

# Proclamation

## by Governor Jim Justice

- Whereas,** many children from low-income families begin school already far behind. Research shows that these children are less likely to be read or spoken to regularly or to have access to books, literacy-rich environments, high-quality early care, or pre-k programs. These interactions have shown to be critical for language development, an important precursor to literacy; and
- Whereas,** 61% of low-income children have no children's books at home; and
- Whereas,** a child's vocabulary as early as age three can predict third grade reading proficiency; and
- Whereas,** children from poverty can hear as many as 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers; and
- Whereas,** according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the congressionally mandated program that is overseen and administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the percentage of fourth-grade public school students performing below the NAEP Proficient level in reading was 78% in West Virginia and 68% nationally in 2022; and
- Whereas,** 39% of fourth-grade public school students nationally and 48% in West Virginia performed below the NAEP Basic level in reading in 2022; and
- Whereas,** parents, other family members, and caregivers can introduce children to literacy and the world of books in different ways, including reading to them; telling stories; teaching letters, words, or numbers; and by visiting a library; and
- Whereas,** to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood literacy, The LiTEArary Society, a national nonprofit organization, invites all residents of the Great State of West Virginia to celebrate *National Early Childhood Literacy Awareness Day*.

**Now, Therefore,** Be it Resolved that I, Jim Justice, Governor of the Great State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim *October 20, 2023* as:

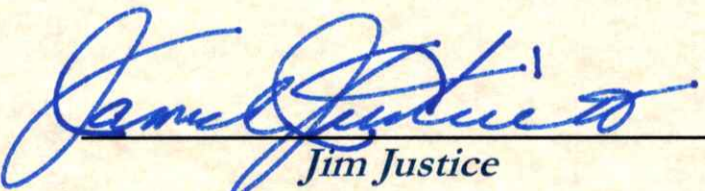
## *National Early Childhood Literacy Awareness Day*

in the Mountain State and encourage all citizens to join me in this observance.

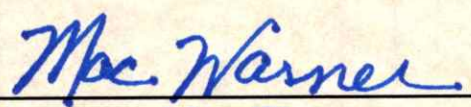
**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

**Done** at the Capitol, City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the Twenty-fifth day of July, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Three, and in the One Hundred Sixty-First year of the State.



  
Jim Justice  
Governor

*By the Governor:*

  
Mac Warner  
Secretary of State