



March 21, 2023

To: House Public Education Committee

Re: Written Testimony Submitted FOR House Bill 2162

Honorable Chairman Buckley and Members of the House Public Education Committee,

My name is Trenace Dorsey-Hollins, a proud parent of two public school students and the leader of Parent Shield Fort Worth. Parent Shield Fort Worth is a grassroots movement of parents, guardians, caretakers, and community members who strongly believe every child should receive a high-quality education that develops their potential and prepares them to be successful adults.

Like all of Texas, Fort Worth continues to grow and attract more people. In order to build the foundations for future prosperity and quality of life, early literacy must be an issue that we address head on.

Unfortunately, in the city of Fort Worth, over 64% of our children are unable to read on grade level and only 13% of our high school students score high enough on the SAT or ACT to be considered college, career or military ready. That means that out of every ten 3rd grade students, only three are meeting basic reading standards. This infuriates me and the hundreds of parents who are a part of Parent Shield Fort Worth. Something must be done differently to ensure our babies can read and, more importantly, have the opportunity to succeed in life.

Parent Shield Fort Worth supports House Bill 2162 because it simply does what we have known for decades works when it comes to early literacy. We should no longer wait until 3rd grade to intervene when we can equip our educators sooner with the data and resources they need to use evidence-based reading strategies and empower parents with accurate information about how their children are doing and the ability to act with their choice of intervention.

On behalf of Parent Shield Fort Worth, I urge you to vote for HB 2162 because it:

- Removes outdated “three-cueing” and “balanced literacy” approaches from teacher preparation programs
- Reinforces the “science of reading” as a proven method and provides public transparency to know how well schools are implementing it
- Offers science-based instruments capable of providing diagnostic information that teachers can use to deliver targeted intervention
- Empowers parents with reliable information about their child’s reading progress and provides resources for them to receive additional tutoring and intervention services

- Focuses on early intervention in grades K-3, allowing educators and parents to work together to course correct sooner rather than later

If passed, this bill would bring the urgent focus needed for educators, families, and communities to tackle the issue of early literacy. We applaud Representative Dutton for introducing this piece of legislation and urge you to support HB 2162 for our babies and their futures. A literate Texas is a great Texas.

Sincerely,

Trenace Dorsey-Hollins
Founder, Parent Shield Fort Worth