

# Read | Write | Spell

2020-2021 NEWSLETTER

## 20 Years of Advancing the SCIENCE of Reading

IN WINSTON-SALEM AND FORSYTH COUNTY



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Read  
Write  
Spell

# New Executive Director for Read Write Spell

Because children’s literacy is a critical factor in breaking the cycle of generational poverty, **Read Write Spell** remains a crucial ministry commitment of St. Paul’s. Yet, when Executive Director Kris Cox stepped down last fall, we were not exactly sure what our next move should be because we were in the midst of so many “unknowns.”

How long would the pandemic last, and would there be a vaccine? How would the duration of the pandemic affect our tutoring work? The school system was going to hire a new superintendent: would that person still want to partner with us? These unknowns made it unclear what kind of leader **Read Write Spell** would need next and what sorts of skills they should have.

However, in the spring of 2021, as some of these “unknowns” became “knowns,” something else became apparent as well:

we already had the leader for which we were looking. Esharan Monroe-Johnson’s work as interim Executive Director clarified that **Read Write Spell** was already in the right hands and headed in the right direction. I am thrilled to see Esharan formally take the reins and continue the outstanding work she began last fall. She brings a wealth of knowledge, deep skills in leadership and management, and an unparalleled passion for the work. It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome Esharan Monroe-Johnson as **Read Write Spell**’s next Executive Director.



- The Reverend Dixon Kinser, Rector

## Letter from the Executive Director

Over the last 15 months, we have had to create new avenues to advance our mission. To keep everyone safe during the 2020-2021 school year, **Read Write Spell** volunteers could not work in schools. This was an obstacle to our work. However, thanks to the support of our donors, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, and the outstanding dedication of the **Read Write Spell** staff and advisory board, we were able to find new pathways to continue serving children, educators, and families during the pandemic.

As we head back into the schools to work with students, we are faced with a new challenge. The impact of COVID on children’s literacy in this community is profound. The End of Grade test scores were released in September, and only 39.4% of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WS/FCS) third graders are proficient in reading. This is a significant decrease from the 51.7% of third-graders who were proficient in reading in the 2018-2019 school year, a number that was already too low. Yet, we remain hopeful because we know that 95% of

children can learn to read with instruction rooted in reading science which is the foundation of our programs.

WS/FCS has set a goal of 90% of third-grade students proficient in reading by 2025. This goal is ambitious, but it is possible if the entire community–non-profit organizations, businesses, and community organizations– works together to reach it. The children in this community need us to end this literacy crisis now.

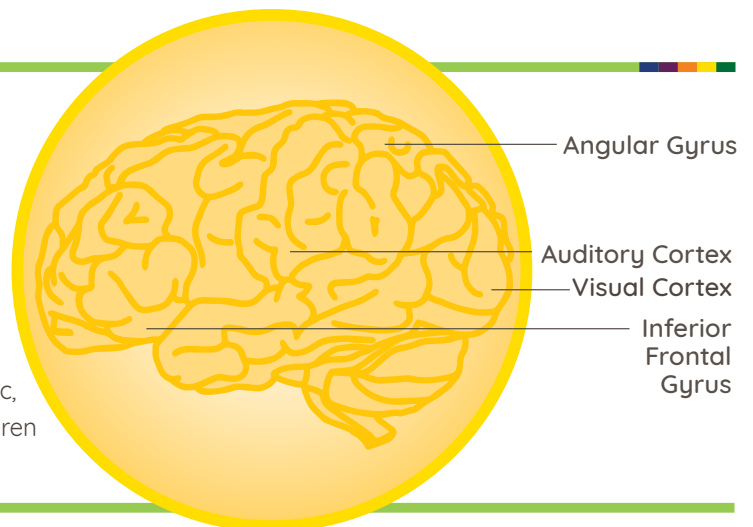
Our work over the last 20 years would not have been possible without a strong community of supporters. Your investment will allow us to ensure that more children have the necessary foundation for academic success and economic mobility in the 21st century. Their success is critical to ensuring that the Winston Sale/Forsyth County community can continue to thrive.

