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Arizona Department of Education Names 95 Percent Group an Approved K-3 Reading Improvement Program

Efficacy research confirms positive effects on reading outcomes; products ready to help schools meet evidence-based requirements starting in 2022-2023 school year

Lincolnshire, IL – September 7, 2022 – [95 Percent Group](#) LLC, a leading provider of literacy solutions and instructional strategies for K-12 schools nationwide, announced today that the Arizona Department of Education approved its *95 Phonics Core Program™* as a supplemental literacy curriculum and its *Phonological Awareness Lessons*, *Phonics Lesson Library™* and *Phonics Chip Kit* as early literacy intervention resources. Schools in Arizona can now find 95 Percent Group’s evidence-based products on their state list of reading improvement programs and begin using them immediately.

The approval was based upon new, state-reviewed efficacy research confirming that 95 Percent Group’s foundational reading products meet Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Level 1-3 evidence requirement for reading instruction. The criteria were established by the Arizona Department of Education as part of its [Move On When Reading](#) initiative, an effort to provide all readers with specific, targeted instruction and interventions so that they are reading at or above grade level by the end of the 3rd grade.

“95 Percent Group believes that evidence-based reading instruction is essential in schools. We have long invested in research that demonstrates the efficacy of our offerings,” said Brad Lindaas, Chief Executive Officer. “The Arizona Department of Education has been a key partner for us for many years, and today’s news will only strengthen our ability to support educators state-wide in promoting the development of early reading skills for all students. With this development, we expect it will be easier for more districts in Arizona to learn about and benefit from our evidence-based products,” he added.

An increasing number of states are enacting laws designed to expand access to evidence-based reading instruction. Even before the pandemic disrupted learning, only 35% of fourth graders met the standards for reading proficiency set by the National Assessment of Educational Progress; students who are not proficient by the end of third grade are less likely to [thrive in school and graduate high school](#). 95

Percent Group's offerings, including its literacy products and professional development, help educators support all readers through an effective, structured literacy approach based in the science of reading.

Independent Research Findings

Students using 95 Percent Group products have been observed to be more engaged and independent throughout the reading block. "Our kids are more engaged than they've ever been with phonics instruction and with reading, and they're applying what they're learning," said one second grade teacher who was part of the research study.

Evidence requirements under ESSA are designed to ensure that states, districts, and schools can identify programs, practices, products, and policies that work across various populations. The evidence for 95 Percent Group's foundational suite of reading products was supported by three studies that included the following findings:

[95 Phonics Core Program™ \(95PCP\)](#) is a whole-class phonics supplemental curriculum designed to bring the effectiveness of 95 Percent Group's structured literacy instructional approach to address and prevent reading gaps for all students. 95 Phonics Core adds an explicit phonics strand to the daily Reading Block to ensure that all K-3 students receive consistent evidence and research-based phonics instruction to improve outcomes. The half-year study of the 95PCP in Missouri met ESSA Level 1 criteria. Schools were randomly assigned to use the 95PCP or continue using another curriculum. Students that used the 95PCP outperformed students in grades K-2 that did not use the program.

[Phonological Awareness Lessons \(PA Lessons\)](#) are designed primarily for pre-K through grade 1 and are sequenced from the simplest syllable skills with compound words to the most complex phoneme substitution tasks. Abstract syllables, rimes, and phonemes become concrete using manipulatives to enhance awareness and manipulation of sounds that are included in our Phonological Awareness Lessons Deluxe Package. The half-year study of PA Lessons met ESSA Level 2 criteria. Schools and grades in a California district were paired based on various school-based characteristics to find similar groups of students who would use PA Lessons or receive early literacy PA skill instruction using other resources. The schools that implemented the PA Lessons intervention model saw significant gains above the comparison schools in student reading scores.

[Phonics Lesson Library™ \(PLL\)](#) is an extensive phonics intervention program that provides all the materials necessary to facilitate effective phonics lessons.

[Phonics Chip Kit™ \(PCK\)](#) explains phonics patterns using manipulatives and sound-spelling mapping. This resource focuses on sound-spelling pattern identification to identify individual phonemes in words and analyze sound-spelling patterns. PLL and PCK were used together and evaluated as part of a one-year Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention program for first-grade students in California. Students using PLL and PCK showed higher gains than the comparison group on multiple measures.

About 95 Percent Group

Founded in 2005, 95 Percent Group is an educational company whose mission is to help educators identify and address the needs of all readers. Using an approach that is aligned with structured literacy, the company focuses on providing educators with whole-class and small-group literacy solutions as well as developing foundational knowledge about The Science of Reading to deliver evidence and research-

based instructional strategies. The company's professional development, diagnostic assessments, skill continua, and explicit instructional materials strengthen MTSS/RTI frameworks and ensure that students receive targeted intervention instruction to close skill gaps.

For additional information on 95 Percent Group, see www.95percentgroup.com.

In 2021, 95 Percent Group secured a significant investment from Leeds Equity Partners to further develop its literacy curriculum as well as invest in new digital solutions.