



Winchester Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Earns Pacesetter Award in 2023

The [Campaign for Grade-Level Reading](#) announced that it is recognizing Winchester's Campaign for Grade Level Reading coalition with Pacesetter Honors for its 2022–23 work. The theme this year is "Moving the Needle in Impact Areas" and the categories are:

- Ensure that fewer children start school so far behind;
- End chronic absence during the school year (including kindergarten);
- Ensure that striving and struggling readers make progress during the summer;
- Address children's health-related challenges to learning;
- Equip parents to succeed as their children's first teachers, advocates, and coaches;
- Advance, align, and integrate grade-level reading and math; and
- Slow learning loss and accelerate equitable learning recovery through access to the internet, tutors, and out-of-school learning.

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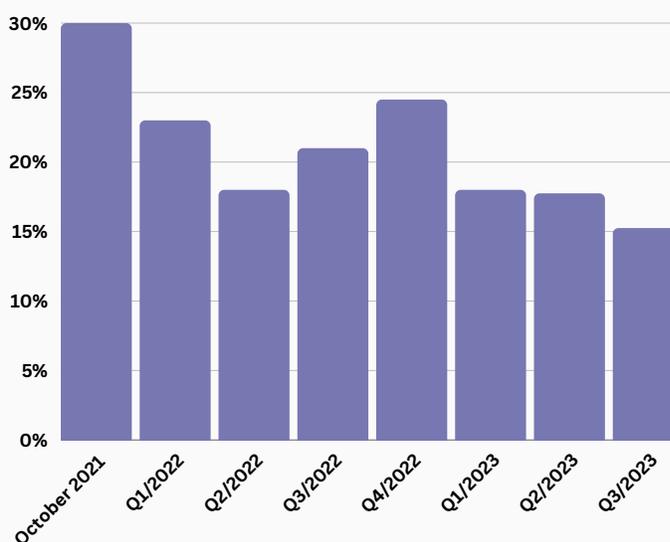
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“It indeed is time to move the needle in impact areas and these Pacesetter Communities demonstrate how mobilized communities are succeeding,” said Ralph Smith, managing director of CGLR. “Let us all learn and grow from recognizing and understanding what they’ve accomplished. We applaud the civic leaders and local funders whose time, talent, energy and imagination have fueled progress in these Pacesetter Communities.”

A collaborative effort by funders, nonprofit partners, business leaders, government agencies, states and communities to ensure that more children in low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career and active citizenship, CGLR focuses on promoting early school success as an important building block of more hopeful futures for children in economically challenged families and communities.

“Through our collaborative partnerships, the Winchester Campaign has developed multiple strategies that provide children and parents with the tools they need to be successful in school,” said Andy Gail, executive director of Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area, the backbone agency for the coalition. “Our coalition building has allowed us to focus on supporting school readiness, school attendance, and summer and after school opportunities. We currently have over 30 organizations within the Campaign, and we are excited to see what we can continue to accomplish collectively. We are always looking for partnership opportunities to expand our impact.”

Matt Peterson, executive director of the John & Janice Wyatt Foundation, helps manage the data collection, monitoring, and evaluation processes for the Campaign. “Progress is absolutely possible. The Campaign began just two years ago and we are already seeing several positive impacts of this collective work with some of our key indicators,” said Peterson. “For example, we are already seeing significant reduction in elementary school chronic absenteeism rates from the spikes that occurred during COVID. We have also almost doubled the number of after-school/summer slots available for our families in the city. And, finally and most importantly, we are working on improving 3rd grade reading scores to get them closer to pre-COVID numbers.”



**WPS Elementary School Attendance:
Chronic Absenteeism Rates**

The Winchester Campaign for Grade Level Reading is continuing to seek more ways to bring the community together to recognize the importance of early literacy in the future success of our children. To learn more or to get involved, please visit the Campaign webpage at <https://lwa.org/cglr/>.

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%** by 2032 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%** based on their performance on the PALS-K. Focus will be on further developing 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-4th graders at all four elementary schools by 2025.

- **Summer and Afterschool Learning**

- **Increase by 100%** the number of K-4th grade students who have access to summer and afterschool opportunities that focus on literacy-related learning and enrichment.

