

A COMMUNITY COMMITMENT TO CLOSING THE LITERACY GAP.

# PROJECT IMPACT

SIX YEAR SUMMARY REPORT  
2022



## A MESSAGE FROM PROJECT IMPACT ADVISORY CHAIR JANET WHEELER

It is hard to believe that Project Impact's six-year tenure is almost complete. In 2016, we came together to launch Project Impact as a community commitment to improve literacy rates and close the achievement gap in third grade reading scores among our youngest learners in Forsyth County. There have been a lot of changes in six years and what continues to remain the same is the community's focus on helping to ensure our children have the support needed for success in school and in life.

**"We were able to impact more than 8,000 lives through seed funding from the Project Impact initiative."**

When I began as board chair at the start of Project Impact, there was so much to learn about early childhood education. Along with the Project Impact Advisory Board, I want to express my sincerest gratitude that you have chosen to engage with us on this journey for lasting impact. While we did not meet our ultimate goal of significantly improving learning outcomes on end-of grade performance assessments, we were able to impact more than 8,000 lives through seed funding from the Project Impact initiative. We are excited to have made a significant contribution to:

**Pre-K expansion** for over 2,000 students, helping to remove students from the waiting list and starting school on a solid footing.

**Science of Reading training** for 550+ Elementary teachers with Reading Research to Classroom Practice, which is now an even more robust training for all K-5 teachers with the Linguistic Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS®) course.

**Early Learning Partners and Pre-K Coaches** to help teachers implement new curriculums and Science of Reading training learning.

**Decreased summer learning loss** through our Pathway to K and Pathway to One programs helping students with opportunities for catch-up learning growth.

**Expanded core curriculum materials** for Kindergarten—2nd grades by providing over \$2 million in funding for the Wonders and Heggerty phonemic awareness curriculums allowing for standardized tools for teaching reading in all WS/FCS schools.

**Launched the first curriculum-training program for volunteer tutors** to serve in high-need schools to improve reading proficiency with the Reading Warriors partnership.

There was a lot of learning on the journey and much of this learning will be harnessed for our community's next level of engagement after Project Impact ends in June 2022. I, along with the Project Impact Advisory Board, donors, The Winston-Salem Foundation and Reynolds American, thank you for being a part of this community commitment to close the gap for our children. Working together, we can ensure that we each continue our responsibility to help support our students to make Winston-Salem the city that values arts, education and innovation!

With gratitude,

**Janet Wheeler**

*Project Impact Advisory Board, Chair*



# PROJECT IMPACT

A SIX-YEAR COMMUNITY  
COMMITMENT TO CLOSING  
THE LITERACY GAP

Over 8,000 students, families and teachers served.



## Expanded access to Pre-Kindergarten

with 21 additional  
classrooms ensuring  
access for  
**208 students**



## Supported more than **1,400 Students**

through our Pathway to Kindergarten  
and First grade readiness programs.



## Funded a 5-day training program for more than **1,000**

**Kindergarten teachers** focused  
on the science of reading.

## Leveraged **9** Early Learning and Pre-K Coaches

to support teachers with implementing  
new curriculum and applying  
Science of Reading approach.



## Equipped 36 Pre-K classrooms with readiness tools

to successfully help students  
and their families transition  
into Kindergarten.



## Launched Reading Warriors

a community volunteer tutor  
initiative to provide catch-up growth  
for Kindergarten and First graders.



## Provided funding **support**

for phonemic awareness  
and core reading curriculum  
for all Kindergarten, First, and  
Second grade classrooms.

## A MESSAGE FROM WS/FCS SUPERINTENDENT TRICIA MCMANUS

I want to thank you for supporting the work of Project Impact and for your commitment to closing the achievement gap in literacy. As I reflect on the importance of Project Impact and how this initiative has served more than 8,000 students, families and educators, I'm drawn to a singular word – foundation.

Project Impact has been an incredible partner with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WS/FCS) in helping us establish strong foundations for our students and teachers in literacy and the Science of Reading.

In 2016 when Project Impact was first initiated, the district did not have access to state or federal funds to expand our work with literacy. This community alongside partners like the Reynolds American Foundation and The Winston-Salem Foundation stepped forward to create Project Impact and fund those foundational supports.

Specifically, I want to highlight four critical areas where Project Impact investments have made a lasting difference in improving outcomes for our students and our teachers.

**Pre-K classroom seed funding** that allowed us to enroll 325 additional students.

**Summer learning experiences** to help with catch-up learning and decrease summer learning loss for over 1,400 students.

**Literacy-intensive Science of Reading Professional Development** to more than 550+ Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade teachers with Reading Research to Classroom Practice (RRtCP) and Early Learning Partner (ELP) /Pre-K coaching support for Pre-K through 2nd grade teachers.

