



# READWS

READ•WRITE•SPELL

## 2018 NEWSLETTER





**42%**

of children in Forsyth County enter Kindergarten at risk of needing additional help with reading



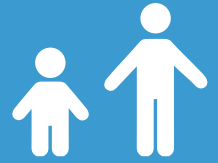
**48%**

of children in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools are not reading proficiently



**3/5**

of children in WSFCS are not college and career ready



**74%**

of poor readers in 3rd grade are still poor readers in 9th grade

**BUT** **90%**

of poor readers can increase reading ability to an age-appropriate average skill level with early, intensive intervention.



The mission of **READWS** is to reach, teach, and advocate for struggling readers by training tutors, educators, and parents to use the research-based best practices of a multisensory, structured literacy approach.

We focus on students who are at an economic disadvantage.

# Letter from the Executive Director



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## Educating Students Equipping Teachers Encouraging Parents

## Transforming Our Community

I have completed my first year as Executive Director and I feel a tremendous amount of gratitude for all of the things that Read • Write • Spell (**READWS**) has accomplished. We built new strategic partnerships, received three new grants, increased our staff, trained more educators and volunteer tutors, provided parents with early literacy strategies for their young children, and participated in several events that enabled us to raise awareness about our mission. We even held our first ever friendraiser/fundraiser, Get Rowdy for **READWS** with huge success!

While we worked hard this year, I am reminded daily that there is so much more work to do! Our county, much like our country, is experiencing a literacy crisis that will take all of our help to correct. NAEP 2017 testing results indicate that only 30% of NC fourth graders are reading proficiently and close to 40% of youth tangled up in the juvenile justice system read below a fourth-grade level. Children in Forsyth County struggle to read for a variety of reasons. Unfortunately, poor reading proficiency does not go away and limits our children's ability to succeed in school, and in life.

The good news is that with strong core literacy instruction and early intervention, our children WILL learn to read, write and spell. Our commitment to struggling readers in this community is unwavering. We are committed to increasing our impact in the 2018-2019 school year. We have enhanced tutor and educator support as we look forward to training 90 educators this summer and up to 50 tutors this fall with continued support throughout the school year. In addition, we will expand our parent education offerings to include a year-long program for parents of Pre-K girls.

Always remember, once you teach a child to read, it lasts a lifetime. It can never be lost, borrowed, stolen or consumed. The ability to read well is a life changer for our students. Together, we can change the trajectory of children's lives in Forsyth County. Thank you for your continued support.

Until every child reads,  
Kris Cox, *Executive Director*

# The Augustine Literacy Project



**161**  
students  
served



**31**  
schools  
served



**150**  
active  
tutors



**40**  
new tutors  
trained



**6,500**  
volunteer  
hours



**111**  
active tutors  
who are  
serving past  
their 60-lesson  
commitment



**3.5**  
average #  
of years of  
tutoring among  
this year's  
active tutors

## Give the Gift of Reading

**Be the Spark. Ignite a Reader.** As an Augustine tutor, YOU can change the life of a child in our community, one lesson at a time. **READWS** will train and support you, giving you and your student the tools for success. We invite you to learn more at any of our information sessions. Please check our website for more information.

### 2017-18 Schools with Augustine Tutors

Ashley Elementary  
Bolton Elementary  
Brunson Elementary  
Cash Elementary  
Clemmons Middle  
Cook Literacy Model  
School  
Diggs-Latham Elementary  
The Downtown School  
Easton Elementary  
Forest Park Elementary  
Gibson Elementary  
Griffith Elementary  
Jefferson Elementary  
Jefferson Middle  
Kernersville Elementary

Kimberley Park Elementary  
Kimmel Farm Elementary  
Mineral Springs Middle  
Moore Magnet Elementary  
Morgan Elementary  
North Hills Elementary  
Old Town Elementary  
Paisley IB Magnet  
Petree Elementary  
Sherwood Forest Elementary  
South Fork Elementary  
Southwest Elementary  
Speas Elementary  
Walkertown Elementary  
Ward Elementary  
Whitaker Elementary

## Judith Margerum, “ALP Artist in Residence”



For the past eight years, Judith Margerum has lent her time and talents to **READWS** as a tutor at Old Town Elementary School and as our own “artist in residence.” From creating drawings for our vowel page to pencil grip, her original artwork can

be found on numerous handouts in our student notebooks. Like many of our tutors, Judith is an active participant in our lunch bunch gatherings sharing her tips for making lessons more fun and engaging for both the tutor and student.

