

50,000 Students in 5 Years

Join our ambitious initiative to promote grade-level reading through proven literacy programs.

A \$15 Million Initiative to Reach 50,000 Students

Join us to disrupt the educational landscape by providing high-quality support at just \$300 per student

Post-pandemic, significant progress has been made in helping students regain lost ground in their education across numerous school districts. However, this progress has yet to be uniform, leaving many students grappling with the lingering effects of interrupted learning. Recent findings from the Education Recovery Scorecard highlight a concerning reality: 92% of parents believe their children are performing at grade level, and only 33% of 4th and 31% of 8th graders are proficient in reading.

This disconnect between parental perceptions and student performance underscores our education system's challenges. Older students, particularly those in middle school and beyond, face a domino effect, falling behind in reading fluency and consequently experiencing academic setbacks. Moreover, the burden of these disparities falls disproportionately on students and communities with fewer resources, exacerbating existing inequities in educational access and outcomes.

Despite schools' best efforts to facilitate students' catch-up progress, challenges persist, compounded by teacher and staff shortages. The federal government has played a crucial role in supporting students, school districts, and communities through additional funding for summer learning, extended school days, and high-impact tutoring. North Carolina achieved just under a .18 gain in single grade-level reading through changes in average test scores of 3rd - 8th-grade students from 2022-2023 (NC DPI, 2023.).

However, with federal relief support set to end in the 2024-2025 school year, there is a looming concern that struggling students and their families will be left behind. This is further compounded by a significant exodus of teachers, particularly in North Carolina, which threatens the continuity of academic support for students at a critical juncture.

Meaningfully Advancing Student Learning at a Cost of \$300 per Student

Your support will unlock opportunities for thousands of students, families, and educators.

■ Expanding Access

To expand access to high-impact tutoring we will implement strategies such as a statewide tutoring initiative, Helping NC, and invest in small group settings, to rapidly scale the number of students who can benefit from high-quality fluency support.

Most importantly, whether supported live online or in person, we are committed to disrupting per-student cost structures that become barriers for schools, vital partners, and funders. With your support, we can increase impact to reach and support more students **for only \$300 per student**. We believe this is critical to overcoming implementation challenges, maintaining implementation fidelity, and scaling the number of students directly supported through high-impact tutoring.

■ Building Capacity

Over the last year, North Carolina saw the largest exodus of teachers in over two decades. More than 10,000 educators resigned in 2023—a 42% increase over 2022—fueled partly by first-year teachers and those close to retirement (NC DPI, April 2024.)

Because of the exemplary efforts of school administrators and educators, schools have continued to overcome formidable challenges to find enough capacity to support students who could benefit from interventions.

To build capacity for local schools and educators, we plan to train, coach, and support partnering educators in our HELPS-SG (Small Group) program to serve multiple students simultaneously (3 to 5 students). With partners that have less educator capacity, we plan to offer our staff to support students on-site in **the strategic role of a Fluency Interventionist**, working alongside teachers to assist in offsetting capacity issues. Our fluency interventionists have proven an ability to support 16 students per semester, which has resulted in a significant

increase in impact. We will also maintain our quality assurance processes to ensure fidelity in implementation and measure student growth, program impact, and sustainability.

■ Scaling Partnerships

Early reading proficiency is essential, as students not on grade level by 3rd grade are four times more likely not to graduate high school than their peers. Beginning in the summer of 2024, we will open avenues to support thousands more students in fostering those fundamental skills at a critical time—for students' long-term success and our collective ability to support students and families in building new pathways for their lives.

Through a more integrated approach within the communities and schools we serve, programs such as Story Exploring and Motherread/Fatheread will empower parents and caregivers to transform the read-aloud experience and share the joy of reading with children. Our evidence-based materials are specifically designed to support families as they create enriching literacy environments at home, simultaneously strengthening their own literacy skills and habits and those of their children. As part of our work to expand access to populations previously excluded from high-quality programs, we will continue to provide our programs in historically underserved communities and with parents who are currently incarcerated within the NC Department of Adult Corrections.

The research-supported curricula foster reading proficiency and long-term success for elementary students. As part of this initiative we have partnerships in place to radically expand the number of classes offered, allowing for hundreds more parents to engage with these programs and begin literacy-filled journeys with their children prior to and during elementary education.



**Helping
Education**

Together, we can unleash their limitless potential.

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