

CINDY HILL

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

LEADERSHIP ★ PROVEN RESULTS

For Immediate Release

September 13, 2010

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Today, Cindy Hill, Republican candidate for Superintendent of Public Instruction, set forth some thoughts on the importance of reading proficiency:

One marker relating to reading proficiency is reading at grade level at the third grade. As parents and teachers know, the story is much more encompassing than this simple assumption and this limited view.

Mrs. Hill stated as follows: “The discussion of reading must begin before the third grade and continues each year after the third grade with progress monitoring and interventions continuing through the entire span of a student’s educational career. Reading proficiency is critical at each grade. Therefore, it would be dangerous to overemphasize the importance of one year over the need to ensure reading proficiency each and every year.”

Mrs. Hill stated that, “with my years of experience in growing children in reading from the lens of a public school principal in improving schools, I would caution against a limited focus on the primary years because the emphasis on reading proficiency does not stop there.” “Just as the newly adopted state standards indicate,” Mrs. Hill continued, “the child must read at grade level each year until the 12th grade. For example, the new state standards provide that students at the 12th grade level should be able to read the Declaration of Independence, or the fine print of a mortgage agreement, or an auto mechanic’s manual. Suffice it to say, any of these far exceed third grade reading level

and demonstrate that a comprehensive focus, on reading in all grades, rather than over-emphasizing one grade, is the only approach that will work.”

Mrs. Hill stated that “class size is critically important. With more students in classrooms than called for in the funding model, it is very difficult to ensure that each and every child will read on grade level and will not fall behind.” “When children do fall behind,” Mrs. Hill continued, “we must timely intervene (whether at the third grade, first grade, or another grade) to ensure that the child is brought to grade level as quickly as possible. Effective reading interventions are well known to educators, and they cannot be considered ‘one size fits all’ interventions. Rather, they may be different based upon indicators of concern.”

Mrs. Hill concluded by stating that, “my conversations with legislators, school boards, and administrators will focus on class size, continual attention to grade level reading, and immediate and situationally appropriate interventions in reading.”

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