During her tenure as an ALP tutor, Judith has earned Old Town Elementary’s “Volunteer of the Year” award several times. “I have loved being a part of such a talented, impassioned, creative group of women and men who are Augustine tutors,” says Judith. “My students have given me much joy and a chance to use my mind and heart. This is truly a worthwhile endeavor,” she adds. With her most recent student moving on to middle school next year, Judith has decided to take a break from weekly tutoring. Fortunately for us, Judith still plans to stay active with **READWS** by mentoring new tutors during our trainings and sharing her artistic talents.

## Petree Tutors

Our four tutors at Petree Elementary School will tell you that the Augustine Literacy Project's tagline of "Tutor One Child, Change Two Lives" certainly applies to them. Although they come from different backgrounds, they have formed a bond and enjoy helping each other by sharing games, materials, and ideas. Pinkney Greene, the **READWS** Mentor at Petree Elementary, says serving these tutors has been a pleasure. "I have truly enjoyed watching their tireless efforts to encourage and support students and teachers. While getting to know them, I have learned that they are extremely generous with their time and commitment. Outside of the school doors at Petree they are busy caregivers to their own parents, children, and grandchildren. They also volunteer for multiple community organizations. Despite their busy lives, they bring enormous amounts of energy and creativity to every carefully planned lesson," Pinkney shares. Ms. Savannah Smith, the teacher of one of our students, has seen "a huge difference in my student's reading confidence since the beginning of the school year. She improved four reading levels throughout the course of the school year. I am proud of her and thankful for Ms. Faucette!"

**Martha Eller:** For the past two years, I visited Petree once a week with Truffles, my Labradoodle therapy dog, to read with 2-6 students at a time. It was very rewarding, but I saw a great need for more intensive tutoring. When my Augustine student moved to Raleigh last summer, I requested to work with a student at Petree. A few weeks ago, as we walked into the Media Center, my student picked up a book about dirt and the creatures who live in it. I quickly adjusted my lesson plan as she devoured the book, revealing an interest in science and giving me a clue for future material!

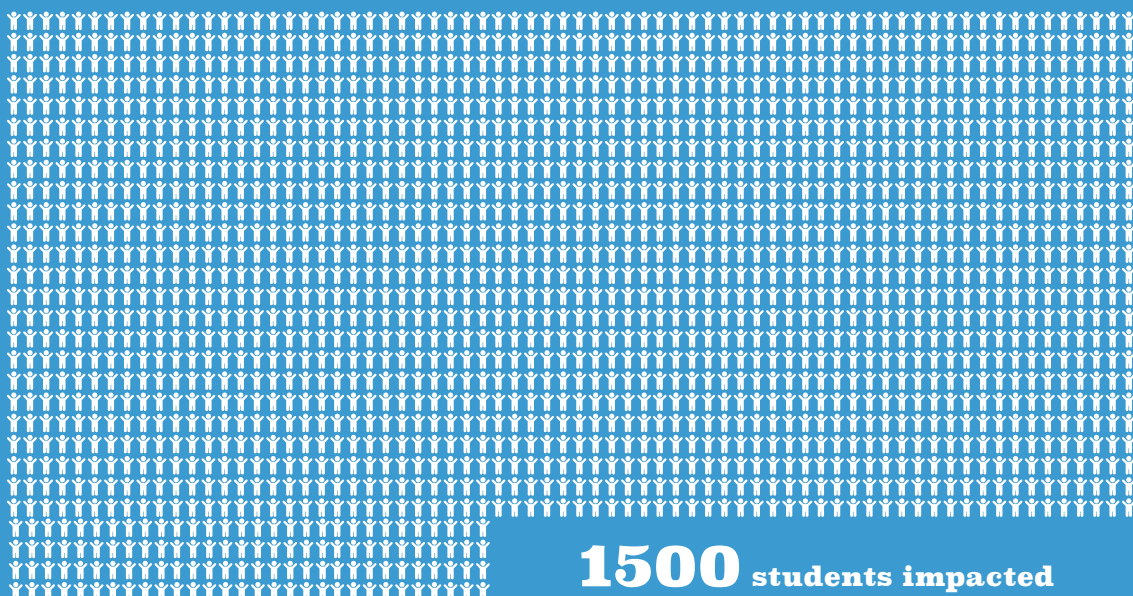
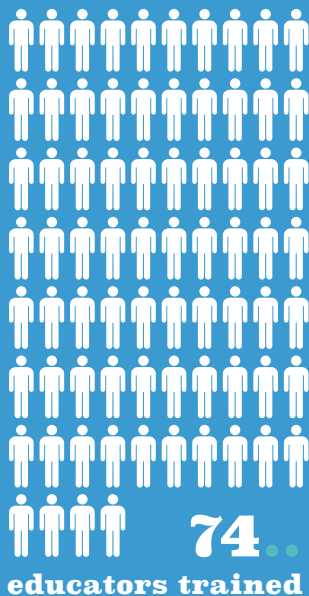
**Lizzie Faucette:** I am a retired teacher who never worked with elementary age students prior to becoming an Augustine tutor in October 2017. I forgot how innocent this age group could be once you gain their trust. They actually believe what you are telling them! My student started out a little slow and disinterested, but she has warmed up quite a bit. I tutor because of my personal experience with reading. It was easier for me to say nothing, rather than to be exposed as a poor reader. If there is any time or knowledge that I can give a student to make them feel good about themselves or feel like a success because of their ability to read, I am ready.

