State Board of Education Resolution
On Early Literacy Priorities
SR22-12

WHEREAS, decades of research in cognitive science and neuroscience reveal much about how people learn to decode and comprehend, and there has been growing consensus and an increased sense of urgency on how and what to teach in order to improve literacy outcomes, including:

1. A Tier I instructional approach known as "structured literacy," based on the vast "science of reading" research,
2. Early, intensive, effective Tier II intervention for students who do not make adequate progress with such instruction, and
3. A focus on building background knowledge across content areas to improve reading comprehension;

WHEREAS, the D.C. State Board of Education (State Board) prioritizes the improvement of reading outcomes for D.C. students, and in support of this has:

- Established an Education Standard Committee, which dates back to February 2021 and has since focused its work on improving literacy state-wide;
- Named Ward 2 Representative and current Chair of the Education Standards Committee, Allister Chang, to the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Early Literacy Work Group, and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) Early Literacy Task Force to lead on work related to the enhancement of literacy outcomes for District students;
- Shared the vision and recommendations of the multi-faceted literacy improvement plan developed by the cross-sector Early Literacy Task Force, convened in 2021–22 by Representative Chang; and
- Recently transmitted a letter to the D.C. Education Research Collaborative asking that they focus their research on early reading instruction, especially on the implementation of the Council of the District of Columbia Bill 23-150;

WHEREAS, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results in English/Language Arts (ELA) from 2022 reveal that the District's fourth grade students scored eight (8) points below District fourth grade students in 2019, and nine (9) points below the 2022 national average;

WHEREAS, in school year 2021–22, only 30 percent of District of Columbia Public School (DCPS) and public charter school students in grades three through eight scored at or above grade level on the ELA PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessment; and

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WHEREAS, significant disparities in performance exist between white students and students of color—such that in school year 2021–22, 79 percent of white students, 31 percent of Hispanic/Latinx students, and 20 percent of Black/African American students met or exceeded ELA PARCC expectations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the D.C. State Board of Education recommends the District focus on providing the following regarding early literacy:

- Intensively train all District pre-kindergarten through fifth grade teachers and leaders in structured literacy, using states with the strongest reading improvements as a guide;
- Supply evidence-based, culturally responsive, high quality curricular materials for all classrooms, including materials for screening, assessment, and interventions; and
- Provide families/caretakers with access to clear, accurate, and up-to-date data on their child's reading performance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the D.C. State Board of Education recommends the District make financial investments in early literacy that fulfill the following:

- Support reading instructors with sufficient time and resources to plan, learn, and adapt to evidence-based practices;
- Strengthen local pipelines to hire, train, and retain reading instructors and literacy coaches;
- Align investments in professional development, curriculum, and assessment;
- Align investments in formal, non-formal, and informal literacy learning opportunities; and
- Support sequential, systematic knowledge-building with materials, training, and adequate instructional time in history, social studies, civics, science, and the arts.

Date Adopted: <u>11/16/2022</u>   Signed: _____

Jessica Sutter, President

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