

SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

S.F. No. 2540

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DATE	D-PG	OFFICIAL STATUS
03/13/2025	769	Introduction and first reading Referred to Education Policy
02/17/2026	6324	Author added Cwodzinski
03/09/2026	6528a	Comm report: To pass as amended and re-refer to Education Finance

1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to education finance; creating the Minnesota Young Readers Club pilot

1.3 program for literacy support; requiring a report; appropriating money.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **MINNESOTA YOUNG READERS CLUB PROGRAM FOR LITERACY**

1.6 **SUPPORT.**

1.7 Subdivision 1. Program established; grantee. (a) The Minnesota Young Readers Club

1.8 program is established to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate books and literacy

1.9 materials to prekindergarten and kindergarten students who are reading below grade level.

1.10 The program supports early literacy development by building home libraries in alignment

1.11 with the Read Well by Third Grade initiative and the Read Act.

1.12 (b) The commissioner must award one grant to a community-based nonprofit organization

1.13 with physical locations in the seven-county metropolitan area, that provides child care and

1.14 youth services, and has broad partnerships with local schools and other nonprofits to

1.15 administer the program. The grant recipient may partner with similar community-based

1.16 nonprofit organizations that are located outside the seven-county metropolitan area.

1.17 Subd. 2. Student eligibility criteria. The Minnesota Young Readers Club program is

1.18 designed to improve reading proficiency and engagement for prekindergarten and

1.19 kindergarten students identified as reading below grade level. A student is eligible to

1.20 participate in the program if:

1.21 (1) the student is enrolled in either prekindergarten or kindergarten and is identified

1.22 through universal screening as not meeting grade-level literacy benchmarks; or

2.1 (2) the student is enrolled in either prekindergarten or kindergarten and has received a
2.2 recommendation to participate in the program from a teacher, reading specialist, or
2.3 intervention team member.

2.4 Subd. 3. **Student participation and enrollment strategy.** (a) The Minnesota Young
2.5 Readers Club program is available to all students eligible under subdivision 2. Schools are
2.6 encouraged to implement the following strategies to ensure that the program is effectively
2.7 integrated as a supportive tool within existing literacy interventions:

2.8 (1) a teacher may recommend and refer students and families to the Minnesota Young
2.9 Readers Club program as an additional resource to support at-home reading, alongside other
2.10 critical interventions;

2.11 (2) a counselor or reading specialist may include information about the program to
2.12 families during parent meetings or at other times, framing the Minnesota Young Readers
2.13 Club program as a supplementary tool for building a home library and enhancing literacy
2.14 support; and

2.15 (3) a student's school may include program enrollment information with progress reports
2.16 or literacy assessments, offering parents an opportunity to enroll their children in the program
2.17 for additional home-based literacy support.

2.18 (b) School literacy teams may present the Minnesota Young Readers Club program as
2.19 one of several tools available to support literacy development for students reading below
2.20 grade level.

2.21 (c) The grant recipient must include in their grant application a plan for providing
2.22 engagement, promotion, and outreach to eligible families to raise awareness of the program,
2.23 emphasizing the value of building a home library to support literacy development.

2.24 Subd. 4. **Book selection.** In consultation with the Department of Education, the grant
2.25 recipient must ensure that the books selected for distribution:

2.26 (1) align to reading levels;

2.27 (2) are selected to match the reading levels of striving readers, ensuring that students
2.28 receive materials that are accessible and engaging while promoting gradual literacy
2.29 improvement; and

2.30 (3) reflect the cultural diversity of Minnesota's student population and are age-appropriate,
2.31 promoting both engagement and inclusivity.

3.1 Subd. 5. **Monthly book distribution and family support.** (a) The grant recipient must
3.2 ensure that the books are distributed in an efficient and timely manner, whether by direct
3.3 mail or through delivery at the student's school or at community locations operated in
3.4 partnership with the grant recipient. The grant recipient must purchase books and literacy
3.5 materials and ensure that they are mailed directly to a student's home or delivered directly
3.6 to a student at school at least once per month throughout the school year. Each delivery of
3.7 materials must consist of at least one culturally relevant and age-appropriate book aligned
3.8 to the reading levels of the student. The delivery method must minimize delays and ensure
3.9 consistency in delivery of the books to students.

3.10 (b) Family support materials must accompany each mailing and must offer guidance on
3.11 creating and using home libraries effectively. To the extent practicable, the family support
3.12 materials must be culturally adapted and translated into the home languages of the family
3.13 and must include tips on shared reading practices and storytelling. The Minnesota Young
3.14 Readers Club program must emphasize culturally responsive family engagement and must
3.15 offer practical resources to support children's literacy through the use of home libraries.
3.16 Materials must be accessible and designed to reflect the cultural and linguistic backgrounds
3.17 of participating families.

3.18 Subd. 6. **Program evaluation metrics; reporting.** (a) The grant recipient must collect
3.19 and analyze data on program participation, family engagement, and student reading outcomes.
3.20 The evaluation metrics must include at least the following:

3.21 (1) the frequency and quality of reading activities at home;

3.22 (2) the impact of culturally relevant books on student interest in reading;

3.23 (3) feedback from families and educators on the program's effectiveness;

3.24 (4) demographic information on the number of students and families served by the
3.25 program;

3.26 (5) data on family engagement and home library usage; and

3.27 (6) the reported impact on literacy development.

3.28 (b) The grant recipient must prepare and submit an annual report to the chairs and ranking
3.29 minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over education in
3.30 accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 3.195. The report must summarize the
3.31 information required in paragraph (a) and make recommendations for future improvements
3.32 or expansion of the Minnesota Young Readers Club program.

4.1 Subd. 7. **Public-private partnerships and community engagement.** (a) The grant
 4.2 recipient may form strategic partnerships with private entities, local businesses, libraries,
 4.3 and literacy organizations to support the Minnesota Young Readers Club program and
 4.4 strengthen community and business alliances.

4.5 (b) The Department of Education and the grant recipient may work with schools to
 4.6 promote and host community literacy events that celebrate literacy, engage families, and
 4.7 promote cultural diversity.

4.8 (c) The Department of Education and the grant recipient may provide supplementary
 4.9 resources and support to enrich the program and strengthen home literacy environments.

4.10 **Sec. 2. APPROPRIATIONS; MINNESOTA YOUNG READERS CLUB PILOT**
 4.11 **PROGRAM.**

4.12 Subdivision 1. **Department of Education.** The sum indicated in this section is
 4.13 appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Education in the fiscal year
 4.14 designated.

4.15 Subd. 2. **Minnesota Young Readers Club pilot program.** (a) For a grant to an eligible
 4.16 organization to implement the Minnesota Young Readers Club program:

4.17 \$ 2027

4.18 (b) The grant recipient must use the money for activities related to the Minnesota Young
 4.19 Readers Club program.

4.20 (c) Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, section 16B.98, subdivision 14, up to \$..... of
 4.21 the appropriation is available for grant administration.

4.22 (d) This appropriation is available until June 30, 2028.

4.23 (e) This is a onetime appropriation.