



## Focusing on Family Literacy

**The Winchester Campaign for Grade Level Reading** put its focus on family literacy this past Fall as we celebrated November's Family Literacy Month. An official proclamation from the Mayor of Winchester, David Smith, was read aloud at the Literacy Brunch event. We also welcomed best-selling children's author, Sue Fliess, who read her book "How to Hide a Turkey" to families at The Winchester Book Gallery. Copies of her book were given away to families, too!

This intentional focus on families is what we will bring into 2023 as we look ahead to Campaign-backed events and initiatives. Coming in March is Laurel Ridge Community College's Community Literacy Program where local staff who interact with children learning how to read will get instructional education and support. This whole-family approach is what will support our students, caregivers, and educators to be ready to read for school and beyond!

### WHAT'S INSIDE

- Our Mission and Goals
- Spotlight on Winchester Public Schools
- Our Needs Looking Ahead
- Celebrating Program Launches
- Thoughts from the Field
- Coalition Partners
- Upcoming CGLR Events

# Our Mission and Goals

## Grade-Level Proficiency

Winchester's overarching vision is to increase the percentage of 3rd graders reading at or above the proficient level **to at least 75%** in the next 10 years based on the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) ELA assessment. We will achieve this mission by setting goals focusing on:

- **School Readiness**

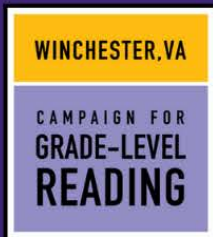
- Increase the number of children ready for kindergarten **to at least 80%** of children being ready based on their performance on the PALS-K. Focus will be on furthering develop high-quality preschool and daycare programs and offering families out-of-school options to further learning and growth.

- **School Attendance**

- Reduce chronic absenteeism **to rates at or below 10%** among K-3rd graders at all four elementary schools by 2025.

- **Summer and Afterschool Learning**

- **Increase by 100%** the number of K-3rd grade students who have access to summer and afterschool opportunities that focus on literacy-related learning and enrichment.



# TALK, READ, PLAY 20 MINUTES A DAY!

#readingby3rd

## A community effort to improve literacy in Winchester

Explore  
more:



[LVWA.org/CGLR](http://LVWA.org/CGLR)



**Simple,  
bilingual  
messaging  
that puts the  
Campaign in  
the  
community's  
focus coming  
to a yard or  
business  
window near  
you soon!**

## Spotlight On:



# Winchester Public Schools

As the Campaign's largest partner, WPS is doing integral work to prepare our community's children to be successful. Over the past few months, these are the updates that we are celebrating:

- The PreK 3-year-old classroom at John Kerr Elementary, which is new to the Virginia Preschool Initiative program, is now full at 18 students.
- The Quality Coach Program has expanded from 5 classrooms to 10 (growing from 63 to 100 students), serving Eukarya, Head Start, Child Haven, Smart Start Learning, and Children of America.

Through the Campaign, these projects are seeking special funds to bring them to life. With coalition partners working together, ideas are endless.

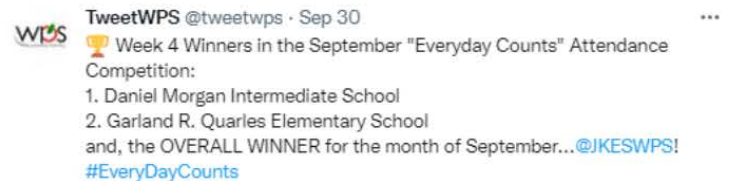
- **Sensory Family Walk:** from the Discovery Museum, Handley Library, and Pediatric Associates comes a walkable, family-friendly experience to engage outdoor learning and play.
- **Regional Spelling Bee:** from the Kids Club comes a return of the spelling bee competition where sponsors are needed.

If you would like to support these CGLR projects, contact Andy Gail at [agail@lvwa.org](mailto:agail@lvwa.org) for more information.

## School Attendance Matters

During the month of September, the Campaign supported Winchester Public Schools in their effort to encourage school attendance. All four elementary schools and the intermediate school participated in the "Everyday Counts" Attendance Competition. At the end of each week, consistent and overall high student attendance was measured to see who would win a visit from Kona Ice. **As a result, chronic absenteeism dropped from 18% at end of last school year to 9% at end of September to 6% at end of October.**

Overall, John Kerr Elementary showed consistently high attendance numbers. Congratulations to all students who participated--and the teachers and administrators who facilitated the competition!



## Our Needs Looking Ahead

# Celebrating New Program Launches By the Numbers

WINCHESTER, VA

CAMPAIGN FOR  
GRADE-LEVEL  
READING



**CALLING**  
*All Winchester Parents!*

**SIGN UP FOR THESE FREE PROGRAMS TODAY!**



## READY4K

Provides age-appropriate, weekly text messages (SMS) at no cost, in multiple languages. The easiest way to deliver 52 weeks of evidence-based whole child support directly into families' hands, from birth to 4th grade.



