



Prepared for School Prepared for Life

Dyersville Campaign
for Grade-Level
Reading

A child's first eight years are the best time to foster positive development, support academic achievement and prepare for a lifetime of success.

The Dyersville Campaign for Grade-Level Reading does this by taking a holistic approach to children's well-being with a keen focus on a key predictor of school success: Reading proficiency by the end of third grade.

Why It Matters

Reading proficiency by the end of third grade is a key predictor of high school graduation. However, less than 48% of children in kindergarten through third grade at Dyersville Elementary School meet this benchmark, and children from low-income families are even further behind. (Nearly 45% of Dyersville Elementary students are considered low-income, as they qualify for free and reduced price lunch). In our rural community, many children lack access to supports that would enable them to increase their academic success, preparing them for college, careers and active citizenship.

Our Unique Role

Hosted by the Dyersville Area Community Foundation, the Campaign builds on the organization's strengths: Forging relationships and convening community partners to transform the systems that serve people.

We facilitate a multi-sector network to share resources and chart a course to help children succeed. Together, we:

- Build community awareness of children's academic and social-emotional needs.
- Provide a unified vision and strategy to improve academic success and child well-being inside and outside the classroom.
- Fund child- and family-focused initiatives by utilizing existing financial resources and offering a way for generous community members to give in support of children's well-being.
- Collect local data to inform our work.

How It Works

Our work is informed by the national Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and focuses on four areas that serve as the foundation of academic achievement: School attendance, school readiness, summer learning and access to books. By analyzing local data, our network of partners can identify the needs of children and families and develop a plan and goals to address them.

Our Accomplishments

- 53% increase in school-wide reading proficiency at Dyersville Elementary; 39% of students experiencing the increase qualify for free and reduced-price lunch
- Helped establish a summer learning program that is now self-sufficient through St. Mark Youth Enrichment
- Partner with hospitals and clinics to provide free children's books for families during exams
- Partner with local businesses to collect gently used books to give out through Little Free Libraries and at pop-up library events
- Worked with local car dealership Victory Ford to created a foundation that supports reading and math programs and incentivizes students to hone their reading and math skills
- Helped Western Dubuque Community School District and James Kennedy Public Library implement a free summer meal program
- Worked with ISU Extension and the City of Dyersville to consolidate competing programs into full-day academic enrichment opportunities

Get Involved



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Community Foundation
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