

## Rationale

Building a culture of literacy requires that students engage in meaningful text beyond classroom instruction and homework. School districts should set the conditions for students to thoroughly enjoy the reading experience and understand its value and purpose in life. Reading should be seen as an opportunity, rather than a burden. Research has firmly established the correlation between time spent reading and quality of life. High levels of leisure reading and reading proficiency are associated with greater academic, financial, professional, and civic benefits (National Endowment for the Arts, 2007).

Figure 1 illustrates some of the benefits that reading has on a child and how it can impact their life trajectory.

According to the District's priorities in the [Blueprint 2020](#), outstanding achievement is at the top of list. Building a culture of literacy in our district that develops avid readers, both in and out of the classroom, will dramatically increase students' academic achievement and equip them with the tools necessary to live a successful and prosperous life. It will also provide them with an equitable educational experience to their suburban counterparts, thus making them more competitive in college and the workplace. Students will graduate from The Detroit Public Schools Community District with the skills and confidence necessary to take on the world and continuously strive for greatness in their communities and beyond.

While Independent reading takes place at home, it also should happen during the school day. Here are the only times during the school day when students should be engaging in independent reading.

- K-2: Foundational Skills Block
- 3-5: ALL Block
- 6-8: Small Group Instruction Block

9-12: After finishing an Achieve3000 or Khan Academy lesson

## How will the district support independent reading?

To build this culture of literacy, reading needs to be reinforced and supported throughout multiple levels of a student's life. Simply providing a student with a book to read at home without building their reading confidence and endurance will have limited impact. Similarly, reading complex texts with students strictly in the classroom environment will not encourage them to sustain these practices at home. A comprehensive plan needs to be developed that attempts to infuse reading in all aspects of a student's life, thus helping them see the expansive benefits of reading. This independent reading plan is broken down into two parts. The first outlines a district wide independent reading challenge during the school year called the "Rise Up, Read More Challenge." The second provides ideas for ongoing support (reading competitions, strategies, etc.) in the school, classroom, and at home to encourage students to build a love for literacy

