

Once you learn to read, you will be forever free. —Frederick Douglass

## Family Health

**Reading and not reading is correlated with nearly every positive and negative life outcome, including health and mental health.**

Children who cannot read often feel ashamed, and over time can lead to anxiety and depression. Accessing appropriate health care and mental health care opportunities is much more likely to happen for people who can read. Adults who struggle to read will likely have difficulty navigating health and mental health systems

Mental health issues show up early for struggling readers. In class, a child who

struggles to read is often a child who is distracted. At first that child finds ways to pass class time but eventually that child is frustrated by their lack of success. This causes finger pointing at the child's bad behavior and further alienates the struggling student who likely is losing confidence in their ability to learn.

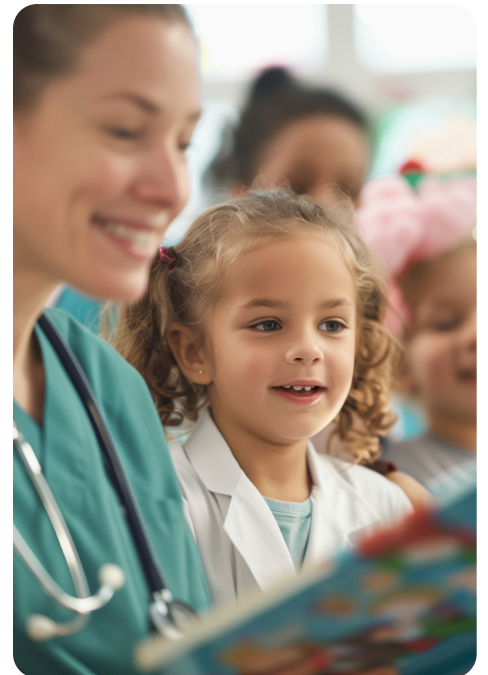
Health and Mental Health institutions are wise to see a correlation between positive health outcomes and reading. Our newest project with WellSpace Health is a partnership that acknowledges the importance of reading and its correlation to their patients' health.

**A huge thank you to the City of Sacramento's Measure L Children's Fund and the many donors who make our programs possible.**

### family health

/fām'ə-lē/ /hěłth/

1. A proactive, shared commitment to promoting physical, mental, and social well-being across all family members.



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www.sacramentoliteracy.org

**Giving monthly is helpful to our continued sustainability!**

Please consider prioritizing children's literacy in your giving— the result will benefit us all.

# SACRAMENTO LITERACY FOUNDATION



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## MISSION

The Sacramento Literacy Foundation's mission is to help all children in our community read at grade-level.

## VISION

Our vision is to have all children and all adults develop the literacy skills they need to fully participate in our economy and in our democracy.

## OUR GOALS

- Put culturally relevant high-quality books in students' hands and homes.
- Support evidence-based curriculum in classrooms and after school programs.
- Expand summer reading programing and funding.

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Tax ID #68-0029756

Sacramento Literacy Foundation READER • June—August 2026



## 2026 Authors on the Move

**Our twenty-fourth anniversary hosting Authors on the Move was informative and successful.**

Guests were greeted by twenty-three California authors, and keynote, Hahrie Han. Auctioneer Pat Hume helped us raise more funds than ever before. This year, we will purchase 20,000 culturally relevant children's books, some of which are already being delivered to Tk-2nd grade students in the Twin Rivers Unified School District. We heard from Principal Brown of Samuel Kennedy Elementary about the importance of our book giveaways and from award-winning author Hahrie Han who talked about the important role 'belonging' plays in building a movement.

A special thank you to our talented authors, incredible volunteers, and Board of Directors who together made the night spectacular. A huge thank you to all the literacy philanthropists who took part in Authors on the Move this year – your support is truly appreciated and will make an immediate difference in these kids' lives.

**Next year's Authors on the Move will be held on March 13, 2027, mark your calendar because it will be our 25th Anniversary – a milestone to celebrate.**

## Promise Zone Literacy Initiative: Books for the Summer

**Once again, we are giving TK, kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders a bag of five brand new high-quality culturally relevant books to take home for the Summer.**

We are grateful for the partnerships with the Sierra Health Foundation, the Rotary Club of Elk Grove, the Kelly Foundation, the City and County of Sacramento, the City of Rancho Cordova, and the support of our individual donors. In May and June, we will give 3,000 students a bag of books and will match this effort in September. The children we are reaching are attending one of the 52 elementary schools that have a 90% or greater Title I rate – a measurement of poverty.

This year, our book giveaway program branched out with two new projects. The first project is with WellSpace Health who is putting a book in the hands and home of every 0-5 year old that is seen for a wellness

visit. This is a great way to continue to reach low-income families and help children in low-income households get kindergarten ready. A big thank you to Dr. Janine Bera and WellSpace for their partnership.