Thank you for your support,  
Esharan Monroe-Johnson  
Executive Director

## Defining the Science of Reading

Building on the premise that literacy is essential for individual and community success, **Read Write Spell** works to increase reading proficiency among children in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. All of our programs are based on the science of reading.

The science of reading refers to decades of research from multiple disciplines on how children learn to read, how to intervene when someone has difficulty learning to read, and how to improve reading skills. The research shows that explicit, sequential, systematic, code-based reading instruction is necessary for 50%-60% of children and all children benefit from this type of instruction.



# Our Work

## Volunteer Tutoring

### Susan and Amiya: A success story

When Amiya was in the 4th grade she had difficulty with reading. Her teacher reached out to **Read Write Spell** for a tutor and I was assigned to work with her. When we started, Amiya did not know what a consonant was. We worked hard and slowly but surely, Amiya learned one-syllable words and then two-syllable words. Every lesson ended by reading a story together. By the 3rd quarter, Amiya's grades markedly improved. She was keeping up with her classmates. She was delighted and surprised when she started to get A's and B's regularly.

Amiya just finished the 6th grade and came for tutoring in the office last year. It was important for me to continue tutoring in spite of the COVID 19 pandemic

because we were so close to finishing all of the Wilson books when school shut down. Plus, Amiya had just started middle school and it was important to us both that she be able to finish the work. When her family was willing to bring her to our offices, I was delighted. Watching her work so hard and achieve our goals made it all worthwhile.

I had my last tutoring session with Amiya in May. It was definitely bittersweet. I will miss our time together, but I am so glad to know that she has a good foundation for learning.

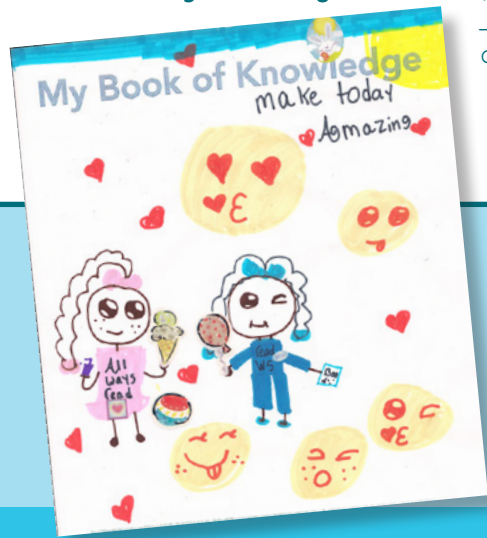
“  
In a way, what we do is so simple: break words apart so they can be read. The impact is enormous! **Read Write Spell** tutors teach simple things in order to achieve life-changing results.  
—Susan Tague  
ALP Tutor since 2015  
”

“When the work of 126 tutors came to an abrupt halt and all activity ceased at the **Read Write Spell** office, we had to reenvision our organization's work. Thus, Interim Tutoring was born! While the process was difficult, the result brought life and joy back to the office. Seeing the students come in with a bounce in their step, hearing their laughter, seeing the interactions between tutor and student, and putting a book in a student's hands brought a smile to all of us at **Read Write Spell!**”  
— Margaret Dickinson and Debbie Kelley



“I remember watching you make this picture when we first met. It was for the front of your student notebook. I love it because it was so clever the way you incorporated the stickers I had with your drawing, and it was a positive message. I appreciate that through all of our lessons you remained positive. Thank you for being my student and for being excited to master reading. You are a good reader and you will only get better with practice. It has been my great honor to be your reading tutor. Be well, my friend.”

—From Susan's card to Amiya on their last day



“I think it is worth me bringing my child to **Read Write Spell**. This allows her to grow and continue on her path to become a more confident reader. She's able to get that one-on-one help that she needs, with a tutor that's very encouraging, caring, and really wants to see Amiya do well. These are the things that are so important to a child that needs help. I'm grateful this service is available. Thank you to the tutors for their support and dedication.”  
—Felicia (Amiya's mom)

# Our Work

## Deepening Our Partnership with WS/FCS

With the pause in tutoring this school year we had to be innovative in our approach to advancing our mission. As we looked for ways to increase our impact while not tutoring in schools we reached out the WS/FCS to see what else we could do. We are happy to announce that **Read Write Spell** provided funding for 17 district leaders and coaches to receive LETRS. This will allow them to support teachers who will start LETRS training over the next two years and work to implement the science of reading in their classrooms.

