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Edgecombe, Nash and Wayne Counties Join Nationwide Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Raleigh, NC (January 26, 2017) –North Carolina communities are taking a big step toward supporting children’s success by joining the [Campaign for Grade-Level Reading](#) (GLR), a nationwide movement to increase early reading proficiency. **Twin Counties Read to Rise** (a coalition across Nash and Edgecombe counties) and **READ Wayne** (Wayne County) will support strategies beginning at birth that put children on a pathway to grade-level by the end of third grade, the single greatest predictor of future academic and career success.

The CGLR mobilizes funders, nonprofit partners, business leaders, government agencies, states and communities across the nation to ensure that many more children succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career and active citizenship. Since its launch in 2010, the Campaign has grown to 300 communities. Twin Counties Read to Rise and READ Wayne join four existing North Carolina communities in Gaston, Mecklenburg, Moore and Wake counties.

Only 38 percent of North Carolina fourth graders and 25 percent of students from economically disadvantaged families scored at or above reading proficiency on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2015. Reading in the early grades predicts high school and later success. Those who read well, go on to graduate, but those who aren’t reading well by the end of third grade, are four times more likely to drop out of high school.

“Rarely does an opportunity come along that addresses the long-standing issues of school readiness, early literacy and “summer slide.” The development of our READ Wayne Action Plan has inspired a broad spectrum support among diverse groups in our county that want to

dramatically improve educational outcomes for our students,” said Allison Pridgen, the READ Wayne Project Manager.

“We are excited that Nash and Edgecombe counties were selected to participate in this national campaign,” said Henrietta Zalkind, Down East Partnership for Children Executive Director. “Multiple organizations came together to make Twin Counties Read to Rise a reality. We know that reading on grade level by the end of third grade is not just the key to academic success but also the key to future economic success for communities. This is good news that will provide a boost for our future.”

In North Carolina, the Campaign is led by the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF). Membership in the campaign provides communities’ access to experts focused on early literacy, support in addressing challenges that keep many children from learning to read, and opportunities to share and learn best practices from communities across NC and the nation.

The Campaign addresses three underlying challenges that can keep young children, especially those from low-income families, from learning to read proficiently:

- School readiness — too many children are entering kindergarten already behind
- School attendance — too many young children are missing too many days of school
- Summer learning — too many children are losing ground academically over the summer

The two coalitions will address these challenges with a focus on school readiness and summer learning loss. In 2015, only 31.5, 42.8, and 46.1 percent of third graders in Edgecombe, Nash and Wayne counties respectively scored proficient on the end of third grade reading test.

The coalitions consist of the following organizations:

Twin Counties Read to Rise	READ Wayne
Boice-Willis Clinic	Communities in Schools
Braswell Memorial Library	Goldsboro Family YMCA
Cummins Rocky Mount Engine Plant	Goldsboro Pediatrics, PA
Down East Partnership for Children	Housing Authority City of Goldsboro
Edgecombe County Public Library	Literacy Connections of Wayne County
Edgecombe County Schools	Local Government Representatives
Family Harrison YMCA	Parent Representatives
F.I.T.	Partnership for Children of Wayne County
Head Start, N.E.E.D., Inc.	Seymour Johnson Air Force Base
Nash-Rocky Mount School District	Sydney’s Book Club
Nashville Baptist Church	United Way of Wayne County
Peacemakers	WAGES/Head Start
PNC Community Foundation	University of Mt. Olive

Teach for America	Wayne Community College
The Evening Telegraph	Wayne County Cooperative Extension
United Way of the Tar River Region	Wayne County Department of Social Services
	Wayne County Health Department
	Wayne County Public Library
	Wayne County Public Schools
	Wayne First
	Wayne Memorial Hospital

The four other campaigns in North Carolina are – [Wake Up and Read](#) (Wake County), [Read Charlotte](#) (Mecklenburg County), the [Moore County Campaign for Grade-Level Reading](#) and the Gaston County Early Literacy Collaborative.

About NCECF

NCECF builds public will by advancing understanding of birth-through-eight child development and promotes practice and policy solutions that drive aligned action to support each child being on a pathway to grade-level reading. Learn more at <http://www.buildthefoundation.org>.

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