New Family Fun Walk Opens at Jim Barnett Park

The interactive signs along the walking path at Jim Barnett Park are sure to get you and your family talking, reading, and playing together! This project was made possible by the following Winchester Campaign for Grade-Level Reading partners: Handley Regional Library System, Friends of Handley Regional Library, J2W Foundation, Pediatric Associates of Winchester, Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum, and Winchester VA Parks and Recreation.



Spotlight On:



Free Parenting Event Offers Families Resources to Thrive

In September, Baby Buzz held its first ever parenting event in Winchester. This free event welcomed 150 participants and provided community resources, expert speakers, and a variety of giveaway items.

Parents and caregivers learned about everything from breastfeeding and dental care to speech development and making baby food. The Baby Buzz is a nonprofit Campaign partner that connects parents of children from pre-birth to three with community support and educational resources, helping children and families thrive. Mark your calendars for next year's Baby Buzz event on September 14, 2024!

Preschool Kit Pilot Program Launches at John Kerr Elementary

Three-year old Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) students in Winchester received care packages as part of the Campaign's preschool kit pilot program. The care packages included educational tools to help them learn numbers and letters, a bedtime routine chart, bath toys, and a hand puppet that accompanies a bedtime story. The goal of these kits is to encourage healthy bedtime routines and set families up for success as children enter elementary school.

Read the article in [The Winchester Star](#).



Our Needs Looking Ahead

Can you help? The Campaign is seeking monthly business sponsors to support the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program.

- **What We Need:** Monthly sponsorship of \$2,500 provides one month of funding for over 2,000 children to receive a free, age-appropriate book in the mail from birth to five years of age.

If you would like to support this CGLR project, contact Andy Gail at agail@lvwa.org for more information.



Winchester CGLR Celebrates Two Year Anniversary

The Winchester Campaign for Grade-Level Reading celebrated its two-year anniversary in October. Community supporters were welcomed to a reception at The Peter Bullough Foundation to learn more about the Campaign's progress over the last two years.

The Peter Bullough Foundation supports emerging artists and the arts by providing interdisciplinary residencies, hosting workshops, lectures, and events, and sharing the rare book and art collections of the late Dr. Peter Bullough. Thanks to the Foundation for partnering with the Campaign!



Campaign Partners Thank WPS Elementary School Staff

In November, Campaign partners had the opportunity to thank Winchester Public Schools staff at Garland R. Quarles Elementary, Frederick Douglass Elementary, John Kerr Elementary, and Virginia Avenue Charlotte DeHart Elementary. Staff were provided a delicious lunch catered by Bonnie Blue Southern Market & Bakery. Thanks to Apple Federal Credit Union, Reaching Out Now, Virginia Ed Strategies, J2W Foundation, Reading Landscapes & Garden Center, and the Jenkins family for partnering with the Campaign to express our gratitude to local teachers and staff. We are very grateful for the work they do for our students, families, and community.



Coalition Partners

- Anita Jenkins
- The Baby Buzz
- Bright Futures
- Community Foundation of Northern Shenandoah Valley
- Handley Regional Library System
- Healthy Families of the Northern Shenandoah Valley
- H. N. Funkhouser
- Infant Toddler Connection
- Jay Foreman
- John & Janice Wyatt Foundation
- La Leche League of the NSV
- Laurel Ridge Community College
- Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area
- Moms in Motion
- Opportunity Scholars
- Pediatric Associates of Winchester
- Peter Bullough Foundation
- Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum
- STARBASE Academy
- Summit Events Co.
- The Kids Club of Northern Shenandoah Valley
- Thrive Under Five
- Top of Virginia Regional Chamber
- United Way of the Northern Shenandoah Valley
- Valley Health
- Virginia Ed Strategies
- Winchester Book Gallery
- Winchester Department of Social Services
- Winchester Education Foundation
- Winchester Parks and Recreation
- Winchester Public Schools
- Worlds Away Escape
- Youth Development Center



Upcoming CGLR Events

DECEMBER



STORY TIME AT THE AIRPORT
WINCHESTER REGIONAL AIRPORT, 11:00 AM
FOR CAREGIVERS WITH KIDS 6 AND UNDER

DECEMBER



TINY TALES
MUSEUM OF THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY, 11:00 AM
FOR CAREGIVERS WITH KIDS 6 AND UNDER

JANUARY



PARENT LITERACY WORKSHOP
HANDLEY REGIONAL LIBRARY, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM
FOR CAREGIVERS WITH KIDS 5 AND UNDER