We also piloted a 'Classroom Library' project with support from the Sacramento Region Community Foundation. We piloted the project in four schools and 16 classrooms. Teachers provided information about programing they conducted and the increase in student interest in reading during class downtime. We are now looking for funding to put these culturally relevant Classroom Libraries in 200 classrooms that have a student population with an 85% or higher Title I rate.

Your continued support is what the Foundation needs to keep expanding our culturally relevant book giveaway programs.

**To give directly, please go to [sacramentoliteracy.org/give-books-today/](http://sacramentoliteracy.org/give-books-today/).**

# Local and National Advocacy Updates



## Sacramento County

**Right now, there are two local groups attending School District Board Meetings; the Sacramento Literacy Coalition and the Sacramento County Education Coalition.**

Both are concerned about our students' low reading rates, and both are concerned about the lower-than-average rates of African America and Hispanic children.

We have noticed some Districts are reluctant to focus on the data showing that more kids cannot read at grade-level than can. While we appreciate the difficulty acknowledging this, we believe that the data, if presented in a straightforward manner would lead Boards to direct their District administrators to prioritize literacy.

Importantly, there is a seat coming up on the Sacramento County Office of Education Board (SCOE), in District 1, currently held by community activist Bina Lefkovitz. By the time this newsletter is out, that election will be nearly done. What we have learned during our School District presentations is that many elected school board members are not familiar with the Education landscape which means they will need to get up to speed. What we need is leaders with experience in education transformation and/or experience in education policy who can hit the ground running. Our kids are not learning to read and we need to advocate that.

**If you would like to advocate for better reading results, please sign up at [sacramentoliteracy.org/slc-signup/](https://sacramentoliteracy.org/slc-signup/).**

## California

**Recently the foundation was invited to make a presentation** to the Association of California County Boards of Education which provides resources to Board members at California's County Offices of Education. There is a County Office of Education in each district.

We were invited to talk about literacy legislation and our partnership with our Sacramento Office of Education, SCOE. Since 2019, California has invested 1.2 billion dollars toward increasing reading rates which should result in measurable advances over the next few years. Currently, California ranks in the bottom half of the nation for literacy but represents the World's 4th largest economy. The 1.2 billion invested in literacy recognizes that investment in literacy is an investment in the economy.

**Let's protect California's strength and fortitude by staying on the literacy path.**

## United States

**The US Department of Education's top three priorities are: 1. evidence-based literacy, 2. expanding education choice, and 3. returning education to the states.**

While many of us are worried about the the US Department of Education being dismantled, we still can try to leverage our alignment in evidence-based literacy. Finding that alignment to help all kids achieve grade-level reading is the right thing to do. We need to put party politics aside and make decisions based strictly on student achievement.

**Over the next several months, the Foundation will work to encourage our metro chamber to take a more active role in leveraging the US Department of Education's evidence-based literacy goal.**



## Summer Reading Grant Recipients

**The Literacy Foundation is excited to make its fifth annual distribution to local summer reading programs and initiatives.**

This year, we received a broad range of requests and were able to invest \$37,000 in summer reading programs. Grantees this year include Escape Velocity, Korean Language and Cultural Center of Sacramento, LifeSTEPS, National Coalition of 100 Black Women, The Center (SCCSC), Sacramento Cottage Housing Inc., and Teach for America.

**To date we have given \$280,000 to community organizations through our Children's Literacy Endowment distributions.**

We have our work cut out for us. Donate today at [www.sacramentoliteracy.org/give-today](http://www.sacramentoliteracy.org/give-today).

## PARTNER

(\$20,000+)

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## IN HONOR OF

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Indru & Pramila Kriplani Trust  
Nancy Lawrence & Gordon Klein  
Beth Mullen  
Dennis & Nancy Marks  
Lois Ann Rosenberg

*Contributions received February 1, 2026 through May 1, 2026.*



## Thank You for Participating in Big Day of Giving!

The Foundation is grateful to the 104 donors who helped us achieve \$23,000 in support on the Big Day. Your support makes a difference! Donations received by the Foundation on the Big Day of Giving will advance the Foundation's strategic mission to help all children read at grade-level. Thank you.

Again, this year we analyzed the Big Day results by comparing mission categories and we still see a philanthropic gap between the reading crisis we are all facing, and the support given to remedy the problem. This year, the Education category had 101 nonprofit organizations (or 11%) and received 8% of all funds raised on the Big Day. Of those 101 nonprofits, seven (or .8 %) are addressing early childhood literacy and received 1.5% of all funds raised on the Big Day. Last year's data was nearly the same. This shows a continued philanthropic gap in literacy funding.

Reading and not reading is correlated to nearly every positive and negative life outcome. Increased investment in early childhood literacy could mean more children and their families benefiting from the positive life outcomes correlated with a child's ability to read including educational and career attainment.

**We will continue to bring children's literacy to the forefront and advocate for the resources needed to get all kids at grade-level reading.**