



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHENWHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 29, 2025

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Delsa D. Chapman, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent 
Division of Assessment, School Improvement, and Systems Support

SUBJECT: Section 35n Reading Excellence and Advancing District Innovation Grant
Announcement

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is announcing the availability of Section 35n of the fiscal year 2025 grant, which supports Goal 2 of [Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#), to improve early literacy achievement. The application opens in NexSys on June 2, 2025, and remains open until 5 p.m. on July 11, 2025.

[Section 35n](#) of the fiscal year 2025 state School Aid Act provides \$10 million to MDE to administer the competitive Reading Excellence and Advancing District (READ) Innovation Grant. The READ innovation competition will provide startup money to eligible districts to develop and deploy innovative literacy initiatives that make a positive impact on student literacy rates. It will provide incentive money to districts determined to have demonstrated the greatest impact. Funds allocated under this section are intended to foster district-led innovations in literacy instruction grounded in the science of reading, provide the state with insights into successful practices that could be scaled statewide, and improve student outcomes in literacy.

MDE will award startup funding to a selection of the highest-scoring applicants for each competition category.

At a minimum, the evaluation must be based on all of the following:

- The quality of innovation proposed, the alignment with the selected competition category, and the likelihood that the innovation will result in the outcomes included in the district's application.
- The percentage of students districtwide who will be affected by the proposed program during the time frame of the competition.

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- The level to which student literacy growth in the applicant district can be benchmarked against student literacy growth in other districts.
- The likelihood that the proposed initiative, if successful, could be expanded statewide.

For a prerecorded webinar explaining the Section 35n application process and additional information and questions regarding this communication or the Section 35n READ Innovation grant, please visit the [READ Innovation grant website](#) or contact MDE-EarlyLiteracy@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Departments