**Curriculum materials for over 1,000 Kindergarten through 3rd grade teachers district-wide** to utilize a Science of Reading instructional resources, with the purchase of Heggerty and Wonders.

To give you a sense of the value of these initiatives, I want to share this comment from one of our 1st grade teachers, Christina Steward, who states, "Through Reading

Research training, I was able to fully understand the how and why of brain development in reading. This led me to be able to make better decisions about the next step for each child's reading growth. Rubbing shoulders with an Early Learning Partner who already had this knowledge helped mentor me as I went through the growing process in my knowledge base." The skills our educators have gained will have a career-long impact on their teaching and their success in the classroom.

These foundations — Pre-K expansion, summer experiences, aligned literacy curriculum resources, professional development and coaching — all build to our ultimate measure of success which are improved student outcomes. With the unprecedented learning challenges created by the pandemic, our task is tall, but we have never felt stronger in our commitment to do this important work. We look forward to continuing to partner with this community and to build on our strong foundations so every student can achieve measurable and meaningful progress in literacy.

On behalf of WS/FCS, we are grateful for the generosity, commitment and passion demonstrated by this community and the investment you've made in our future – the children of Forsyth County.

Best,

**Tricia McManus**  
*Superintendent*  
*Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools*



# The Project Impact Story

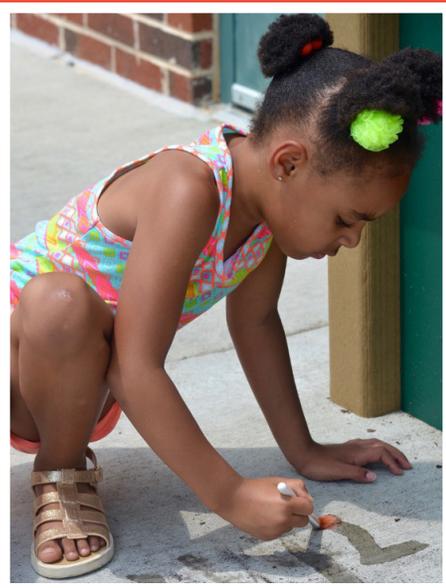
With the completion of Project Impact's six-year tenure, this summary report was developed to capture successes, reflect on outcomes and begin the conversation about how we move forward in responding to the current and future needs of our students.

Project Impact supported many significant initiatives focused on the early grades in WS/FCS— Pathway to K and Pre-K expansion, chief among them — along with a suite of leadership and professional development opportunities for our district's teachers and administrators.

Our goal is now to utilize the learnings from this work in determining ways our community can continue to improve its support and actualize improved outcomes for our children in Forsyth County.



**1 in 4 children  
in America  
grow up  
without  
learning how  
to read.**



## PROJECT IMPACT BRIEF HISTORY

In 2016, WS/FCS was facing falling average literacy scores, consistent achievement gaps and significant state budget cuts. There was compelling evidence that if intensive support was not provided to support WS/FCS financially, the gaps were likely to widen over time. Compounding the challenges faced by the district was the release of a Harvard University research study on the difficulty of transitioning out of poverty in Winston-Salem in comparison to other U.S. cities. Because of these realities and united by the goal of better achievement outcomes for students in Forsyth County, Project Impact, a multi-million dollar, six-year public education funding initiative was born.

Business, community and educational leaders came together to develop a framework for transforming the educational landscape with a priority on intervention and support for students in Pre-K — 3rd grade. The leaders focused on four key areas to improve 3rd grade proficiency outcomes;

- **supporting Pre-K expansion,**
- **ensuring student readiness for Kindergarten,**
- **providing educators with professional development,**
- **and promoting and supporting family engagement.**

The importance of a child's first years in school cannot be overstated. An increasingly large body of research highlights the foundational significance of early childhood learning experiences as a predictor for future academic and life success. Because of this research, Project Impact set Pre-K expansion and a Kindergarten readiness strategy as its initial priorities.

