

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

## Advocacy.

**The Foundation's strategic plan is focused on all children achieving grade-level reading.**

**Our established primary goals are:**

- 1.) To put culturally relevant books in the hands and homes of our most under-resourced students.
- 2.) Advocate for the implementation of evidence-based practices based on the Science of Reading research.
- 3.) Invest in Summer Reading Programs.

This Spring, we joined literacy advocates in the state and in the country to turn the tide on the literacy crisis. Collectively, we advocated for literacy, specifically, evidence-based curriculum, teacher

training, and after school interventions rooted in the body of research named, the Science of Reading.

According to an *Education Week* analysis, 40 states and the District of Columbia have passed laws or implemented new policies related to evidence-based reading instruction since 2013, including California. In 2021, California passed SB-488: Teacher Credentialing Reading Instruction. For the second year in a row, Assemblywoman Blanca Rubio introduced assembly bills that would put evidence-based curriculum and methods of instruction into every California classroom, kindergarten through the fifth grade.

Sacramento's Literacy Coalition is getting stronger as we join with statewide advocates. The Sacramento Literacy

ad·vo·ca·cy [ad-və-kə-sē]  
noun

1. the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal
2. the act or process of advocating [for] something.

Foundation hosts monthly literacy check-ins that bring the literacy community together to connect and get updates. We continue to host the California Literacy Map which details where California's 3rd graders are reading at grade-level and where they are not. Data can be looked at by city, county, zip code, and State Assembly & Senate districts and the US Senate and House of Representatives. The map is an advocacy tool that supports literacy advocates in accessing the data needed to advance literacy.

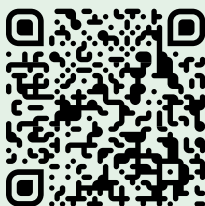
**Please go to [sacramentoliteracy.org/literacy-map](https://sacramentoliteracy.org/literacy-map) to learn where kids are reading at grade-level and where they are not.**

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### Billboards are up. Have you seen one?

You might have seen one of the billboards donated to the Foundation in support of our mission saying, "More kids CANNOT read at grade-level than can." If so, let us know what you think. The space has been generously donated by Outfront Media, and we are grateful to the entire team for their support and professionalism in making this happen. **For fun, send a photo to [info@sacramentoliteracy.org](mailto:info@sacramentoliteracy.org) and tell us where you saw it.**



[www.sacramentoliteracy.org](https://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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Sacramento, CA 95816  
(916) 836-3540 • [sacramentoliteracy.org](http://sacramentoliteracy.org)

## 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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Sacramento Literacy Foundation READER • June—August 2025



## Promise Zone Literacy Initiative: Books for the Summer

**Once again, we are giving TK, kindergarten, 1st and 2nd graders a bag of five high-quality diverse books to take home for the Summer.**

We are grateful for the partnerships of the Sierra Health Foundation, the Rotary Club of Elk Grove, and the Kelly Foundation, who continue to support this program. In May and June, we will give 2,000 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 poverty measurement.

Unfortunately, our book giveaway program is not growing this year as some funders were unable to continue their support. Your continued support is what the foundation needs to keep growing this program that puts culturally relevant books in the hands and homes of our most under-resourced early learners. Go to <https://www.sacramentoliteracy.org/give-books-today/> and make a donation to put culturally relevant books into the hands and homes of our most under-resourced kids.



## 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 \$40,000 in summer reading programs. As part of the Promise Zone's Literacy Initiative, we continue to fund summer reading programs within and near the Promise Zone. To date we have given \$240,000 back to the community. Grantees this year include:

Escape Velocity, Korean Language and Cultural Center of Sacramento, La Familia, LifeSTEPS, Roberts Family Development Center, The Center (SCCSC), Sacramento Cottage Housing, Single Mom Strong, Suvudha International Foundation Teach for America, United Way California Capital Region, and Women of Color on the Move.

## ADVOCACY UPDATES:

### California Legislation

**On April 11, 2024, Speaker Rivas rejected AB 2222, sponsored by Asm. Blanca Rubio, without a hearing but promised he would investigate this issue.** On February 20, 2025, Asm. Blanca Rubio proposed a new bill, AB 1121 with revisions that responded to the opposition. This past March and April, the same opposition came forward and included the California Teachers Association (CTA), California Together (CALTOG) and California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE).

On April 30, 2025, Speaker Rivas put a new bill before the Assembly Education Committee, AB 1454, which brings a great deal of what AB 1121 was proposing as well as support from the California Teachers Association. Thank you, Speaker Rivas and thank you CTA!

On April 30, 2025, more than 50 advocates stepped up to register their support for AB 1454 and the bill passed with a unanimous vote from all members of the Assembly Education Committee. Next, the bill needs to make it through appropriations, an Assembly vote, a Senate vote and then the Governor's signature. This bill could be law by September 2025 if we all make our voices heard. We would be the 11th State in the country to pass legislation that addresses every category needed to create a systemic change in reading instruction. States with comprehensive legislation right now are Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

There are approximately 500,000 possible kindergartners entering California's education system each year and each year we don't have an evidence-based reading policy in place, an additional 300,000 kids will fall behind in reading.

### CAP-to CAP with the Metro Chamber

**This year we joined Sacramento's Metro Chamber for their program Cap-to-Cap and the 450 Sacramento Business leaders who attended.** We met with 10 US Congress members and met the US Chamber, a trip highlight. The Foundation spoke with 200 or more of Sacramento's business leaders. The single message to Congressional and Business leaders is reading is a workforce issue. A big thank you to SCOE's Xanthi Soriano who was the Workforce and Education Team Coordinator – not an easy job. Thank you Xanthi!

### White House Watch

**This is a new segment that will detail policy changes from the White House that directly impact the literacy community.** Right now, there are concerns about significant budget reductions to the US Department of Education which could affect Title I funds, the AmeriCorps program serving nearly every nonprofit that provides literacy support to kids in Sacramento and the IMLS which supports libraries nationally to help adults with illiteracy.

AmeriCorps is a federal agency dedicated to paid national service and volunteerism, offering what it says are "opportunities for Americans of all backgrounds to serve their country." Sacramento is feeling the impact of the cuts to AmeriCorps already. Local GOP Representative Kevin Kiley is challenging the reductions having been an AmeriCorps for Teach for America in South Los Angeles. More than 24 states are suing the Trump administration for rolling back the funding and cutting jobs – California is one of them.



**The Foundation is grateful to the 136 donors who helped us achieve \$19,000 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.

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 109 nonprofit organizations (or 13%) and received 8% of all funds raised on the Big Day. Of those 109 nonprofits, eleven nonprofit organizations (1.3%) are addressing early childhood literacy and received 1.8% 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.**



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

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

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