“Read Write Spell has served as a community partner with WS/FCS for many years. The vision of Read Write Spell to transform our community so every child learns to read, write, and spell is in direct alignment with our Superintendent’s goal to achieve 90% third grade reading proficiency by 2025. We share a collaborative understanding between WS/FCS and Read Write Spell to support early literacy and increase student reading proficiency. . . By building the capacity of our district leaders and coaches who directly support all elementary schools, the district will be able to coach and guide teachers as they receive the LETRS training over the next two years.”

–Nicollette Grant, Chief Academic Officer, WS/FCS

## Well Read Well Fed

In the summer of 2020, with our programs on pause because of COVID, we wanted to make sure that children still had access to books while the schools and libraries were closed. Thanks to the generous support of two of our donors we were able to purchase a truck of 35,000 new books and **Well Read Well Fed Forsyth** was born. **Well Read, Well Fed Forsyth** is a coordinated collaboration that provides books and literacy resources to the families that receive food and other support from our partners. The goal of **Well Read, Well Fed Forsyth** is to provide high-quality, culturally relevant books to the most vulnerable school-aged children in the county and to connect with parents who might need us to provide them with resources and support to ensure that their child/children can read proficiently. To date, we have distributed 26,500 books to children all over Forsyth County.

**26,500 BOOKS**  
have been donated  
to kids all over  
Forsyth County!

“Families coming to GreeNest for furniture now have the opportunity to also get books. And that’s thanks to you all. It’s such a nice treat that [clients] come in often with their children and we allow them to go to our bookshelves where we have the bags of books you all have provided, and in addition to having new furniture in their homes that before were empty, now they also have books to read. We are so grateful. Thank you so much for all you do for the community. You’re really making a difference in the lives of others.”

–Julia Toone, Executive Director, GreeNest



# A Community Call to Action



YOU can help more children learn the early reading skills necessary for success in school and beyond.

Visit [www.readwritespell.live](http://www.readwritespell.live) to watch Rise and Read 2021 to learn more about childhood literacy in Forsyth County and the path forward to ensuring that all children learn to read.

“  
If you look at the social determinants associated with poverty, whether it's healthcare access, food, safety, transportation, jobs, and housing, nothing's more important than education. And the key to education today begins with the capacity to read.

- Don Flow  
”

## Featuring Keynotes From:

**KELLY KING**

Chairman and CEO of Truist Bank

**DON FLOW**

Chairman and CEO of Flow Automotive

**TRICIA MCMANUS**

WS/FCS Superintendent



A Project Impact, WS/FCS, & Read Write Spell partnership

Project Impact, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, and Read Write Spell are organizing an army of Reading Warrior Volunteers—people like you who know that reading is essential for success in life.

To learn more visit [www.projectimpact.ws/readingwarriors](http://www.projectimpact.ws/readingwarriors)

# Volunteer today!

We host volunteer info sessions on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Visit [www.readws.org/becomeatutor](http://www.readws.org/becomeatutor) to sign up for an upcoming information session.

# Gratitude

## Staff reflections

“I was blessed by having the ability to personally reach out to a handful of donors over the phone during COVID to tell them how thankful we were for their contributions to **Read Write Spell**.

What I didn't expect was the return of overwhelming gratitude from those donors for what the RWS staff & tutors continue to do for the children in our community.

The show of appreciation is mutual & that's what makes RWS such an amazing organization to be part of.”

-Paula Bennett, Fundraising & Development Manager

“It's an exciting time to be in the front row at **Read Write Spell**.

Even remotely, we work together to change and grow with the evolving needs of our organization.

We are putting building blocks in place to be ready to train and support an army of tutors.