# EARLY SUCCESSES

## PRE-K EXPANSION

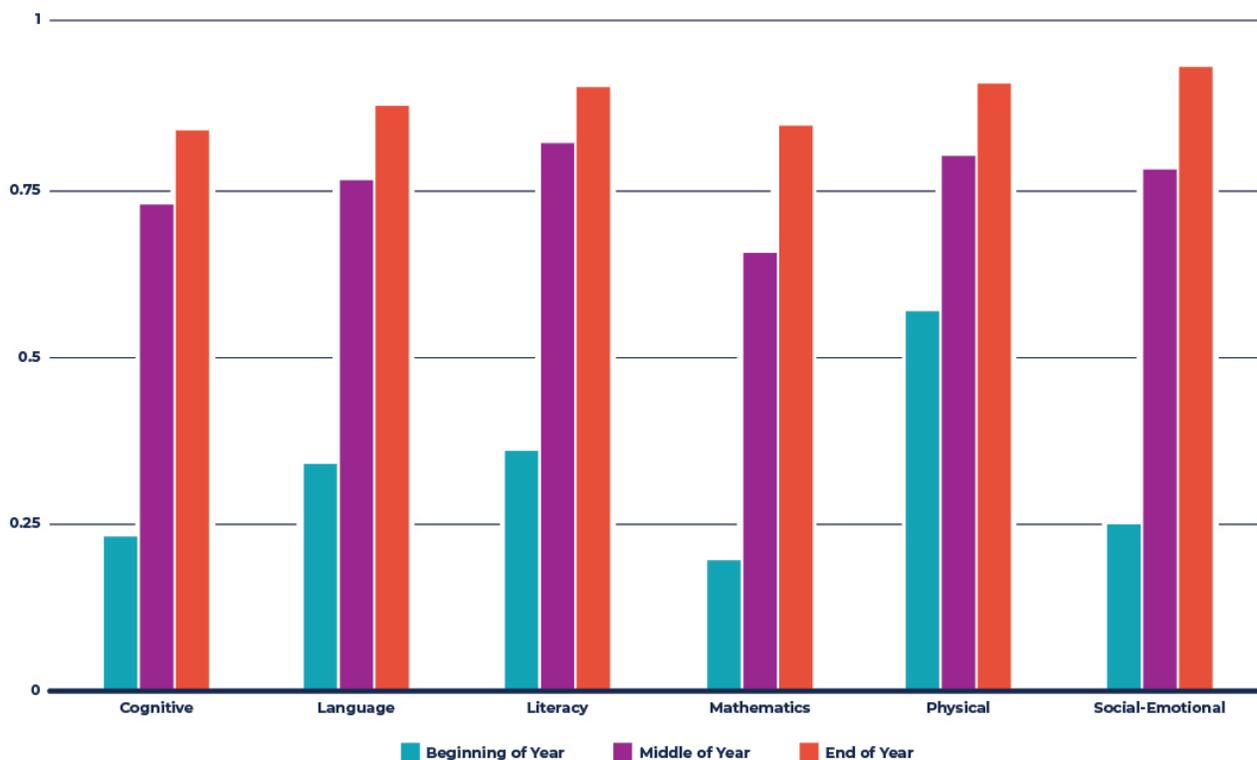
Project Impact's Pre-K expansion initiative focused on increasing the district's capacity for more classrooms and more students especially at high-need schools across the district. Funding support began in the 2016-17 school year with Pre-K classrooms added at six elementary schools. This support has continued for each of Project Impact's six years, resulting in 21 additional classrooms and 325 additional students served.

Pre-K expansion also meant a new emphasis on formative assessment. With Project Impact support, Pre-K teachers were now able to administer formative assessment for the first time, checking in with children multiple times a year to assess developmental progress and making changes as needed.



**Project Impact increased the district's Pre-K capacity by 64%. Available Pre-K seats increased from 510 in 2015-16 to 835 in 2021-22.**

### Pre-K TSGOLD Meeting/Exceeding Expectations 2020-2021



The formative assessment conducted during the Pre-K year points to specific improvements in key skills. For example, for the 2020-21 school year, the district evaluated all Pre-K students for growth in 6 areas – Cognitive, Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Physical and Social-Emotional. Across every area, there was dramatic growth from the beginning of the school year, middle and end, with the greatest gains coming in Social-Emotional learning and Mathematics.

# SUMMER PATHWAY PROGRAMS

With the goal of improving children’s academic, social, and emotional readiness for Kindergarten, Project Impact funded the launch of Pathway to K, a three to four-week summer program for rising Kindergarteners and their families. More than 500 students were served in the program’s first two summers before it was expanded to include Pathway to One, a summer program for rising 1st graders. Both programs proved very popular and beneficial, with documented growth in key skills such as counting, engagement, peer interaction and social problem solving.

