



Board of Public Education

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Montana Board of Public Education (Board) is committed to increasing PK-12 attainment in reading and reading proficiency; and

WHEREAS, the 2023-24 Statewide Assessment shows that only 39.2% of 3rd graders are at or above proficiency in English Language Arts and Literacy and 52.5% of 11th graders are at or above proficiency in English Language Arts and Literacy; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing convergence of evidence regarding the Science of Reading; which is grounded in rigorous research that encompasses cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and education; and

WHEREAS, effective reading instruction involves phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension strategies, all of which are essential for literacy development and supports successful comprehension, which stems from the ability to integrate background knowledge with the text, necessitating strategies that build this connection; and

WHEREAS, studies show that implementing science-based reading instruction significantly improves literacy rates among all students, especially those at risk for reading difficulties and educators must be equipped with knowledge of the Science of Reading to effectively teach these foundational skills and support diverse learners; and

WHEREAS, the Board is dedicated to ensuring a basic system of free quality public schools and believes that proficient reading skills are linked to better academic outcomes, economic opportunities, and overall societal engagement throughout an individual's life;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Montana Board of Public Education intends to adopt actionable, evidence-based standards that will form the foundation for literacy instruction by including the Science of Reading in the updated English Language Arts and Literacy Content Standards in ARM Title 10, Chapter 53; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Montana Board of Public Education will hold schools accountable through the Accreditation Standards in ARM Title 10, Chapter 55, to review, update, and align their learning programs and curricula following the state's adoption of the revised English Language Arts and Literacy Content Standards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Montana Board of Public Education will work to align the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards in ARM Title 10, Chapter 58 to support accredited Educator Preparation Programs to include the Science of Reading within teaching reading courses.

RESOLVED BY THE MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ON
JULY 18, 2025.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy W. Tharp".

Dr. Tim Tharp
Chairperson
Board of Public Education