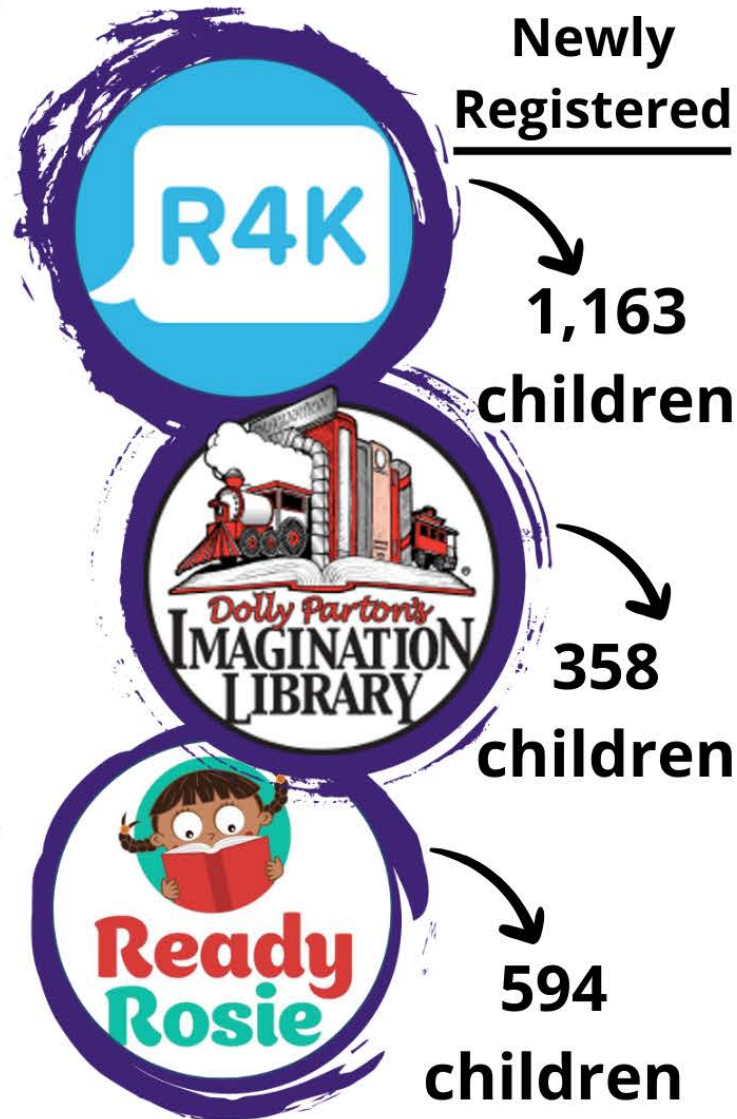
## DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

Provides age-appropriate, curated books into the hands of families with children birth to 5. With parenting tips, DPIL increases access to quality reading material and adds more books into the homes of our youngest learners.



## READY ROSIE

Provides age-appropriate, weekly emails at no cost, in multiple languages. Using videos and other resources, Ready Rosie builds capacity and confidence in families supporting the whole child from birth to 5 years old.



# Thoughts from the Field



**John Huddy, Director of Handley Regional Library System and Katie Moss, Youth Services Manager**

Libraries have traditionally played a crucial role in developing imaginations, expanding knowledge, and driving innovative thinking. The Handley Regional Library System continues to aspire to be the center of information and learning today. As an active collaborator in the community, we consistently provide free family literacy engagement and enrichment through diverse collections, services, programs, and initiatives. The library aims to meet our community's needs both inside and outside the library.

The Handley Regional Library System is a natural partner with the Winchester Campaign for Grade Level Reading. Since the launch of this coalition, we have been proud to support the campaign's vision of improving school readiness, increasing summer and afterschool learning opportunities, and reducing chronic school absenteeism in the Winchester area.

While we continue to inspire families to be strong readers and school ready, the campaign has given us the backbone of support to do so with a long-term impact. We have renewed our focus on early literacy and school readiness, as the library has become a model for how to enrich children's lives through imaginative storytelling and playful learning in weekly story times and STEAM programming.

Through checkouts of enriching materials, we continue to bridge the gap of disadvantaged youth via their access to quality materials, homework help, as well as free early childhood and after school programming. We recently celebrated over 1,700 readers in our Youth and Adult Summer Reading Programs who checked out close to 160,000 items this summer. These programs have connected us to students when they are out of school to keep their reading abilities growing strong.

We also work to form sustainable partnerships with Winchester Public Schools. During the school year we are creating strong relationships with school administrators, teachers, and students through engaging field trips and book giveaways. When every elementary and middle school student receives a library card, the more support they have at home with homework and research projects setting them up to succeed in school.

Looking ahead with the campaign, we are eager to continue to expand family literacy beyond the library's doors. We have just eliminated fines on children's materials, removing a significant barrier to our services. We are set to launch Ready4K, an accessible text messaging service that supports learning and development with weekly engagements and are planning a family passport guide to incentivize supporting local businesses through education and exploration. As we continue to do this work to decrease barriers to literacy and increase family engagement, we invite community members to also consider how they can support the Winchester Campaign for Grade Level Reading and their local library.

# Coalition Partners

- Bright Futures
- Community Foundation of NSV
- Handley Regional Library System
- Healthy Families of the Northern Shenandoah Valley
- John & Janice Wyatt Foundation
- Kids Club of the Northern Shenandoah Valley
- Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area
- Laurel Ridge Community College
- Pediatric Associates of Winchester
- Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum
- STARBASE Academy
- Top of Virginia Regional Chamber of Commerce
- United Way of the Northern Shenandoah Valley
- Valley Health
- Winchester Book Gallery
- Winchester Department of Social Services
- Winchester Public Schools
- Youth Development Center



## Upcoming CGLR Events

JANUARY



**PRESCHOOL & DAYCARE OPEN HOUSE**

HANDLEY LIBRARY, 11 AM - 1 PM  
AGES: FAMILY

JANUARY



**SPRING CLASSES BEGIN**

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS, VARIOUS TIMES  
AGES: ADULTS

FEBRUARY



**PARENT CHAT & PLAYDATE: "SELF-CARE"**

HANDLEY LIBRARY, 10:30 AM  
AGES: CAREGIVERS WITH UNDER 5

MARCH



**COMMUNITY LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

HANDLEY LIBRARY, 10 AM - 12:30 PM  
AGES: ADULTS