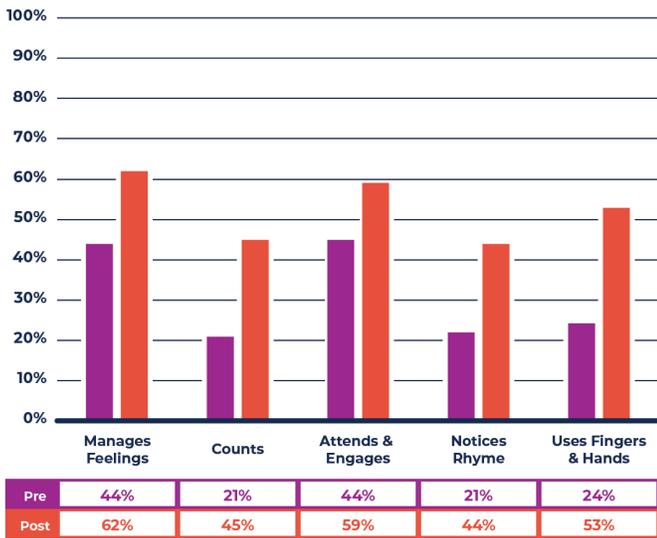
During the summer of 2020, Pathway to One was offered virtually (Pathway to K had to be paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic) and then in the summer of 2021 both programs saw their strongest enrollments with more than 750 students served. Summer program funding from Project Impact also enabled WS/FCS to transition from contracting services to staffing summer school with its own highly experienced school system teachers.



**Since inception, the Summer Pathway Programs have served a total of 2,230 children.**



**Pathway to K 2021 Early Learning Inventory Pre-Post**



**Pathway to One 2021 Early Learning Inventory Pre-Post**



*Pathway programs significantly improve student outcomes in the summer. Even in just a few weeks, participants make meaningful gains across a range of early learning skills that will be necessary for future academic success. In 2021, Pathway programs used selected components from the NC Early Learning Inventory to assess students’ progress, observing statistically significant improvements across every skill assessed.*

## KINDERGARTEN READINESS SUPPORTS

The Pathway to K program was the initial step to support WS/FCS students and their families in making the successful transition to Kindergarten. Early childhood experts agree that children need to be adequately prepared in order to have a successful year in Kindergarten. Starting this process early—as well as being intentional and consistent throughout the process—is key to creating an easier transition. While Pathway to K opened critical inroads with children who might otherwise have entered Kindergarten unprepared and unconfident, many high-need schools continue to have children arrive on their first day unregistered and unready.

To bolster its Pathway programs, Project Impact turned its attention to transition-focused initiatives to engage families with informational opportunities and to ensure a successful start to Kindergarten. A Transitions Coordinator was hired to provide assistance to families preparing for entry to Pre-K and Kindergarten and to coordinate services between schools and the community. This broad initiative set a priority for WS/FCS, private Pre-K and preschool providers, community agencies, and families to effectively implement transition programming, including the Pathway programs, registration events, information sessions, screening opportunities, and a wide range of other activities. Alignment with The Forsyth Promise’s Kindergarten Readiness Community Action Network and the Ready Freddy initiative led to a year-round calendar of school and community events supporting positive transitions to school.



“The Ready Freddy Curriculum has been a true gift for our community. The curriculum helps to build literacy and language development support for both English and English-language learners. The activities have assisted parents in being more hands on and active with their children. It has helped them bring excitement to starting Kindergarten.”

- **Markisha McCray-Powers,**  
*Pre-K Teacher*

### Snapshot of Kindergarten Readiness Program IMPACT (2020–2021 School Year)

246

Ready Freddy Family  
Engagement Sessions

5,562

Free Books  
distributed to parents

2,358

Early Kindergarten  
Registrations

# NEW INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT EDUCATORS

## READING INTERVENTIONISTS INITIATIVE

Educators know that students who face reading challenges in the 1st grade will be at a significant disadvantage in subsequent grades if their needs are not met quickly and effectively by one-on-one literacy interventions. It was with this lens that Project Impact joined forces with Duke Energy and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to implement student intervention support that would include additional positions at prioritized schools for full-time, specially trained Reading Interventionists.

The Reading Interventionists serve students performing at the lowest 20% in Kindergarten and 1st grade as measured by assessment data with Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). When the program launched in 2016, there were two Reading Interventionists and one instructional facilitator trained at each of six priority elementary schools—Ashley, Cook, Easton, Forest Park, Kimberley Park, and Petree.

The Reading Interventionists used Early Steps, an intensive one-to-one early literacy intervention focused on accelerating the literacy development of at-risk students. Developed by Dr. Darrell Morris of Appalachian State University, this series of thirty-minute sessions worked to build fluency and sight vocabulary, and systematically address phonological processes and sentence writing. After working with the Reading Interventionists to screen and select students, Dr. Morris and his colleague Dr. James Bumgarner visited each school to model lessons and provide real-time feedback.

The impact of Reading Interventionists was assessed at the end of 2018-2019. Students supported by an interventionist were matched with similar students not receiving support to compare literacy outcomes. The impact of Reading Interventionists was observed in Kindergarten and 1st grade, with the Reading Interventionist group having lower percentages of students in the Well Below or Below Benchmark performance levels, and larger percentages of students performing at or above expected grade-level expectations, compared to their peers in the control group.



