



HR1034

LRB102 29996 LAW 42184 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Literacy is not only critical for individuals'  
3 ability to earn income, secure housing, participate in their  
4 healthcare, support their children's education, pursue  
5 happiness, and navigate the world but also collectively  
6 foundational to our community and democracy; and

7           WHEREAS, The World Literacy Foundation found that low  
8 literacy is a major contributor to inequality and increases  
9 the likelihood of poor physical and mental health, workplace  
10 accidents, misuse of medication, participation in crime, and  
11 welfare dependency, all of which have substantial additional  
12 social and economic costs; and

13           WHEREAS, Fifty percent of Illinois' third graders met,  
14 exceeded, or approached learning standards in English language  
15 arts according to the Illinois Assessment of Readiness with  
16 the other half of students not meeting or partially meeting  
17 standards; this represents a ten percentage point swing from  
18 the 2019 pre-pandemic rates when 60 percent of students met,  
19 exceeded, or approached learning standards; and

20           WHEREAS, Thirty-three percent of Illinois' fourth graders  
21 achieved proficient or advanced reading scores on the 2022  
22 National Assessment of Educational Progress with another 29

1 percent meeting basic reading proficiency and the remaining 38  
2 percent scoring below basic reading proficiency; and

3 WHEREAS, Research from the Annie E. Casey Institute found  
4 that students who are not proficient readers in third grade  
5 are four times more likely not to finish high school; if those  
6 students are from low-income families, they are more than six  
7 times more likely not to finish high school; and

8 WHEREAS, Research consistently finds that a diverse,  
9 well-trained, and expanding pool of teachers, in conjunction  
10 with curricula responsive to the strengths and needs of  
11 diverse student populations, improves educational outcomes for  
12 all students; and

13 WHEREAS, An appropriate curriculum blends the learning  
14 needs of students with their developmental needs and increases  
15 in complexity with every new stage of childhood; and

16 WHEREAS, Oral language development is a prerequisite for  
17 reading and writing that is nurtured from birth through  
18 talking, reading, story-telling, singing, nursery rhymes, and  
19 other language exposure and, as younger children develop,  
20 through intentional dialogue with rich vocabulary; home  
21 visiting programs, access to books, high-quality childcare and  
22 preschool, and lived experiences strengthen students'

1 opportunity to build oracy skills, vocabulary, and background  
2 knowledge, leading to higher-level cognitive thinking; and

3 WHEREAS, Reading builds new neural pathways in the brain  
4 as people, usually children, learn to connect the sounds in  
5 language to letters on a page to the meaning of the text;  
6 however, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to literacy,  
7 as learners will require different dosages within different  
8 areas of literacy instruction to meet their individual needs;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Reading and writing have a reciprocal  
11 relationship as each strengthens the other, and students  
12 benefit when their instruction is closely intertwined; and

13 WHEREAS, English learners benefit from a comprehensive  
14 literacy approach that recognizes the value of multilingualism  
15 by enveloping all areas of literacy instruction with a deep  
16 focus on oral language development and encouraging students to  
17 make connections between English and their home language; and

18 WHEREAS, Teachers deserve the tools to be knowledgeable  
19 about the cultural practices and language system of the  
20 children they serve, including those children who speak  
21 language variations of English, such as African-American  
22 English (AAE); AAE has a linguistic structure that is a

1 systematic and rule-governed variation of General American  
2 English (GAE); and

3 WHEREAS, Research shows that direct, systematic,  
4 cumulative, and explicit reading instruction that is focused  
5 on the foundational reading skills of phonemic awareness,  
6 phonics or decoding, spelling or encoding, vocabulary  
7 development that includes morphology, oral language  
8 development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension that  
9 includes syntax and building background or content knowledge,  
10 is highly effective in teaching young children to read; and

11 WHEREAS, High literacy achievement across all demographic  
12 groups is an essential indicator of educational equity within  
13 the State of Illinois; strengthening early literacy  
14 instruction and supports for students in Illinois will pay  
15 dividends in the future by empowering students, providing the  
16 skills they will need to graduate, find fulfilling careers,  
17 and be productive members of their communities and of our  
18 democracy; and

19 WHEREAS, Ensuring that every child has access to  
20 high-quality, research-aligned, developmentally-appropriate  
21 reading instruction implemented using a comprehensive approach  
22 is a foundational component of Illinois' public education  
23 system and a responsibility shared among federal, state, and

1 local education agencies; and

2 WHEREAS, The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) held  
3 a literacy summit on October 25, 2022 to bring education  
4 professionals and advocates across Illinois together to share  
5 ideas and best practices to support literacy development for  
6 Illinois' children while also recognizing the complexity of  
7 literacy development and potential pitfalls of adopting  
8 incomplete or simplistic policy solutions; therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
10 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
11 we urge the Illinois State Board of Education to share  
12 findings from the literacy summit held on October 25, 2022 as  
13 progress towards promoting research-aligned,  
14 developmentally-appropriate literacy practices across grades  
15 and subject areas, developing a comprehensive literacy plan  
16 through continued collaboration with other relevant agencies  
17 and stakeholders, supporting alignment of early childhood  
18 programs, curriculum, educator training, professional  
19 development, and student supports to Illinois' standards, and  
20 ensuring that closing literacy opportunity gaps among  
21 demographic groups be prioritized; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
23 presented to ISBE with our appreciation for the agency's

1 efforts to advance literacy and with our support for the  
2 continuation of such efforts.