



**BOONE COUNTY**  
UPWARD MOBILITY

## Early Grade Literacy Workgroup Minutes

April 9, 2025, 2:30PM – 4:00PM

Central Missouri Community Action (807 N. Providence Rd, Columbia, MO 65203) and virtually

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**Meeting Objective:** Make progress on community reading campaign planning

**Attendees:** Al Plummer (Facilitator, Minority Men's Network), Sarah Howard (Daniel Boone Regional Library), Cindy Reese (Boone County Early Childhood Coalition), Kelly Scheuerman (Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services - Brighter Beginnings), Kristine Smith (Columbia Public Schools – Parents as Teachers), Lara Wakefield (Smarter Steps), Lindsay Massie (Community Member), Aaron Fox (Aaron Fox Writes), Onni Flint (Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA)), Mindy Hulett (CMCA), Phil Peters (Grade A Plus), Talia Jackson (Heart of Missouri United Way), Verna Laboy (Boone County Community Services Department (BCCSD)), Gina Jenkins (BCCSD), Joanne Nelson (BCCSD)

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Al Plummer opened the meeting, reminding the workgroup to briefly share a new or exciting thing your organization is doing to support early grade literacy as part of introductions. Those in attendance provided an introduction and highlighted some current organizational efforts.

### 2. Follow up from last meeting

- Review draft campaign goals and survey

The workgroup read through the campaign goals refined by some members of the workgroup with those in attendance showing support for moving forward with them as written. The survey questions were reviewed by the workgroup with no changes requested.

- Shared marketing document

The document listing suggested names for marketing the literacy campaign was reviewed by the workgroup. Gina noted workgroup members contributed all the suggested names and online tools were used to group them under the different theme headings.

### 3. 2025 workgroup planning

- Suggested list of potential campaign names

Review of the suggested names included individuals sharing some of their top choices along with overall support for a shorter name. Discussion of how to narrow the list to five options to be included in the survey involved noting interest in wanting to distinguish this from existing efforts, clarifying the early childhood focus, and consideration of if Boone County should be included in the phrase. The workgroup felt that Boone County Upward Mobility would likely also be noted with campaign messaging, so the preference was to keep the location out of the selected name.

The workgroup agreed on five name options to include in the survey.

- Let's Grow Readers
- Raising Readers
- Read, Share Grow
- Start Early, Read Often
- We Grow Readers



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- Survey distribution and timeline

Building from discussion from previous workgroup meetings, the workgroup reviewed who would be emailed the survey. As part of this planning process, clarification of the target ages for the campaign was discussed. The workgroup considered previous conversations about a 0-5 focus along with potential benefits to broadening this up to second grade. The workgroup agreed this expansion would be helpful as it would align with how early childhood is commonly defined and includes those that may start school following the state compulsory age of seven. Groups to include in the survey distribution were finalized with individuals in the workgroup volunteering to contact specific groups.

The timeline for distribution and review of the survey was discussed along with overall thoughts on the potential timing for a campaign launch. Benefits and challenges with aligning the start of the campaign with the start of the school year were discussed. The workgroup will keep the survey open until May 6, 2025 so results can be discussed at the next workgroup meeting.

- Additional assignments to consider

Given the interest in the workgroup to move forward with a campaign launch in a timely fashion, the workgroup recognized additional brainstorming and planning outside of workgroup meetings could be helpful. The workgroup intends to continue using the shared document for all workgroup members to review existing ideas and contribute their thoughts. Each workgroup member is asked to visit the document at least once before the next workgroup meeting.

#### 4. Next Steps

- Gina will share the survey link and sample email language for specific workgroup members by 4/11/2025.
- Workgroup members who volunteered to assist will email the specific groups identified during workgroup discussion by 4/18/2025.
  - Cindy – Boone County Early Childhood Coalition list and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education childcare provider list
  - Kristine – Parents as Teachers across Boone County school districts, NET email list, Columbia Public School early childhood team
  - Sarah – School Media specialists across Boone County school districts
  - Verna – Learning Specialists and K-2 teachers across Boone County school districts
  - Survey results will be compiled and shared with the workgroup by email on 5/7/2025.
- All workgroup participants are asked to visit the shared workgroup document at least once before the 5/14/2025 workgroup meeting to provide further input.

#### 5. Closing

- Partner updates
  - No partner updates were shared.
- Comments and questions
  - Al closed the meeting with a reminder of the next workgroup meeting date.

**Next Workgroup Meeting:** May 15, 2025, at 2:30 PM at CMCA (807 N. Providence Rd) or via [Zoom](#)