“Being a Reading Interventionist for WS/FCS was a profound experience for me that has shaped me into a more informed educator. .... It taught me how to utilize data to identify students in need of extra support, then select the appropriate diagnostic assessments to determine where to focus intervention, and know which evidence-based strategies to utilize for that targeted intervention.”

- **Valerie Crumpton,**  
*Old Town Elementary*



**Comparing literacy outcomes between Reading Interventionist students and a matched control group, Kindergarten and 1st grade students who worked with a Reading Interventionist had significantly better literacy outcomes.**

## PARTNERSHIP WITH WS/FCS OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

In 2017-18, WS/FCS opened its Office of Early Learning to centralize support for Kindergarten through 2nd grade teachers and their administrators. Working in partnership with the Office, Project Impact focused its energies on helping to bolster educator effectiveness by providing training and resources to implement the Heggerty phonemic awareness curriculum, intensive professional development in the Science of Reading, and support staff to educators in the form of Early Learning Partners.

**Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum:** All WS/FCS Kindergarten teachers, along with some 1st and 2nd grade teachers were provided with the Heggerty phonemic awareness curriculum. These materials help build educator capacity to develop childrens' phonological awareness, one of the five cornerstones of reading proficiency. In the first two years of implementation, classroom monitoring indicated an average fidelity rate of 76%, meaning more than 3/4 of teachers trained to use the Heggerty phonemic awareness curriculum were delivering the instruction in the manner needed to produce improved literacy foundational skills. Today, teachers in Kindergarten and 1st grade use the Heggerty curriculum district-wide for teaching phonemic awareness skills.

**Reading Research to Classroom Practice:** A key area of professional development was providing educators with initial Science of Reading training through a course, Reading Research to Classroom Practice (RRtCP), to build better understanding of how children learn to read and progress through the stages of reading development. A North Carolina professional development opportunity, RRtCP is one of few foundational courses available to help educators build their understanding of the science of teaching reading. WS/FCS launched this 5-day course to train all Kindergarten teachers initially and progressed to support educators in 1st and 2nd grades. Now, the state of North Carolina has expanded the launch of RRtCP to provide a two-year training course for all Pre-K through 5th grade teachers known as Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS®).

Since RRtCP was launched in WS/FCS, almost 25% of all 560+ Kindergarten through 2nd grade teachers have been armed with knowledge in the foundational skills required for early reading development. This course proved highly effective in increasing teachers' knowledge of the Science of Reading, as indicated by pre-post training assessments. Teacher assistants are now being trained to utilize these learnings as co-teachers in classrooms.

"During my tenure as an Early Learning Partner, I observed students and teachers taking part in Heggerty activities. My nine schools ranged from Title I to High Performing and across ALL of them I saw teachers using the program with fidelity. I saw students learning how to manipulate sounds and letters and words. I saw students comprehending the skills they needed to become successful readers."

- **Will Abbott**, Kindergarten Teacher, Old Richmond Elementary

"Reading Research to Classroom Practice was extremely helpful and informative. It provided us with concrete research that is proven to impact our children's academic growth, along with wonderful ideas as to how to implement what we learned and bring it to the classroom. It helped me to fully understand how children learn to read, and to teach reading with purpose, but yet instilling in them a love of reading."

- **Marta Roman**, Teacher Assistant, Speas Global Academy



## EARLY LEARNING PARTNERS AND PRE-K COACHES

"I was blessed to work with an Elementary Learning Coach who came in and observed, gave strategies for classroom instruction, and also did some lessons with my students."

- **Nicole Wooten**,  
*Kindergarten Teacher,  
Sedge Garden Elementary*

Research illustrates that quality coaching has a long-lasting impact on educator practice when it is job-embedded and teachers are able to focus on select areas for improvement and strategize side-by-side with a coach to impact learning outcomes. Starting in 2018, Project Impact helped fund Early Learning Partners and Pre-K coaches to provide one-on-one and small group support to teachers.

This support covers a broad educational landscape that includes the Early Learning Inventory (formerly Kindergarten Entry Assessment – KEA), Heggerty phonemic awareness curriculum implementation support, applied learnings from Reading Research to Classroom Practice, and currently, support for Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), a two-year Science of Reading training course required for all North Carolina Pre-K to 5th grade teachers.

"I have gained a clearer and more direct understanding of the instruction I should be giving to support my students in their growth. I realize now even more how intentional every moment of instruction should be."