To work with a great team is a privilege. Having a job in which I feel challenged and helpful is a blessing. Thank you for your support.”

-Susan Tague,  
Office Manager

## Letter from Board Chair

Despite the closure of our public schools and subsequent lack of tutoring, the year 2021 provides **Read Write Spell** a momentous opportunity to realize our vision: To advance the Science of Reading by teaching, training, and advocating, with a goal of achieving 90%+ reading proficiency in Forsyth County. Why?

First, Esharan Monroe-Johnson is now the permanent Executive Director of **Read Write Spell**. She will provide the leadership required to realize our mission.

Second, she has created a partnership with the WS/FCS administration to support their efforts to implement the Science of Reading, to realize their goal of reaching 90%+ third grade reading proficiency IN ALL SCHOOLS by 2025.

Third, the NC General Assembly has passed legislation that requires the use of the Science of Reading in teaching reading in all public schools throughout the state. It stresses the re-training of all teachers, as well as literacy intervention for all students

falling below grade proficiency levels. Already, we have funded initial training for WS/FCS administrative personnel this summer. We will support teacher training, and offer tutoring to assist WS/FCS in complying with the NC legislation.

In order to do this, we will need your help. I ask you to watch the **Read Write Spell** Rise and Read video and share it with everyone that you know to help us raise awareness about childhood literacy rates in WS/FCS and learn how to be a part of the solution. To watch this video visit [www.readwritespell.live](http://www.readwritespell.live).

Above all, thank you for your continued support of **Read Write Spell**!

Pete Hellebush  
2021 Advisory Board Chair



# Gratitude

## Subaru Share the Love



### We continue to be amazed by the generosity of Flow Subaru of Winston-Salem.

To hear how passionate Alex and the team are about children's literacy is truly heartwarming. We are grateful to have been the Subaru Share the Love Hometown Charity for Flow Subaru of Winston-Salem for the last 3 years.

## Donors: May 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

We are so thankful to all of the donors that have supported our work for the past year. Your contributions helped us to continue to advance the mission of **Read Write Spell** through a very difficult year full of uncertainty. **Thank you!**

### Community Partners

- Diamondback Grill
- Flow Companies, LLC
- Forsyth County Reading Association
- Lewisville Ward, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- The Lovett Foundation
- St. Anne's Episcopal Church
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Salem Smiles Orthodontics
- The Strickland Family Foundation
- Triad Woodcarvers Club
- Twin City Kiwanis Club

- The Weil Foundation
- Williams Development Group

### Donors

- Carol & Greg Adams
- Dwanna & Trent Adams
- Sandra & Fred Adams
- Tom Adams
- The Ajam Family
- Liz & David Albertson
- Martha Albertson
- Rodney Allen
- Shirley Amen

- Cynthia Anderson
- Marian Anderson-Booker
- Hannah & John Appel
- Colleen & Kyle Armentrout
- Patsy & Stephen Ashworth
- Kathy Ausen
- Allen Aycock
- Beth & Sandy Baldwin
- Sara March Barber
- Wendy & John Barclay
- Wrenna & Andy Barney
- Helen Barnhardt
- Alvita & Eduardo Barrow

- Lennetta Bartley
- Jennie & Earl Beasley
- Beth & Mark T. Beeler
- Ana Beery
- Katherine Beery
- Martha Beery
- Diane Behar
- Ran & Frank Bell
- Jack Kiser Bennett, Jr.
- Paula & Brad Bennett
- Rita Bennett
- Katy & Josh Benoit
- Debra & Mike Beroth

