

READ AND ACHIEVE

OVERVIEW AND EXPECTATIONS

Background and Purpose

Across the Heart of Indiana footprint, nearly 1 in 5 children are living below the federal poverty level. Moreover, 12,167 households, or 36%, with children are at or below the threshold we call ALICE, Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed. This is important because research shows that academic performance gaps between students from low- and high-income families appear early and widen over time. Social-emotional challenges create additional obstacles for students experiencing poverty. The stress of economic instability can manifest as behavioral difficulties, anxiety or withdrawal. We can see these effects in standardized test scores for schools in our footprint. Those schools located in areas with high ALICE populations have a lower percentage of children passing the IREAD assessment. Chronic absenteeism is between 5–10 percentage points higher in the counties in the HIUW region than the state average.

A child's ability to read at grade level by third grade is the single greatest predictor of future success because this is when they transition from learning how to read into students who must be able to read to learn. When a child falls behind in reading, they risk falling further behind in every subject. The Read and Achieve partnership works to ensure that every child in our five-county region is reading at or above grade level, thereby setting them up for lifelong success.

Engaged communities that are mobilized to remove barriers, expand opportunities, and assist caregivers in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities to serve as full partners in the success of their children are needed to assure student success. Grade-level reading depends on the following factors:

- Children meet developmental benchmarks, and are ready for kindergarten
- Children attend school persistently
- Children retain knowledge from the school year and continue learning over the summer
- Children are healthy
- Parents and caregivers are supported and successful in their role as first teacher, tutor, advocate, and coach.

What is the Read and Achieve Partnership

The Read and Achieve partnership provides A MORE SEAMLESS, OUTCOMES-ACCOUNTABLE SYSTEM of care, services, and family support for children from birth through third grade. It is a network that is less fragmented, more aligned, and intentionally structured to operate along a continuum of support. Our approach starts with strengthening relationships and listening to families. We focus on:

- Expanding education and engagement opportunities for caregivers
- Supporting high-quality early learning environments for children
- Providing enriching and engaging out-of-school opportunities for children
- Creating mentorship opportunities for children
- Encouraging meaningful partnerships between schools and families
- Hosting engaging events that foster learning and connection
- Building strong social networks among families
- Improving communication between educators and parents
- Equipping professionals to navigate difficult conversations with care

To accomplish this, partners are focused on providing services that achieve the following outcomes:

School Readiness – Children are ready for school and developmentally on track, or fewer children are entering kindergarten with undetected, undiagnosed, and untreated conditions or delays that can impede learning.

School Attendance – Children are attending school regularly, or fewer children are chronically absent because of manageable and/or preventable health challenges.

Summer Learning– Children are maintaining or increasing their reading levels over the summer.

Grade Level Reading – Children are reading at or above grade level at the end of first, second, and third grade.

Family Support and Engagement – Families have the support needed to help their children read on grade level and achieve academic and life-long success.

REQUIREMENTS

Read and Achieve Partners provide enriching and nurturing environments where children are engaged in learning, encouraged to explore their curiosity, and surrounded by strong, meaningful relationships. Families are connected to and engaged in their children's activities and learning, as well as supported and respected in their role as their child's first teacher.

While Read and Achieve partners have flexibility to design and deliver programming for children and families, HIUW has specific expectations that must be met. These requirements enable HIUW to be most effective at supporting the partnership, evaluating its work, and attracting resources. They are as follows:

1. Be an eligible applicant. (See HIUW funding eligibility criteria)
2. Participate in the Read and Achieve Partnership. An important part of elevating the work of each Read and Achieve partner is participation in joint learning, sharing of resources and best practices, and other professional development opportunities. Partners must commit to engaging and sharing with the broader partnership by helping to shape, participate in, and host convenings with other Read and Achieve partners.
3. Host a minimum of ONE Heart to Heart Talk with families. HIUW is committed to listening to families and elevating their voices to ensure their children reach their fullest potential.
4. Collaborate with other organizations. In order to fully support families to ensure children can reach their fullest potential, partnerships are critical. Read and Achieve partners must collaborate with school corporations, early childhood providers, libraries, healthcare providers, and other community organizations to create seamless supports for children and families.
5. Collect and evaluate data. HIUW is committed to measuring and reporting results for the Read and Achieve Partnership as in all its programs and initiatives. Read and Achieve partners must commit to tracking information on activities and outcomes that can be used

to improve the initiative's performance, and to reporting results and lessons learned to funders and the field. Partners may track a range of performance and outcome metrics, including, but not limited to:

Child Outcomes

- #/% of children meeting developmental benchmarks
- #/% of children with developmentally appropriate language/communication skills
- #/% of children prepared for school at kindergarten entrance
- #/% of children who are reading at grade level
- #/% of children who maintained reading levels over the summer
- #/% of children reading proficiently at the end of third grade
- #/% of students who maintain model attendance (attending 90% or more of instructional days).

Family Outcomes

- # of family engagement activities
- #/% of families participating in activities (formally or informally)
- #/% of families who have increased their engagement with your program
- #/% of children with two or more trusted adults in their lives

Social Emotional Outcomes

- #/% of children who demonstrate improved self-regulation and behavior management.
- #/% of children who form healthy relationships and engage in cooperative play.
- #/% of children who exhibit excitement for learning, creative expression, and persistence in tasks
- #/% of children in out-of-school suspension