- **Mamie Glenn**, *Teacher Assistant, Cook Literacy Model School*

## TEACHER ASSISTANT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher assistants play vital roles in the classrooms, and it was important to create opportunities for their continued training and development. Teacher assistants in schools with great need for literacy growth were trained to utilize Assessing Multiple Measures, a diagnostic assessment along with intervention resources to allow for direct support to students in the classroom. Working side-by-side with Early Learning Partners, these teacher assistants focused on students who demonstrated the greatest need in developing foundational literacy skills in Kindergarten and 1st grades.

### Reach of the WS/FCS Early Learning Partners Program

6

**Early Learning Partners**  
Serving in 2020–2021

560

**K–2 educators across 45 Elementary Schools**  
with access to Early Learning Partner support

1,872

**Site visits in 2020–2021, including 623**  
Professional Learning Team meetings

94%

**Proportion of K–2 educators** indicating they  
feel supported by their Early Learning Partners

# OUR RECENT SUCCESSES

## PROJECT IMPACT DIRECT SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

The Inspire 340 network engages schools, families, businesses, and community partners in implementing action-oriented strategies for systemic change and improved learning outcomes. (The number 340 represents the local education code for WS/FCS). In 2017, Project Impact began awarding direct grants to Inspire 340 network schools for summer programs, after-school programming and student positive behavioral systems.

As an example, Project Impact provided direct support to Cook Literacy Model School for a summer program, after school programs, and No-Nonsense Nurturing to help decrease learning loss due to suspensions and consequences for behavioral incidences.



**EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS**  
FOR STUDENT GROWTH



2 years in a row



**LEARNING OUTCOMES DOUBLED**



increased one letter grade

**Direct support from Project Impact resulted in measurable improved outcomes at Cook Literacy Model School.**



## SUPPORT FOR WS/FCS WONDERS CORE CURRICULUM

As remote learning became a reality during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an ever increasing need for schools to standardize teaching materials for consistency with student instruction district-wide. Since WS/FCS had not had a full district literacy textbook adoption since 2002, the district's curriculum resources were not aligned to the state standards and teachers often did not have enough materials for their students, forcing schools to make individual decisions to purchase supplemental materials and creating inequities and gaps between schools.

In May 2020, the WS/FCS Board of Education approved the selection of Wonders by McGraw Hill for the elementary textbook adoption at a cost of \$3.3 million for the K-5 adoption. The district requested Project Impact provide \$1.7 million in funding for Kindergarten-3rd grade print and digital resources to ensure a standardized curriculum program for reading was available equitably in all WS/FCS schools. The addition of digital resources was crucial to enable consistent virtual learning for all students.