# Gratitude

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Linda & Lee Bettis	Melanie & Ed Broyhill	Jane Clarke	Marlita & Rudy Diamond
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Jan & William Blackburn	Sylvia Budd	Melissa Clendenen	Paige Dillon
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Pam & David Bowton	Diane & Johnny Byrd	Molly Cooper	Cary F. Driver
Sandra & Gray Boyette	Jennifer & Austin Byrne	Rachelle Cooper	Linda DuBose
Beth Day & Jimmie Bracewell	Katherine Cagle	Hilda Cox	Mary Dudley
Penni & Mike Bradshaw	Dianne & Jim Campbell	Kris & Chris Cox	Lu & John Dunkelberg
John Brady	Susan & Jack Campbell	Emily Craig	Phyllis Dunning
Wendy & Mike Brenner	Nancy & Tom Cannon	Jenny Craver	Randy Eaddy
Betty & Jim Brewer	Sara & Drew Cannon	Melinda & Todd Crouse	Susan Edge
Sallie & Dave Brewer	Nancy Montgomery & Bo Carlton	Lila J. Cruikshank	Laura & Haywood Edmundson
Janet & Jeffrey Brice	Sally & Todd Carlton	Anna Reilly & Matthew Cullinan	Lynn & Barry Eisenberg
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Carla Brown Rumph	Becca & Todd Chase	Michelle & Arthur DeBaugh	Gail & John Fisher
Linda & Dale Browne	Claire & Hudnall Christopher	Edie Barrett & Drake Dennis	Gregory Fisher
	Rhonda & Andy Chused	Nancy & Bucky Dennis	Robbin & Don Flow



# Gratitude

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Sara & Bob Fly	Stacey & Stephen Hanf	Susan Huneycutt	V. B. Lougee
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Synthia & Dale Folwell	Steve Harberger	Susan & Frank Hussey	Mona Lovett
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Lisa & Bob Gfeller	Meg & Brent Hilleary	Maxine & Robert Kelly	Suzette & Tom McLain
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Jane Goodrum	Leslie Hollan	Karen Knott	Linda & Walt Miller
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Jonathan Halsey	Caro & George Humphrey	Susan Faust & John Llewellyn	Louise & John Mundy
Ann & Borden Hanes	Ellen & Bruce Humphries		

# Gratitude

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Bonnie & Dan Murphy	Pleasants	Catherine & Omar Sanguenza	Jill & Neal Tackabery
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Leigh Thurston Myers	Sherry & Pete Polonsky	Carrie & Jason Schymanski	Mitchell Tague
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# Gratitude

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Ginny Whipple  
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Jean White  
Mary Blake & Ernie White  
Lauren & Scott Wierman  
Letitia Wilkinson  
Allison Copeland Williams  
Joe Williams  
Liz & Taylor Williams  
Emily & Van Williamson  
Carol Willis  
Tillie & Ben Willis  
Pat Wilmot  
Anne & Charles Wilson  
Lindsey Wilson  
Marian & John Wilson  
Mary Lou & Peter Wilson  
Melissa Wilson  
Mo Ogburn & C. Michael Wilson  
Holley & Ben Winikoff  
Linda & Stuart Winikoff  
Trudy & Powell Winstead  
Paul Wollner  
Brigitte Woloszyn  
Robin & Lee Woodard  
Leigh Ann & Kelly Woodruff  
Sylvia Woodruff  
Janice & Billy Wooten  
Kristin & Robert Wooten  
Melissa & Ray Workman  
Mona & Wally Wu  
Debbie & Lindsay Yancey  
Sallie & Karl Yena  
Becky & Alan York  
Charlene & James Young  
Laura Young  
Lynn & Jeff Young

Susan & David Yount  
Katie Zuber  
Ann & Ken Zuhr

## In Honor

Owen Armentrout  
Martha Beery  
Ann Beery  
Jack K. Bennett, Sr.  
Paula Bennett  
Mr. & Mrs. Parker Bradway  
Caroline & Brian Brost  
Caroline Brost  
Hal Brown (2)  
Henri Brown (9)  
Pat & Hal Brown (2)  
Mrs. John Randolph Butts, Jr.  
Diane Byrd  
Alice Day Clark  
Woody Clinard (11)  
Becky Clingman (3)  
Becky & Bill Clingman (2)  
Anne Collins  
Roberta & Jim Conroy  
Kris Cox (7)  
Sharon Creasy  
Carol Danforth (5)  
Ellis Oliver DeBaugh  
Myrna Doernberg  
Susan Edge & Don VonCannon (2)  
Justin Emanuel  
Jeannie K. Evans  
Gail & John Fisher  
John Fisher  
Robbin & Don Flow  
Sara Fox (3)  
Leni Fragakis  
Barbara Gerhard (2)

