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ReadCLT Insiders

Read Charlotte [elise=readcharlotte.org@mail177.atl121.mcsv.net] on behalf of Read Charlotte [elise@readcharlotte.org]

Sent: Monday, January 29, 2018 2:09 PM

To: [Steve Johnston](#)

ReadCLT Insiders

Read Charlotte just announced its inaugural “Commit to 80” campaign, a mission which aims not only to raise awareness of the critical importance of children’s literacy, but to also activate everyone in Mecklenburg County to commit to do their part to reach the community goal of 80% of third graders reading proficiently by 2025. The community is being asked to pledge commitment in March and ultimately get involved throughout the year.

Only 39% of Charlotte’s third graders are reading at grade level.

“Read Charlotte was launched in 2015 as a community-wide effort to change this alarming statistic,” explained Executive Director Munro Richardson. “Third grade is the critical dividing line between learning to read and reading to learn. We spent the first two years digging into the research and finding what works to move the

PRACTICES MATTER: CMS  
TEACHER LITERACY SURVEY

On March 15, Read Charlotte Executive Director Munro Richardson and representatives from CMS will share the findings of a yearlong study of CMS classroom literacy practices by Dr. James Kim of Harvard University. This jointly funded study by CMS and Read Charlotte included a survey of all elementary literacy facilitators, survey of nearly 1,000 K-5 teachers in a representative sample of 30 elementary schools, and analysis of relationships between classroom literacy practices and student performance on formative literacy assessments and third grade reading EOG scores.

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needle for kids from birth through third grade. In 2017, we began implementing what works to improve early literacy, working alongside dozens of committed community partners to move toward this goal of doubling the number of Charlotte-Mecklenburg third graders reading proficiently. The early momentum is encouraging but it will take an army of dedicated people “committing to 80” with us. Everyone has a part to play. We know that working together, we can do this.”



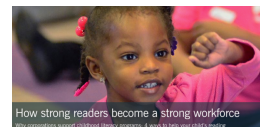
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Reading proficiency at third grade is critical for school, career and life success. Children struggling with reading in third grade are four times more likely to end up dropping out of high school, as this is the pivotal moment in a child's education when they have to shift from learning to read to reading to learn.



How strong readers become a strong workforce

[HOW STRONG READERS](#)

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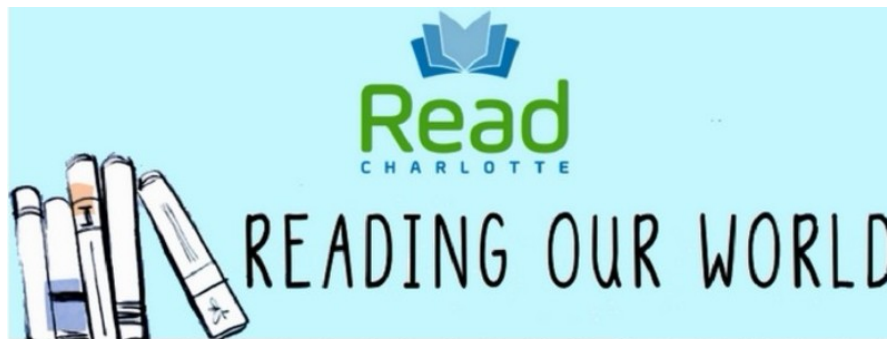
The “Commit to 80” campaign will target families and caregivers at home and in child care programs (primarily with 0-5 year olds), volunteers in schools, professionals at work, as well as various community and faith-based groups, all in an effort to educate and increase engagement around what works to improve early language and literacy.

Even at this early stage in Read Charlotte's work, nearly 100 local companies and organizations have been at the table and committed by supporting and/or integrating evidence-based practices at every turn.

“At the root of it, this work is part of a strong commitment to systems change,” says Richardson. “This means improving and realigning programs, policies, and practices so that more children move down the reading success pathway.”

“Commit to 80” officially opens to the public via the organization's website March 7-21, 2018. At that time, people are invited to sign the commitment form and choose one or more ways to get involved throughout the year. Visit [CommitTo80.org](#) for more information.

(Participants may also pledge commitment by calling 980-819-1431.)



### PHOTOVOICE EXHIBIT OPENS FEBRUARY 2018

In 2016, Read Charlotte embarked upon a project to explore how 2nd and 3rd grade students related to concepts of literacy in their everyday lives. Educators and parents nominated teachers who they felt were particularly community-minded and went above and beyond for their students. These educators from across Charlotte, who serve students in both public and charter school settings, partnered with Read Charlotte to provide a platform for their students' experiences to be seen and heard, using Photovoice.

Some of the goals of Photovoice include helping those who are often unheard gain a voice, enabling them to record and reflect on their experiences and their communities' conditions, and encouraging critical consciousness through choosing, discussing, and reflecting on the subjects of the photographer's images.

"This Photovoice project was a unique way to peek into students' lives, a way to bring home into school. I can see what the students find important. Where they read, who reads with them," explains Charlotte Lab School teacher Emily Fields. "Pictures open up a whole other world. I can see different perspectives in the same family - some siblings wanted to get in on the project too. There was a lot of excitement!"

The participating students come from a variety of backgrounds, speak various languages at home, and have a range of living situations—all are united through their quest for literacy.

Be sure to visit the "Reading our World" exhibit, opening in February at ImaginOn: The Joe and Joan Martin Center (300 E 7th St, Charlotte, NC 28202). The project will be on display for five weeks.

Read Charlotte would like to thank Charlotte Will for funding this project and Facilitate Movement for expertly managing and developing the exhibit.



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