**Don Kautz:** I retired from teaching nursing at UNCG in December 2016, and by August, I was really needing a jumpstart most weeks. I found it becoming an Augustine tutor! I know every tutor has the 'best child,' but mine really is. Recently we were walking down the hall, and one of her classmates walked by. My student said, 'We are going to work on letters, reading, writing, and spelling. It's really fun. You can join us if you want.' I have no idea what effect I will have on her, but she has changed me so much, for the better.

**Sylvia Woodruff:** I began this phase of my life's journey when my pastor made an appeal for volunteers to help make an impact on improving reading rates. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with my student. She has gone from being unsure and unfocused to wanting to read as we walk from her classroom to the library where we hold our sessions. Having co-tutors who share ideas and materials has proven to be an important part in being successful. When I was overwhelmed with teaching blends, my mentor encouraged me to let the student try to read them. I was pleasantly surprised when, after tapping out a couple of words, my student said, "You can't trick me; I got this," and continued to read the words almost effortlessly.



# Structured Literacy Training: Educator Academy



## What is Structured Literacy?

Structured literacy is systematic and follows the logical order of language. In addition, it is diagnostic and based on continuous assessment. A structured literacy approach teaches ALL children how to read by explicitly teaching students decoding (reading) strategies. Students are also taught phonology (the sound of words), sound-symbol (letter) association, syllable types (6), and morphology (meaning in language).

READWS is committed to deepening educator knowledge regarding the structure of the English language and providing educators with the tools and support necessary to teach struggling readers how to read. When given the knowledge and tools that we provide through our Educator Academy program, all teachers report an increase in knowledge of the structure of the English language, and how to teach it. They also all feel empowered to better teach the struggling readers in their class. This increase in competence and confidence, when coupled with ongoing support to ensure proper implementation, leads directly to an increase in student reading achievement.

**2 years. \$150,502. Over 4,000 students impacted.**

We are excited to announce that READWS received a grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust. The Trust's mission is to improve the quality of life and the quality of health for the financially needy of North Carolina. This grant will allow us to provide Structured Literacy training and support to 60 public school educators per year for two years, impacting over 4,000 students.

# Structured Literacy Works: In their own words

“I’m a fourth grade teacher. We read novels. In the past when one of my students struggled with reading the greatest tool that I had to help him/her was to say, ‘you need to spend more time reading, and ask yourself do your words look right, sound right, and make sense?’ But, if a child cannot read words, how can they tell if the words look right? This training provided me with the tools necessary to help struggling readers in my classroom. Since I’ve started using the Orton Gillingham approach in my classroom with struggling readers I have witnessed the growth first hand.

