



Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn since 1971

News Release

For Immediate Release

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May 9, 2023 (NEW YORK CITY) — Today, Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to the Chancellor's announced changes to literacy instruction in New York City Public Schools:

Parents count on schools to teach their children how to read, but New York City's approach to literacy instruction and curriculum selection hasn't been working for students or for educators. While no elementary English Language Arts curriculum is perfect—and any curriculum is only as good as its implementation—the City has a responsibility to ensure that schools are using research-based programs, that the curriculum reflects the rich diversity of the student population, and that teachers have the materials and training they need to be successful in the classroom. Establishing consistency within schools and within districts won't solve all the problems, but it is an important step in the right direction. The choice of reading curriculum is a critical piece of the puzzle when it comes to strengthening core instruction and scaling change system wide. The plans announced today will help ensure schools abandon ineffective practices, enable districts to provide more robust support to schools and teachers around implementation, and help move us towards a system in which every child gets the quality instruction they need to become a strong reader.

About Advocates for Children of New York (AFC)

Since 1971, Advocates for Children of New York has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds who are at greatest risk for failure or discrimination in school because of their poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems. AFC uses four integrated strategies: free advice and legal representation for families of students; free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals to equip them to advocate on behalf of students; policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and compel needed reform.