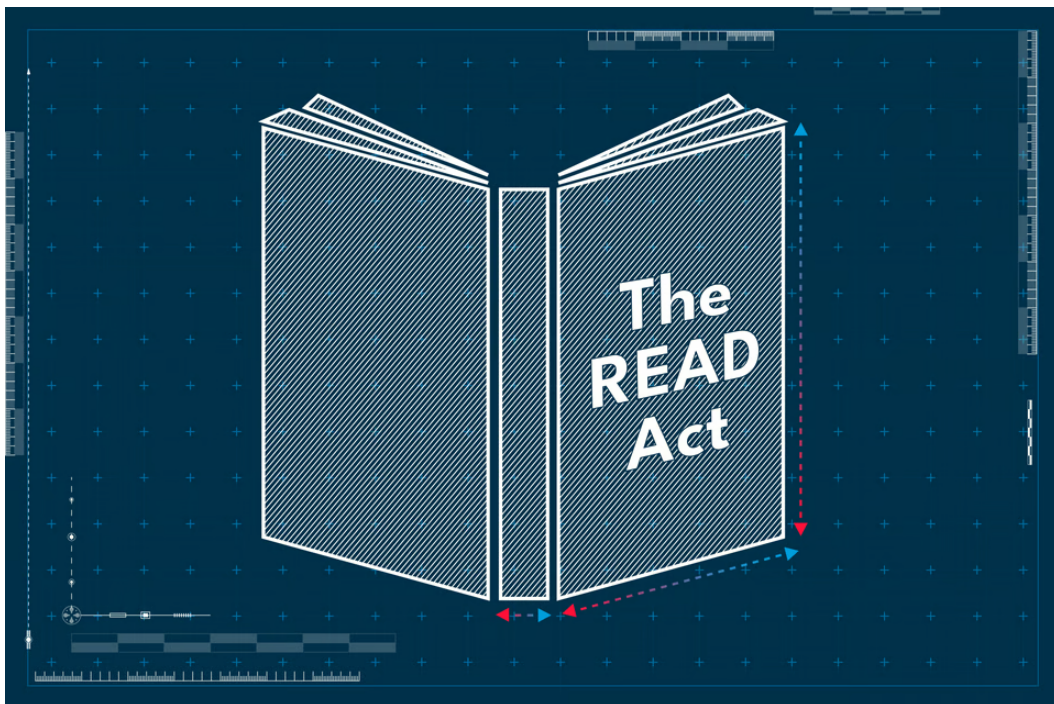


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The READ Act: A Blueprint for Bipartisanship in Education

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The *READ Act* is a notable exception to Washington’s gridlock on K-12 education. Advocates across the country and on both sides of the aisle have worked to elevate the urgency of America’s literacy crisis, and the *Reading Excellence and Achievement for Development (READ) Act* takes smart steps to address it. The legislation, which advanced out of the Senate HELP Committee in late July, would reform federal literacy grant programs to align with the science of reading, encourage early intervention for struggling readers, and promote high-quality instructional materials to improve student literacy outcomes.

The *READ Act* is a blueprint for the type of bipartisan action critically needed in K-12 education: it addresses what parents care about most, centers evidence-based strategies, and draws on state-level successes. Here are three things the legislation gets right.

It Focuses on What Matters Most to Families

Polls are clear: parents want policymakers to spend less time dissecting culture war issues and prioritize fundamental reading and math skills. The *READ Act* brings bipartisan attention to an issue where public concern is high: ensuring students can read. And the legislation does more than target reading instruction—it makes transparency with parents a key component. Under the bill, states that receive federal funding through Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grants would be required to develop a process for notifying parents when students are performing below grade level in reading. Too many parents have an incomplete picture of their child’s reading skills and may believe their child is on track when objective measures show otherwise. This notification requirement would give parents the information they need to understand and support their child’s reading progress.

It Builds on Evidence-Based Interventions

Schools, districts, and researchers have spent decades working to identify the most effective approaches for improving reading instruction. The *READ Act* builds on these efforts, calling for states to provide universal early literacy screenings at least once before students reach third grade and use high-quality instructional materials aligned to the science of reading. These components go hand-in-hand, as third grade is often the first major “testing year” for elementary students—and the year when students must transition from learning to read to reading to learn. These practices have gained national traction in the last decade, but not all states have had the means to make the changes that evidence shows help boost reading performance. Modernized CLSD funding would give states an on-

ramp to implement these practices and strengthen the literacy foundations students need to succeed.

It Leverages Lessons Learned from States

The *READ Act* also incorporates newer strategies that have been effective at the state level in improving outcomes for students at risk of falling behind: literacy coaching and high-impact tutoring. Mississippi has been one of the biggest [literacy success stories](#) in recent years, and a key component of the state's success was the training and deployment of instructional coaches. Drawing lessons from Mississippi's experience, the *READ Act* would fund literacy coach networks, as well as require states to develop robust systems of teacher preparation and professional development. The bill also incorporates one-on-one or small-group tutoring as a complement to core instruction. High-impact tutoring gained momentum following the pandemic as an academic recovery strategy, with research showing [positive results in states across the country](#). Rather than simply identifying low performance, the bill would give schools and states tools to address it, putting resources behind the most effective approaches to supporting struggling readers.

Conclusion

The *READ Act* demonstrates that bipartisan action is possible on an issue where public concern is high and common ground is real. Teachers, families, and voters have made clear the need to better support our youngest students in learning to read, and members of Congress are responding. The *READ Act* plants the seeds for focused efforts to address the learning crisis by letting evidence lead the way, involving educators and parents, and continuously building on what we know works. Policymakers should leverage this bipartisan momentum to support the students who need it most.