Debra Gladstone  
Chiquita Guglielmi  
Chiquita & John Guglielmi  
Skye Harvey  
Pete Hellebush  
Brent Hilleary (2)  
Kathy Jacobs  
Celeste & Paul Jernigan  
Debbie Kelley  
Nancy Keshian (2)  
Kristin Kinser  
Whitney Lang  
Mrs. George F. Lewis  
Rashad Little  
Susan Melville & Charles Monroe  
Judy Mountjoy  
Sylvia Oberle  
Sharon Ralston (3)  
Read Write Spell Staff (2)  
Read Write Spell Staff & Tutors  
Read Write Spell Volunteers  
Summer Riley  
Jenny Ryan  
Patsy & Jay Shearin  
Stanaford Road Neighborhood  
Susan Tague (8)  
The Tague Family  
Martha Tegeler  
Myles & Liana Thompson  
Mrs. Jack W. Thomson  
Joy Van Zandt (2)  
Mrs. Robert Whann  
Omega Wilcox  
Liz Keiser Williams (3)  
Dr. & Mrs. Luther Williams  
Lou Wilson  
Holley Winikoff (3)  
Linda Winikoff

Raymond & Mark Woloszyn  
Robin Woodard (3)

## In Memory

Betty Barrow  
Sara Bradshaw  
Elizabeth "Liz" Brady  
Irene Burton (6)  
Alfred & Gladys Foss  
Josephine & Sanford Fitts  
Tommy Goodrum  
Betsy & Jim Gregg  
Dr. Willis Jackson (Jack) Grant  
Mr. Benjamin Johnson  
Alice Koontz  
Sally Lang  
Soline Leon  
Jean Woodbury Llewellyn  
Barbara Helm Meilinger  
Al Mixon  
Judy Oakley (54)  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Parker  
Forrest G. Read, III  
Mary Neil Henderson Rice  
Lane Roemer  
Christine Rose  
Mary "Granny" Sagar  
Dorothy P. Slater  
Nell Penn Watt Spencer  
Sue Stevens  
Lamar Taft (2)  
Kennetta H. Thompson  
Thomas Ray Turpin II  
Susan Uphoff (2)  
Hortencia Villalon  
Melvin Wilt  
Estelle Y. Wrenn  
Karl H. & Lucille M. Yena

# Who We Are

## Mission

Advance the science of reading by teaching, training, and advocating.

## Our Vision

A transformed community where every child can Read, Write, and Spell.

## Our Values

- Commitment
- Empowerment
- Equity
- Partnership
- Respect

## Equity Statement

Equity is the state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial and fair. Equity is not only a desired state of affairs but it also must be achieved and sustained structurally and systemically. Equity is achieved when race no longer predicts educational outcomes.

Literacy is the currency of the 21st century and is inextricably linked to equity and justice. While the primary focus of our work is to provide students with research-based reading instruction, we acknowledge that systemic change is

necessary to create a community in which all children have access to the opportunities that literacy and education make possible. In an effort to create a more just and equitable community, **Read Write Spell** commits to creating policies, programs, and practices that are anti-racist; embed diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout; and partner with organizations that are engaged in anti-racist systemic change.

To read the full statement visit [www.readws.org/about-us](http://www.readws.org/about-us).

## Staff

**Esharan Monroe-Johnson**  
Executive Director

**Paula Bennett**  
Fundraising and Development Manager

**Margaret Dickinson**  
Program Manager

**Debbie Kelley**  
Tutor Educator

**Melissa Lester**  
Financial Secretary

**Susan Tague**  
Office Manager

**Site Coordinators**  
Emily Etzel  
Alyce Gilbert  
Patricia Helm  
Itohan Igbinigie  
Kathy Jacobs

## 2021 Advisory Board

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## Founding Mothers

**Becky Clingman**

**Susan Uphoff**

**Trudy Winstead**

## Contact Us

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