

SHORT VERSION: SPEAK UP FOR LITERACY

Good evening to you all; my name is _____ and I would like to talk about literacy instruction. Thank you all for taking on the responsibilities to improve student achievement and provide fiscal accountability for our school and taxpayers. What I have to say will interest you.

Our data is from the New York State Department of Education and Education Consumers Foundation; you can find all this in the brochure. Here are some facts: did you know that illiteracy costs New York taxpayers around 3-billion dollars per year?

At our district _____ in 2019, _____ % of third-graders were reading below grade level in total, and _____ % were below basic (functionally illiterate).

Approximately _____ students from the 2019 third grade are predicted to drop out. Our district will have _____ unprepared graduates from that year, costing taxpayers an extra \$ _____ for healthcare, criminal justice, welfare, and education over their lifetimes.

Yet, 95% (yes, 95%) of ALL students with proper instruction can become skilled readers and read at or above grade level.

This is Our Request: We respectfully demand that New York State discontinue funding for and disseminating unproven and disproven teaching methodologies by publicly funded institutions. We respectfully demand the complete removal of balanced literacy, including but not limited to Reading Recovery, Leveled Literacy Intervention, Fountas & Pinnell, and Lucy Calkins Units of Study for all students from first to third grade. **The scientific evidence shows that balanced literacy programs negatively impact our children.**

We implore you to safeguard students' academic progress by implementing a District literacy goal: **"95% of 3rd Grade Students Will Read to Grade Level"** in an effort to meet the district's fiscal responsibility to taxpayers and justice for a students' right to read. We need investment in teacher training, early screening, and intervention to ensure that students at risk of dyslexia do not fall behind, and general education students learn how to read. We need programs that follow the science of reading that are: explicit, systematic, and structured.

If we choose to continue using balanced literacy, we need to seriously ask ourselves how much of taxpayers' money we are willing to misuse? How many lives are we willing to disenfranchise?
Thank you for your time.