

Chapter 270

(House Bill 475)

AN ACT concerning

**Education – Open–Source Phonics Matching Grant Program – Establishment
(Open–Source Phonics Matching Grant Program Act)**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Open–Source Phonics Matching Grant Program within the State Department of Education; requiring the Department to administer the Program; authorizing certain organizations to apply for grants from the Program; requiring the Department periodically to review the open–source phonics learning materials to ensure the materials are consistent with best practices in literacy education, including the science of reading; and generally relating to the Open–Source Phonics Matching Grant Program.

BY adding to

Article – Education

Section 7–135

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education**7–135.**

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “OPEN–SOURCE” MEANS MATERIAL WITH EITHER FREELY OBTAINABLE SOURCE CODE, A LICENSE FOR MODIFICATION, OR PERMISSION FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION.

(3) “OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS ORGANIZATION” MEANS ~~A~~ ANY NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, OR PUBLIC LIBRARY THAT PRODUCES OR DISTRIBUTES FREE, OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS MATERIALS IN THE STATE.

(4) “PHONICS” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 4–136 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(5) “PROGRAM” MEANS THE OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM.

(B) THERE IS AN OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT.

(C) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE MATCHING FUNDS TO OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE FREE, OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS LEARNING MATERIALS TO BE USED BY ADULTS TO TUTOR STUDENTS IN THE STATE.

(D) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM.

(E) (1) AN OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS ORGANIZATION MAY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR A GRANT ON THE FORM THAT THE DEPARTMENT REQUIRES.

(2) AN APPLICATION FOR A GRANT SHALL INCLUDE A PLAN TO ENSURE THAT THE OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS ORGANIZATION IS ABLE TO PROVIDE FREE, OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS LEARNING MATERIALS ~~TO ENABLE~~ THAT:

(I) ARE CONSISTENT WITH BEST PRACTICES IN LITERACY EDUCATION, INCLUDING THE SCIENCE OF READING; AND

(II) ENABLE ADULTS TO TUTOR STUDENTS IN THE STATE.

(3) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DISBURSE GRANTS TO OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS ORGANIZATIONS.

(F) PERIODICALLY, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL REVIEW THE OPEN–SOURCE PHONICS LEARNING MATERIALS PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION TO ENSURE THE MATERIALS ARE CONSISTENT WITH BEST PRACTICES IN LITERACY EDUCATION, INCLUDING THE SCIENCE OF READING.

~~(F)~~ (G) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

(1) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2025, AND EVERY OTHER YEAR THEREAFTER, REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2–1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE; AND

(2) COLLECT STATISTICS AND OTHER INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR THIS PURPOSE.

~~(G)~~ (H) **FOR EACH FISCAL YEAR, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$150,000 TO THE PROGRAM.**

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor, April 25, 2024.