



Can't read? Can't succeed.

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Children's Book Authors and Education Advocates to Join Elected Leaders for Every Child Reads Briefing Event

Every Child Reads briefing to promote legislation that will provide new resources to Mass. schools so they can help struggling readers before they fall too far behind

WHAT: Children's book authors and education leaders will join Senator Joseph Boncore and Representative Michael Day for the Every Child Reads Briefing Event on Thursday, February 8th. During the event, children's authors, representatives from higher education, educators and others will speak about the importance of literacy and urge the passage of legislation currently pending in the state legislature that will help struggling readers before they fall too far behind.

While Massachusetts has the best schools in the nation, 53 percent of the state's third graders cannot read at grade-level. This number jumps to over 70 percent for low-income, Black and Latino students, and to 80 percent for English Language Learners. Perhaps no other single education issue is more crucial than literacy, which has lifelong social, economic and health consequences.

If passed, the Early Literacy Act will provide additional resources to schools so they can find, screen and intervene with struggling readers. Grants are targeted to fund key initiatives that research shows most effectively helps students learn to read, such as reading coaches and literacy consultants, teacher home visits, interventionists who are trained in addressing learning disabilities, advanced literacy technology, summer literacy and academic programs, vision and hearing screenings and adjustment councilors. The bill also promotes early literacy for children ages 0-5 through a grant program at the district level to support early literacy service providers.

WHO: **Jane Yolen**, children's book author
Heidi Stemple, children's book author
Megan Dowd Lambert, children's book author & Senior Lecturer in Children's Literature at Simmons College
Erin Dionne, children's book author
Representative **Michael Day** (Early Literacy Act co-sponsor)
Senator **Joseph Boncore** (Early Literacy Act co-sponsor)
Reverend Clyde D. Talley, Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church
Meagan DeLeon, Stand for Children member and mother

Sean Palfrey, MD, BU School of Medicine, Boston Medical Center
Susan Astone, Principal of Burlington Public Schools
Ranjini Govender, Executive Director of Stand for Children Massachusetts
Researchers from the **Rennie Center**

WHERE: Room 222
Massachusetts State House
Boston, MA

WHEN: 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 8, 2018

For more information about the Every Child Reads campaign please visit everychildreadma.org