Not only has this Orton Gillingham training helped my students grow and instill in them confidence, it has also given them hope. The ripple effect that your generosity is having will touch, not only my students and the students of the other teachers who were trained, but it will touch countless people who will come into contact with each of these children throughout their lives. Reading enables them to become lifelong learners, which in today’s quickly changing world is what these children need.”

— Serena D’Agostino, *4th/5th grade teacher at Hall-Woodward Elementary*

“Over the past three years we have been able to train twenty Pk-5th grade teachers and staff at Union Cross Elementary School. We recognize that student success increases as the number of trained staff increases. Therefore, it is our desire to train our entire staff. Over the summer of 2017 I had the opportunity to complete the **READWS** Educator Academy OGI training. I now feel much better equipped to support my staff in designing an effective system to meet the needs of all of our students.”

— Tricia Spencer, *Principal, Union Cross Elementary*

“Research shows that children who are successful in learning to read by the end of grade 3 have increased outcomes in school and in life. With the use of OG in every class at CLMS we have begun to create a reading pipeline with routines and structures that serve our students well. We’ve noticed this year how well our students are adjusting and continuing to grow with reading instruction. From the educator perspective we are continuing to grow more educators who have a working knowledge of how to identify students reading areas of difficulty and respond appropriately in helping those students improve as readers.”

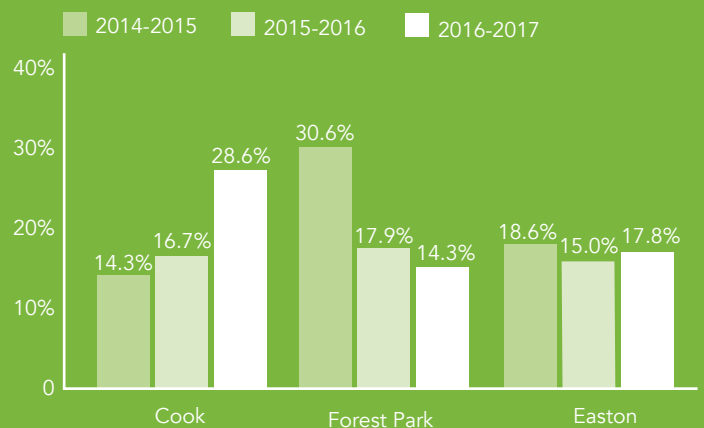
— Dr. Paula Wilkins, *Principal, Cook Literacy Model School*



## By the Numbers

In early 2018, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools published data on the Priority Schools for 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017. In the last two years, Cook Literacy Model School (where the entire staff has completed the **READWS** Educator Academy) nearly doubled its reading achievement growth! We are very optimistic about the progress at Cook. While we recognize that there is still room for improvement, this data shows us that the structured literacy approach is effective in a regular classroom setting when used with fidelity.

Percent of Students Reading at Grade Level – 3rd Grade End-of-Grade Results



# Raising Awareness about Structured Literacy in the Community

This year **READWS** worked hard to raise awareness about the effectiveness of a multisensory structured literacy approach to address the low literacy rates in Forsyth County.

We participated in several community programs including Christmas for the City, the BookMarks Festival, The JLWS Boutique Sale, The Burke St. Food Truck Festival, The Forsyth County Health Fair, and the Forsyth Country Day School Greater Good Forum.

## Christmas for the City



Christmas for the City is a citywide Christmas party that fosters community among residents and businesses and nonprofits and provides an opportunity for collaboration and celebration. This year 12-14,000 people from all generational, racial and socio-economic lines participated in CFTC. The **READWS** table was located in the children's area. We provided over 200 wordless books for children to color and use their imagination to tell the story.

## READWS Book Nooks: A story of community and collaboration

This year we added 12 more Book Nooks to our collection! These Book Nooks are a collaborative effort between **READWS**, volunteer builders, and local artists. **READWS** Book Nooks will be placed across the county in an effort to increase access to books and book ownership for children in Forsyth County. Books can take you places and we want to help the children in this community go far! To sponsor a Book Nook please email [info@readws.org](mailto:info@readws.org).

