

## **RESOLUTION**

### **A RESOLUTION TO PRIORITIZE LITERACY IN ALL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND TO URGENTLY IMPLEMENT ACTIONABLE PLANS THAT ENSURE ALL STUDENTS READ AT GRADE LEVEL.**

***WHEREAS***, the Tarrant County Commissioner's Court is committed to promoting the safety and prosperity of all residents, recognizing that education and literacy are foundational to achieving these goals; and

***WHEREAS***, research shows that literacy is the most critical skill for academic and life success, with reading proficiency serving as a cornerstone for educational achievement, career readiness, and lifelong opportunities; and

***WHEREAS***, statistics reveal the strong correlation between low literacy levels and increased likelihood of criminal behavior, including:

- Approximately 80% of Texas prison inmates are reported to be functionally illiterate;
- 85% of all juveniles within the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate;
- High school dropouts are five times more likely to be arrested in their lifetime;
- According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, two-thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of the fourth grade will end up in jail or on welfare; and

***WHEREAS***, addressing literacy early can significantly reduce these risks and improved educational outcomes are a proven deterrent to criminal behavior and a pathway to better futures for our children; and

***WHEREAS***, achieving grade-level literacy is not only an educational imperative but a moral obligation to the children and families of Tarrant County; and

***WHEREAS***, this resolution reflects the Court's firm belief that improving literacy is a shared responsibility with far-reaching benefits for the educational, economic, health and safety of Tarrant County; and

***WHEREAS***, school districts across the nation have demonstrated that significant and rapid improvements in literacy rates are possible through focused, evidence-based strategies and collaboration;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the Commissioners Court of Tarrant County call on all independent school districts to make student literacy their highest priority, and to develop and implement a detailed, results-driven plan that ensures universal grade-level literacy

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, we have hereunto set our hand and caused the great seal of Tarrant County to be affixed this 19th day of February 2025.