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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EdVoice Institute and Partners Launch Early Literacy Policy Brief Calling on the State to Implement Policy Solutions to California’s Early Literacy Crisis

Sacramento, CA (December 20, 2023) – The EdVoice Institute for Research and Education (EdVoice Institute)—in collaboration with its California Early Literacy Coalition partners at Decoding Dyslexia CA, 21st Century Alliance, Families in Schools, and California Reading Coalition—is excited to announce the release of its [Early Literacy Policy Brief](#). The brief proposes a research-based early literacy policy agenda anchored in the Science of Reading that, if passed and implemented effectively, will help California accelerate its path toward literacy for all students by the third grade.

The following policy recommendations, further outlined in the brief, are each in connection with the Science of Reading:

1. Access to curricula and instructional materials;
2. Professional development and training for current teachers;
3. Effective preparation and credentialing for teacher candidates; and
4. Universal screening along with progress monitoring and interventions for struggling readers.

Currently, only 40% of 3rd-grade students are on grade level in English Language Arts. These statistics are even more discouraging for Black and Latino children from low-income communities, English Learners, and Students with Disabilities. This is a major contributor to California having one of the lowest adult literacy rates in the nation.

“The path to ending adult illiteracy and ensuring opportunity for all starts with our public schools teaching reading effectively to elementary school children. The California Early Literacy Coalition calls on the State to take immediate action on comprehensive early literacy legislation given the urgency of this crisis,” said Megan Potente, Co-State Director of Decoding Dyslexia CA.

“Early literacy is a critical factor for students’ academic and social-emotional success in middle school, high school, and beyond. Through deep research and analysis, we know what we need to do to ensure effective and equitable reading instruction—we just aren’t doing it. We implore our elected leaders to implement our early literacy policy agenda,” said Heather Calomese, EdVoice Institute Chief Policy & Advocacy Officer.

Policy recommendations for each policy agenda item, proficiency rates for 3rd grade students in English Language Arts by subgroups, past State initiatives and policies, and additional considerations are all included in the Early Literacy Policy Brief.

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EdVoice Institute is a nonprofit organization that, since 2006, has advocated for systemic changes to policies and practices necessary to provide equitable opportunities and outcomes to students from low-income communities by providing evidence-based policy recommendations, implementation support, and community resources.