Book Nook Artists: Wendy Pryor, Stewart Knight, Dennis Wells, Judith Margerum, Toni Becker, RJR Art Club, Beth Haas, Gary Ritz, Becki Carlisle, Judy Rush, and Corrie Beck





# Get Rowdy for **READWS**

The room overflowed with people. The air was filled with laughter. The speakers echoed songs from local musicians. Savory aromas drifted through the air of Haitian food, hot dogs, and wings. The tables were full of silent auction items. The glasses clinked and clanked as cold beer brimmed to the edges. Vibrant colors and designs of face paint covered the faces of running children. Our first ever, Get Rowdy for **READWS** was better than we could have ever imagined!

Get Rowdy for **READWS** featured fun and games for the whole family. Face painter Shannon Hacker made animals and

designs come to life on the cheeks of over 200 children. Dewey's ice cream cooled everyone down in the warm April sun. It was great fun!

Get Rowdy for **READWS** was a huge success! We accomplished our goal of raising awareness about our work to increase access to structured literacy instruction for all children in Forsyth County, and our supporters went home with wonderful items from our silent auction. In addition, the numbers are in and we have raised more than double our initial goal, topping off at just over \$15,000! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!



## GRFR Business Contributors List

AMC Theatres  
Belle La Vie Spa and Nails  
BodyMind Pilates and  
Megaformer Studio  
Bookmarks  
Brixx Pizza Winston-Salem  
Brookstown Inn  
Bunker Dogs  
Carolina Hurricanes  
Carolina Thunderbirds  
Closet Rejuvenation  
Dejavu Lifestyle Nail Salon  
Fleet Feet Winston-Salem  
Fur Pet Salon and Day Spa

Gigi's Cupcakes  
Greensboro Science Center  
Hoots and Hollers  
House of Plants  
Kaleideum  
Kaplan Early Learning  
Lifelong Learning at WFU  
Lyndhurst Medical Spa  
Maple Chase Golf and  
Country Club  
McCalls at Reynolda Village  
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Milner's  
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Nothing Bundt Cakes  
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Wet'n Wild Emerald Point  
WFU Secrest Artist Series  
Wildfire  
Wise Man Brewing  
WS Dash  
WS Open  
WS Symphony

# Parent Education



**17**  
Reading  
Parties



**145**  
families  
served



**265**  
books  
donated

**Reading Party is a free parent-oriented seminar that teaches parents and their children, ages 4-6, simple and effective multisensory strategies that can be used at home to help strengthen pre-reading and early reading skills.**

This has been an exciting year for the Reading Party program! Watching these young children's excitement as they jump up for a rhyming word, hop from one foot to another for each word/syllable/sound, or use their imagination to tell the story of the magic chalk has been a rewarding experience for **READWS** volunteers, parents and school administrators. The value of this program is illustrated by the words of the participants, volunteers, and school administrators.

*The Junior of League of Winston-Salem has been thrilled to participate in Reading Parties with Read • Write • Spell. This particular placement has allowed the Junior League members to learn how vital early literacy is to the children in Forsyth County, and have a direct impact on raising the literacy rate in Forsyth County. Watching children 'get it' and see that moment of excitement when the kids realize that they can rhyme, or can recognize syllables, has been empowering. Knowing that those skills in turn place the children on a path to literacy is so rewarding. What better feeling than seeing kids fight to be the next one chosen to hip hop to syllables? The Junior League looks forward to continue supporting Reading Parties through providing trained volunteers.*  
— Carrie Vickery, Junior League of Winston-Salem



*"I wanted to help my kids read. They love reading, and I wanted to continue that. All of the activities helped; and they enjoyed it! We play the activities that the kids liked the most at home, specifically No Words, No Problem. The Reading Party was great for my kids, who like me are not American and do not speak English as a native language, to learn with children who are native English speakers."*

*— Martha Mendoza, mother of Alevis and Jennifer Pioquinto from North Hills Reading Party, September 2017*



