[Your Name]
[Your Address]

Dear Members of the [District Name] Board of Education,

I am writing as a [parent / educator / community member] who cares deeply about ensuring every student in our district learns to read with confidence and understanding. Reading proficiency is the foundation of all learning, and research continues to show that how we teach reading matters as much as what we teach. According to data from data.nysed.gov, [insert district name] currently has [insert percentage]% of students not meeting ELA proficiency standards. When students do not master foundational reading skills early, it impacts every subject area—limiting comprehension, writing ability, and overall academic success.

Decades of research, often referred to as the Science of Reading, have clearly identified the most effective ways to teach children how to read. This body of evidence, grounded in cognitive science and linguistics, demonstrates that explicit, systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension benefits all students. The same methods that help students with dyslexia or other reading challenges are equally powerful for developing proficient readers across the classroom.

To raise literacy outcomes, our district must align classroom instruction and intervention with the Science of Reading and begin phasing out misaligned approaches proven to be ineffective, including Units of Study, Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), and the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS). These programs rely on "cueing" and leveled-text methods that encourage guessing rather than decoding—strategies that extensive research has shown to hinder reading development. New York State has made major strides toward aligning instruction with this research through the NYSED Literacy Initiative, which includes the below tools for districts to evaluate and strengthen their literacy programs.

I respectfully urge the Board to review how our district's literacy instruction and professional development align with these state-supported initiatives. Specifically:
1. Conduct a curriculum review using NYSED's *K–3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide* to ensure classroom materials reflect structured literacy practices rather than balanced literacy or three-cueing approaches that research has shown to be ineffective.
2. Invest in professional development that builds teacher knowledge of language and reading science—such as LETRS training, Keys to Literacy, 95% Group, or The Reading League's professional learning programs. These trainings empower educators with the understanding of how reading develops in the brain, how to identify skill gaps, and how to deliver instruction that accelerates growth for every student.
3. Ensure alignment across all tiers of instruction (core, intervention, and special education) so that struggling readers receive consistent, research-based support throughout their schooling.
4. Engage families and the community by sharing literacy data transparently and offering opportunities to participate in literacy committees and learn about evidence-based reading practices.

Structured literacy instruction doesn't just improve test scores—it changes lives. Students who receive this kind of instruction early are less likely to need intensive intervention later, reducing special education referrals and closing equity gaps for multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and those from under-resourced communities.

Thank you for your time, commitment, and continued service to our students and families. I believe [District Name] has the opportunity to be a leader in this statewide movement toward stronger, research-aligned reading instruction. I would welcome the chance to participate in a committee, community discussion, or upcoming review process that helps move this work forward.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your Address]