**In 2021, over 60% of 3rd graders in WS/FCS were reading below grade level.**

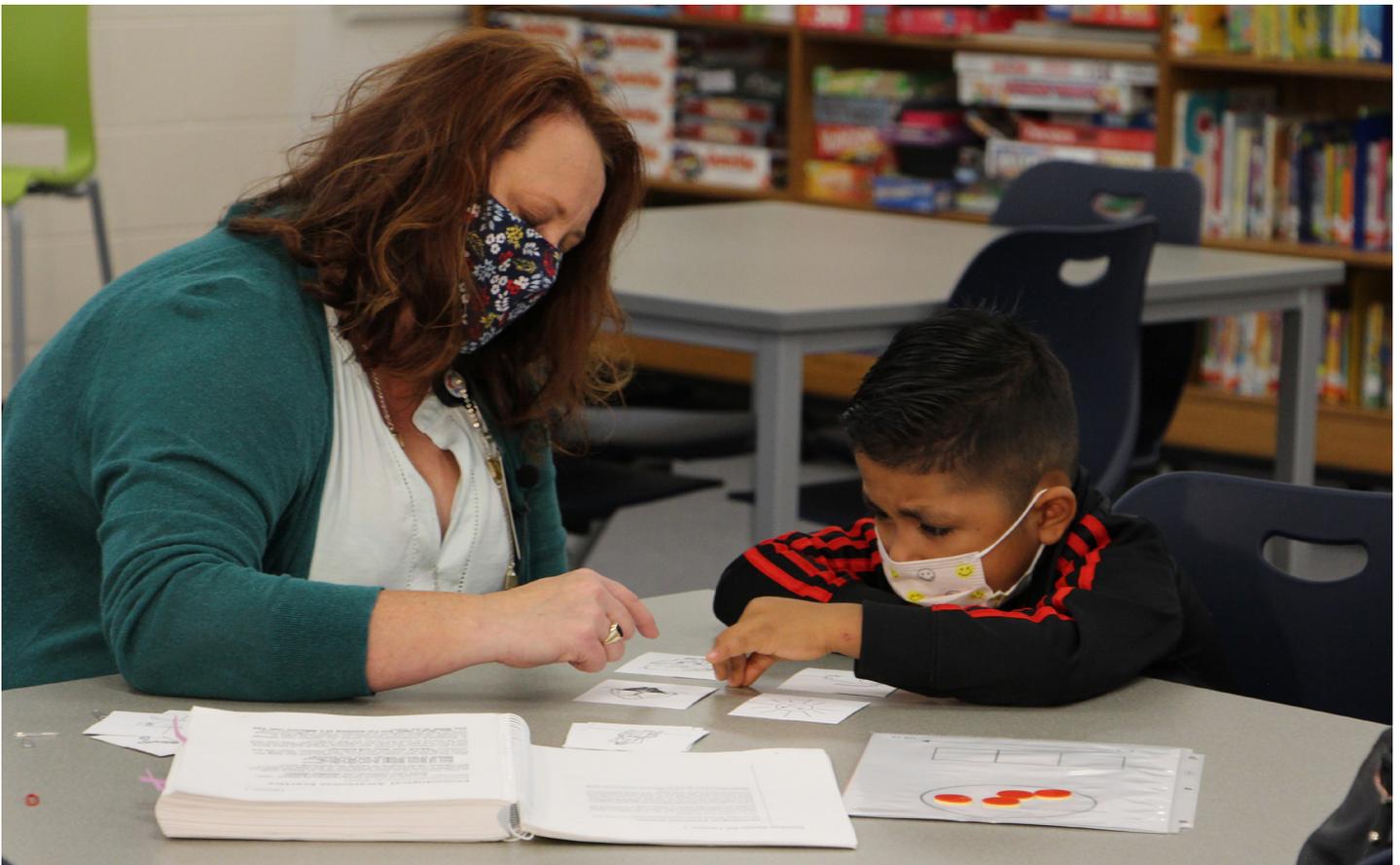
## READING WARRIORS

With the transition back to in-person learning and understanding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on young learners, a new opportunity was presented to shift how WS/FCS and Project Impact could support teachers and students and re-engage community volunteers. Project Impact teamed up with Read Write Spell and WS/FCS to launch a tutoring initiative called Reading Warriors. Reading Warriors deploys volunteer, trained reading tutors in 19 schools to provide additional reading support. The program works with partners to train and support volunteers with an aligned curriculum and skills practice so that volunteers can support students in need of additional reading assistance.

In the coming year, it will be critical to continue recruitment of volunteers and expand support of the Reading Warriors initiative to engage volunteers to serve schools as another layer of support to help meet our district goal.



The Reading Warriors program directly supports the WS/FCS **90 by 25** grade-level reading goal through its work with current Kindergarten students, who will finish 3rd grade in 2025.



# Project Impact

## 2016–2022 Financial Statement (as of 3/2022)

### Funds Pledged/Received

Founding Partner Reynolds American Foundation	\$11,875,000
Corporate Donations	\$3,582,181
Individual Contributions	\$2,044,367
Funds reallocated for initiative*	\$1,189,583
	<hr/>
	\$18,691,131

### In-Kind Service Contributions

Leadership training services, Pre-K classroom materials	\$3,590,000
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<b>Value of All Contributions:</b>	<b>\$22,281,131</b>
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(in-kind/funds pledged and received)

### Funds Disbursed

Pre-K Expansion	\$6,942,070
Pathway Programs	\$4,442,001
Coaches	\$2,221,463
Educator Training Programs	\$1,040,908
Transition Programs	\$363,878
Wonders Core Curriculum	\$1,700,000
Reading Warriors	\$49,949
Program staffing & administration expenses (Executive Director, Evaluator, Transitions, Clerical)	\$1,000,171
Basic Operations cost	\$210,140
	<hr/>
	\$17,970,580

<b>Current Funds Available**</b>	<b>\$720,550.62</b>
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\* As part of Project Impact's partnership with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, funding disbursements that were not fully utilized by a specific program were reallocated to other Project Impact initiatives within the district.

\*\* The Project Impact Advisory Board will direct all remaining funds to support literacy efforts in Forsyth County and meet WS/FCS district goals. All grants approved prior to the end of the initiative will be fully disbursed by 6/30/2022.

**Total Anticipated Grant Payouts and In-Kind Services  
by end of Project Impact —  
Over \$21 Million!**

## A MESSAGE FROM PROJECT IMPACT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PAULA WILKINS

The past six years of Project Impact have been marked with great opportunities and its fair share of challenges as we forged new initiatives to improve outcomes for our youngest students, families and educators. When we began the journey at Project Impact, the business community, citizens, families and Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools made a commitment to be the champion of our community's children. Now, as we conclude this initiative, I know more than ever there is great work yet to be done along with inspiring possibilities for our next generation of literacy champions!