*"Reading is my jam, period. This is why I was so excited when the possibility to host a Reading Party was presented to me. Our students have a lot of fun practicing early literacy skills-rhyming, beginning sounds, etc. with their classmates. Parents appreciate getting an "insider's view" on how to help their child succeed with skills that will help them learn to read. The Reading Party provides parents and students with ready-to-go activities and materials that can be used at home and on-the-go. Watching our students "read" a book with no words is always fun but the gift of our students being able to choose their very own book at the end completely seals the deal for me. I look forward to extending the invitation to the Reading Party to our parents at Kimmel Farm in the years to come."*

*— Malinda Kerns, Assistant Principal, Kimmel Farm Elementary*

## **READWS Awarded Grant to Expand Parent Education**

The Women's Fund of Winston-Salem provides funding to programs that build economic security for women and girls in Forsyth County. **READWS** received a \$7,000 grant from The Women's Fund of Winston-Salem that will help to strengthen and expand our Parent Education programs. This grant will fund our new Mommy and Me: Reading Readiness program for

the 2018-2019 school year. This program is designed to increase Kindergarten readiness in Pre-K girls by addressing the skills set forth in the Kindergarten Dibels Benchmark assessment and the English Language Arts Standards for Kindergarten. This program will include four seminars spread out across the nine-month school year. These seminars will teach mothers structured literacy practices that can be used at home to increase Kindergarten readiness, and will provide them with information designed to help them navigate Kindergarten and be an active participant in their daughter's education. The Mommy and Me: Reading Readiness Program will empower mothers to play an active role in the early literacy success of their daughters.

# News and Noteworthy

## Allegra

In February 2018 the Allegra FootPRINT Fund awarded **READWS** with a \$1000 grant to be used towards printing and marketing services. The FootPRINT Fund “awards marketing communications and print services, through Allegra in Winston-Salem, to select applicant non-profit organizations to help enhance their image, expand their services and extend their marketing communications and printing budgets.”

## Giving Tuesday

#GivingTuesday is a global day of giving that encourages people to give charitable donations to nonprofits in their community. #GivingTuesday is celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving and uses the power of Social Media to maximize charitable giving. In 2017 we raised over \$2,500 on #GivingTuesday. On November 27, 2018, please help **READWS** by sharing why you support this organization. Then encourage your friends to make a donation and help bring effective structured literacy tutoring and instruction to more children in this community.



## MLK Day of Service

In order to honor the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. many people/organizations use the MLK holiday as a day of service, instead of a day off. This year **READWS** was fortunate enough to be chosen as one of the service placements for the Winston-Salem city workers. With the help of the volunteers from the city we sorted over 2,000 books and primed 12 **READWS** Book Nooks. Thank you for all of your help!



**“Everybody can be great because anybody can serve”- MLK**



## READWS goes Viral

Providing new and gently used books to the children that we tutor and children that attend our Reading Parties is an important and fun part of our work. There is nothing like the look on a child's face when they receive a new book! This year we put the call out to the community that we needed more books and the response was overwhelming. We even got a call from State Superintendent Mark Johnson! He donated over 500 books to **READWS** as a part of the new NC Reads initiative which aims to support literacy from preschool to graduation. Thanks to your generous giving we collected over 3,000 books and were able to partner with Project HOPE to provide over 550 books to Pk-5th grade WSFCS students who are experiencing homelessness.



## READWS Partners with The Abraham Project

The Abraham Project (TAP) is a 9 month service program of the Episcopal Service Corps focused on spiritual discernment and social justice for young adults to live in intentional community and serve the community through a local nonprofit. My time at **READWS** really changed my life.

I trained as a tutor in October 2017. Since then, I have tutored a sweet first grader at Kimberley Park three times a week. I remember when I first began tutoring I, like many others, was somewhat frustrated. I remember thinking, "Why are things not clicking? I promise I paid attention in training!" Then one day in the late fall/early winter, during our 20-something lesson in 1.2, things clicked; her growth was exponential. Just a few weeks ago, we spent a lesson focused on reading a passage. I knew this would be a huge step, as she had never read more than two small sentences at once. 7 sentences in to a story about jam, her eyes were huge as she looked up from her book and exclaimed, "Miss Emily, I CAN read!" Needless to say, I have told everyone in my life this story with tears every time.

