

Submitter: Johnna Timmes
On Behalf Of: Stand for Children
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez and Members of the Committee, for the record, my name is Johnna Timmes. I come to you today not only as an Early Literacy Policy Director for Oregon Stand for Children, but also as a black educator who has taught kids to read as a Kindergarten and first grade classroom teacher. HB 3198, the Early Literacy Success Initiative, provides the policy road map to enable our students to leave third grade reading proficiently.

By fully funding HB 3198 within SB 5506 for the '23- '24 biennium at \$225M for the Early Literacy Success School Grant fund, you have an opportunity to quite literally change children's lives by ensuring all children leave third grade as strong readers and writers. We're in an early literacy crisis, but WE KNOW HOW TO support our students and educators. Clear, research aligned policy partnered with enough funding is the key to successful implementation. With full funding, I'm confident we'll see timely gains in achievement.

There are three components to HB 3198 that I want to underscore as paramount to the success of this work:

The initiative is research-aligned to the Science of Reading & Writing and focused to the four strategies schools will implement. Those include: (1) professional learning & coaching for teachers AND administrators; (2) high dosage tutoring with trained tutors; (3) summer programs that partner with CBO's and support families by providing books and literacy activities in the students home and community; and (4) culturally responsive instructional materials aligned to curriculum that center the cultural wealth students bring to the classroom..

These research-aligned strategies have been shown to work for students our system has historically underserved—including BIPOC students, multilingual students, and low-income students. AND, they are good for all kids.

Of these research-aligned strategies, I want to highlight the importance of research-aligned job-embedded literacy coaching to support educators in aligning their classroom practices to research. We cannot support our students if we do not also support our educators. And we must invest in our classroom educators in order to ensure we have fewer students who need additional interventions and/or remediation outside of the classroom.

I also want to emphasize the importance of the accountability provided in this initiative. Schools and districts will report to ODE on how they are aligning their strategies to the research, and the outcomes they get as a result. ODE will then be held accountable to the legislature with an annual report that shows how the initiative is achieving the goals.

The policy in HB 3198 is strong, but it will only be as successful as the legislature's investment. We must ensure funding is at the level needed to implement the

measures we are asking districts to take on.

This focused policy, coupled with sufficient funding, will enable us to better support educators in a statewide approach, and in turn ensure a brighter future for the over 180,000 children in Oregon's early grades. Thank you for your time and for your commitment to centering the needs of Oregon students!