

To the Distinguished Members of our Alexandria City Public School Board,

I am a literacy coach new to George Mason Elementary School. However, I have been a teacher in ACPS since 2008 at Jefferson-Houston and Mount Vernon Community School. One of my roles as a literacy coach is to plan reading instruction with teachers on a regular basis. Currently, we have a wonderfully written reading curriculum to guide teachers with what to teach students. However, we don't have a resource to support the curriculum. Since there is no resource that meets the needs of our diverse readers, teachers and I are forced to spend numerous hours hunting down materials to support good teaching. The last textbook adoption was in 2004, it's 2018. Our teachers work hard to plan quality instruction for all students, they shouldn't have to work harder trying find the resources to support their instruction. If we had a textbook that all teachers had access to, there would be more consistency in instruction from K-5 reading instruction.

Another one of my roles is to support new teachers with getting their reading instruction in line with the ACPS Literacy Guidelines. When I guide a teacher in the literacy guidelines I am not able to share a teaching resource that other colleagues are using since we don't have an adopted textbook. When I say textbook, I don't mean a basal that I was taught using, I mean a teacher guide with reading strategies and authentic children's literature. Research shows to improve reading is by having students engage in reading authentic literature at their reading level. We need a textbook adoption to support the teacher resource guide as well as filling our students hands with quality literature. We want all students to succeed. At the moment, teachers are having to spend their own money to build classroom libraries with second hand books. Teachers energy should be spent teaching not constantly hunting for resources.

I am a parent of three ACPS students and I am shocked that my kids and their teachers had to hunt around looking for teaching tools and books to have my kids learn to read. I am also surprised at the lack of consistent reading instruction in the classrooms my children have been in. This isn't fair to the kids or the teachers. As an alumni of T.C. Williams, a city resident, a parent, and a passionate educator, we need to update our reading instruction with solid resources for the teachers and kids.

Please consider funding a core instructional resource for all our amazing kindergarten through fifth grade teachers. Our teachers and children deserve quality instruction with quality resources.

Thank you for your time.