

1                                   **EARLY CHILDHOOD READING READINESS**

2   **RESOLUTION**

3   2007 GENERAL SESSION

4   STATE OF UTAH

5   **Chief Sponsor: Karen W. Morgan**

6   Senate Sponsor: Howard A. Stephenson

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8                   **LONG TITLE**

9                   **General Description:**

10                   This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor encourages "Reading  
11 With a Child 20 Minutes a Day."

12                   **Highlighted Provisions:**

13                   This resolution:

14                   ▶ recognizes the value that "Reading with a Child 20 Minutes a Day" contributes to  
15 the lifelong learning and success of children and the well-being of society as a  
16 whole; and

17                   ▶ encourages "Reading with a Child 20 Minutes a Day" to help children prepare for  
18 and advance through their schooling.

19                   **Special Clauses:**

20                   None

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22                   *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

23                   WHEREAS, research shows many children are not starting school with the skills they  
24 need to be successful readers;

25                   WHEREAS, within a kindergarten classroom there is a five-year range in reading  
26 ability, with some children at age five possessing the reading skills of a three-year-old and  
27 others possessing the reading skills of a seven-year-old;

28                   WHEREAS, this "reading readiness gap" originates during the years prior to  
29 kindergarten and is rarely a reflection of intelligence but rather opportunities;

30 WHEREAS, children who lack reading readiness skills as they enter kindergarten have  
31 a more difficult time learning to read;

32 WHEREAS, the brain development that occurs in an infant before the age of one is  
33 rapid and extensive;

34 WHEREAS, by the age of two, a child's brain has twice as many synapses, or  
35 connections, as an adult brain, and using and strengthening these networks is fundamental to  
36 learning;

37 WHEREAS, during the first three years of life, children learn at a speed that is  
38 unmatched during the rest of life;

39 WHEREAS, the part of the human brain that develops critical visual, auditory, and  
40 learning skills needs to be stimulated early and often, and a nonstimulating environment can  
41 hamper brain development;

42 WHEREAS, young children learn by gentle repetition and engaging interactions with  
43 caring adults, including speaking, singing, playing, and sharing stories, regardless of family  
44 income or which language is spoken in the home;

45 WHEREAS, simply reading aloud to a child, especially during the preschool years, will  
46 help lay an important intellectual and motivational foundation for eventually learning to read;  
47 and

48 WHEREAS, the Utah Commission on Literacy was created by an Executive Order of  
49 the Governor on December 22, 2004, to increase public awareness of the importance of  
50 reading, to maximize the percentage of Utah children who read at or above grade level by the  
51 end of the third grade, and to maximize the number of children who read with an adult 20  
52 minutes a day:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the  
54 Governor concurring therein, recognize the value that "Reading with a Child 20 Minutes a  
55 Day" contributes to the lifelong learning and success of children and the well-being of society  
56 as a whole.

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage

58 "Reading with a Child 20 Minutes a Day" to help eliminate the reading readiness gap as  
59 children prepare for and advance through their schooling.

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah  
61 Commission on Literacy, the Utah Parent Center, Utah Children, Utah Head Start, the Utah  
62 Department of Health, the Utah Office of Child Care, the Utah Rural Schools Association, the  
63 Utah Association for Gifted Children, the Utah Family Partnership Network, the Utah Reading  
64 Clinic, the Utah Council of International Reading Association, Utah Public Libraries, Kids on  
65 the Move, the Utah Association for the Education of Young Children, public and charter  
66 elementary school community councils, the American Federation of Teachers, Utah Teachers  
67 United, the Utah Council of Educators, parent teacher organizations, and the members of the  
68 Education Coalition, which includes the State Board of Education, the Utah Education  
69 Association, the Utah Parent Teacher Association, the Utah School Employees Association, the  
70 Utah Association of Elementary School Principals, the Utah Association of Secondary School  
71 Principals, the Utah School Boards Association, the State Office of Education, the Utah  
72 Council of Education Deans, and the Utah School Superintendents Association.