Working alongside Kris, Esharan, and Deena in their wisdom and vigor everyday has grown a sense of passion and responsibility for struggling readers, children,



and all of "the least of these" in our community and the world. As I attend graduate school at Wake Forest University School of Divinity in the fall, my work with **READWS** has informed my sense of vocation and grown my desire to live a life of service, compassion, reconciliation, and love. I will be forever grateful for the impact that these women, our volunteers, and this work have had on my life.

## Rita's Retirement

Rita Bennett, former Office Manager and Financial Secretary, retired from **READWS** in March. For eight years, Rita was an integral part of our growth in the early days as the Augustine Literacy Project-Winston-Salem with 32 tutors grew to Read•Write•Spell with over 150 Augustine tutors plus two new programs — Reading Party and Educator Academy. We are eternally grateful for everything Rita has done for our organization and will miss her quick wit, savvy financial skills, and giving spirit.

## 875 Update

We are SUPER excited about our upcoming move! This new location will allow us to have a dedicated training space, more office space, and a beautiful conference room. With more room, we will be able to expand our programs and find new ways to serve struggling readers, their parents, and educators in Forsyth County. St. Paul's, thank you for your support and for allowing us to grow!



# READWS DONORS

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## Special Thanks

We would like to extend a special thanks to Robin Woodard for all of your help with Bloomerang, and to Lisa Rowell, Margaret Dickinson, and Kathleen Tatter for volunteering in the office. Your help makes a big difference!

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Dear friends of **READWS**,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank our many friends and donors for your continued support of **READ•WRITE•SPELL**. The impact of **READWS** continues to change lives in our community, and I am honored to work alongside those who make this impact possible: our board of directors, volunteer Augustine Literacy Project tutors, and our highly dedicated staff. This year has been busy with so much to celebrate, yet much work lies ahead to reverse the literacy crisis in Forsyth County.

Sadly, reports from N.C. Department of Public Instruction shows that 48% of children in Forsyth County are not reading proficiently. Even more disturbing is that 74% of poor readers in 3rd grade remain poor readers in 9th grade. Earlier in the year, I attended a literacy conference at UNC-Chapel Hill and was sickened to hear that many state prison boards forecast their bed count using elementary-grade reading statistics. No young child should ever be labeled by this statistic. Literacy is not only a skill for success in school; it is a bridge to hope and productive citizenship. As adults, we owe all children this bridge to hope.

Because of your generosity and support, **READWS** provides this bridge to many students and families. We know that for 90% of poor readers, early, intensive intervention can increase the reading ability to an age-appropriate skill level. We know that evidence-based, multisensory, structured reading instruction works! Last year alone, 182 **READWS** trained tutors provided over 8100 hours of individualized, structured literacy instruction for struggling readers in Forsyth County.

**READWS**'s mission to improve literacy rates can only be accomplished through partnerships with teachers and schools. Our Educator Academy offers evidence-based structured literacy training for Forsyth County teachers. Our partnership with Cook Literacy Model School, training teachers since 2014, has contributed to impressive growth in 3rd-grade reading proficiencies. The average reading growth of all targeted priority schools in Forsyth County increased by 1.4% from 2015-



2017 (18.1% achieving 3rd-grade level proficiency); whereas Cook increased by 11.9% from 2015-2017 (28.6% achieving 3rd-grade level proficiency). The reading progress at Cook is something to celebrate, and I am grateful to the former and current **READWS** staff for their hard work which helped to make this success story possible. We celebrate but also recognize that more work is needed.

**READWS** has responded to the literacy crisis in our community with rapid growth over the past five years. From the humble beginnings of six tutors and students seventeen years ago, our program has expanded to include the Educator Academy, Reading Parties for families, and significant growth in our Augustine Literacy Project tutoring. The board is working on a revised strategic plan to manage this growth and continue to serve as responsible stewards of our finances. The plan will be complete by summer's end. In an ideal world, we could tutor every student on our waiting list and train every teacher in Forsyth County. In the meantime, we will continue to work diligently and passionately to reach, teach, and advocate for struggling readers.

Thank you to every supporter of **READ.WRITE.SPELL**. You are helping to build that bridge of hope through literacy.

Sharon Ralston  
*Board Chair*



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