**“When we began the journey at Project Impact, the business community, citizens, families and Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools made a commitment to be the champion of our community’s children.”**

Our task remains significant and as we move forward from the COVID-19 pandemic, there's an even greater need for our community to rally in support of our children. As I reflect on the learnings of Project Impact, I believe there are four critical platforms that must guide our efforts going forward:

**Engage multiple leadership champions from across the community** as diverse and stabilizing forces to ensure our change efforts continue and are supported long term.

**Involve stakeholders who represent the “boots on the ground” of literacy work** to keep us close to the current needs and gain a better understanding of how we best support improved outcomes. This includes educators, families, and students working alongside our business and philanthropic supporters.

**Establish benchmark measures of success** that support the ultimate goal of improved reading proficiency and help track key milestone wins. The literacy journey is

long so it's important to set and meet goals, and gain momentum with the short-term wins that serve as indicators that we're on the right path.

**Create community alignment around the work.** Our community is invested in making a brighter future for our children and we are fortunate to have many complementary initiatives working to achieve improved outcomes. The clearer our priorities, the more systematic and aligned we will be in how we get our work done. There is no scarcity in the work left to be done and each of us has a role to play. It will be critically important for our community to collaborate, map, align, and share how each organization can best leverage its time, talents, and resources to be more effective and in support of reaching our goals.

I'm encouraged by the opportunity to integrate these key lessons into our ongoing community listening conversations and to leverage them in building recommendations for our community as we move forward. In the coming months, you'll be hearing more as Project Impact, alongside WS/FCS and other stakeholders, works collaboratively to outline how we can best support our children in Forsyth County.

As Project Impact announced the completion of our six-year tenure, many people asked me what they could do individually to continue to support literacy initiatives in our

**“Our community is invested in making a brighter future for our children and we are fortunate to have many complementary initiatives working to achieve improved outcomes. The clearer our priorities, the more systematic and aligned we will be in how we get our work done.”**

community. I encourage you to advocate for the importance of literacy and supporting our children with the fundamental right to learn to read. Consider volunteering in a school to support them to reach the WS/FCS district goal of getting 90% of students reading on grade-level by 2025. Sign up to be a Reading Warrior tutor and find all the information you need to get started on our website, [www.projectimpact.ws/readingwarriors](http://www.projectimpact.ws/readingwarriors).

As a former teacher and principal, I can tell you that the best way to help our children is to let them know that you believe in them. Whether you are helping out in a classroom, volunteering as a tutor or raising your voice as an advocate, our children are seeing and hearing that they have a community committed to creating educational opportunities to help them succeed in school and in life!

Yours in service of our community's children,

**Paula B. Wilkins**

*Executive Director  
Project Impact*



**“I encourage you to advocate for the importance of literacy and supporting our children with the fundamental right to learn to read. Consider volunteering in a school to support them to reach the WS/FCS district goal of getting 90% of students reading on grade-level by 2025.”**



# Thank you to Project Impact Donors and Partners for your commitment

The Project Impact Advisory Board is grateful for the leadership and support of our Founding Partners, Corporate, Foundation, and Lead Donors. Because of your vision and commitment, Project Impact has been able to serve over 8,000 students, educators, and families in our community!

“As a founding partner of Project Impact, we believe this initiative made progress in addressing literacy challenges facing children in our community. While Project Impact is sunsetting, the learnings gained will help to inform how our community shapes future literacy efforts to ensure children and educators in Forsyth County have the support and resources needed to succeed.”

- **Sharonda Mustafa,**  
*Reynolds American Foundation Board Chair*

## Individual Lead Donors

**THOMAS R. ADAMS**

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**WENDY AND MIKE BRENNER**

**MARY LOUISE AND  
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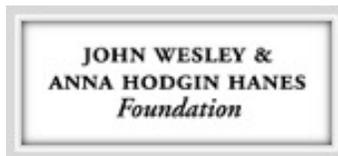
# Founding Partners

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# Corporate & Foundation Lead Donors

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# Thank You to our Project Impact Advisory Board members

A special thank you to our Project Impact Advisory Board members for the commitment you've made to serving students in Forsyth County. Your deep consideration and reflection on being the best stewards of charitable contributions has been remarkable. We thank you for your leadership and know that you will continue to advocate and support the students of our community.

## **Project Impact ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**JANET WHEELER**

*Chair, Community Leader and Retired Vice President of R.J. Reynolds*

**DR. MATTHEW CULLINAN**

*Vice Chair, Community Leader and Former University Administrator*

**KELLEY BENDHEIM**

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