



Collective Impact for Early Literacy

# Literacy Powers Learning

**Reading is the foundational skill for school success**, impacting every aspect of academic achievement across all subjects. That's why learning to read is a student's most important educational challenge. But less than half of Arizona's third graders read at grade level. It's not their fault, it's not right, and we know what to do about it.

**Decades of research provides a clear understanding of** how skilled reading develops and **how to effectively support children**, including struggling readers, in learning to read. And everyone agrees that we all benefit when our students have the literacy skills they need to be successful in school.

**Read On Arizona is our state's collective impact initiative for early literacy.** Partners in Read On Arizona have identified and are implementing the comprehensive set of strategies required to drive large-scale improvement in reading proficiency. From 2013 to 2022, Arizona was one of only six states to make gains in fourth grade reading (NAEP).

**We're on the right course, but there's a lot more to do.** And doing everything we can to help our children read at grade level is not optional.



**Read On Arizona brings partners together to focus on what works. Now we need to build on the momentum."**

*Steve Zabalski, President and CEO | Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust*




Read On Arizona was launched from the urgent, fervent belief that Arizona had to do more to help our young children develop the literacy skills they need to be proficient readers and successful in school.

Our founding partners understood from the beginning that progress is made incrementally, with no quick fixes or magical solutions.

Ten years later, our collaborative efforts have transformed the literacy landscape in the state of Arizona.

We are in position for long-term success, with the comprehensive set of policies, strategies, and targeted investments needed to improve school readiness and third grade reading.

Like every other state, we lost ground through the pandemic. But what was true before remains true now — with the right support and instruction, the vast majority of our children can learn to read at grade level.

 **Read On Arizona has made a huge, positive difference for our students and our state."**

Sean Ross, Executive Director  
*Arizona State Board of Education*

## Collective Impact

- Coming together around common aspirations.
- Using data for strategic learning.
- Focusing on high-leverage opportunities for change.
- Building trust and strengthening relationships through inclusive community engagement.
- Providing strong backbone leadership to align and coordinate the work of the group.

## Core Functions

- Collaboration
- Data Sharing and Analysis
- Policy
- Sustainability
- Communication
- Capacity Building

## Advisory Board

\*Founding Partner

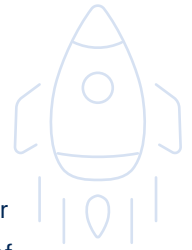
- Arizona Community Foundation\*
- Arizona Dept. of Economic Security
- Arizona Dept. of Education\*
- Arizona Office of the Governor
- Arizona State Board of Education
- Arizona State University
- The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation
- The Burton Family Foundation
- City of Phoenix / Read On Phoenix
- Eyes On Learning
- First Things First\*
- Helios Education Foundation\*
- Maricopa Association of Governments
- Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust
- The Steele Foundation
- Valley of the Sun United Way
- Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust\*

# Milestones

**2013**

## Official launch of Read On Arizona

Terri Clark appointed AZ Literacy Director  
11 Read On Communities formed as part of collective impact initiative for early literacy  
ROA publishes Early Literacy Guide for Families



**2014**

## ROA publishes Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices: A Guide for Practitioners

Arizona awarded \$80M  
Preschool Development Grant  
Read On Communities network grows to 16



**2015**

## ROA launches MapLIT data mapping tool with shared data sets that impact early literacy

Read On San Carlos Apache Tribe becomes first tribal Read On Community



**2016**

Arizona Literacy Director chairs K-3 Literacy Ad Hoc Committee convened by State Board of Education for literacy policy recommendations

ROA releases Factors Related to Early Childhood Literacy research brief  
**25 Read On Communities across Arizona**



**2017**

## ROA releases bilingual Smart Talk awareness campaign for families with children from birth to age 3

**SMART TALK**

Arizona Education Progress Meter includes quality early learning and third grade reading goals

**2018**

Arizona awarded \$4.4M federal grant for family engagement and literacy programs in high-need areas

## ROA publishes Dyslexia Resource Guide for Families

6 Read On Communities receive specialized technical assistance as part of Acceleration Zone project



**2019**

Third grade reading proficiency in Arizona increases to 46%, up 6 pts from 2015

ROA publishes case studies highlighting Arizona schools with exceptional gains in literacy

## Arizona receives 7th consecutive "Pacesetter" recognition from Campaign For Grade-Level Reading



**2020**



## ROA leads Arizona's successful application for \$20M federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant

ROA convenes Arizona-Mississippi learning exchange on policies and practices to accelerate reading outcomes

**2021**

## Arizona enacts new legislation and invests more than \$100M of federal relief funds in early learning and literacy

Arizona 1 of 5 states with all components of effective, comprehensive early literacy policy

**2022**

## Arizona 1 of only 6 states with gains in NAEP 4th grade reading scores from 2013-2022

ROA receives \$2.8M in philanthropic investments over 3 years for expansion and sustainability of collective impact backbone functions

Arizona Dept. of Education makes \$10M grant for Project CALL, funding 5 local literacy hubs and a statewide online resource center developed by ROA

ROA kicks off Arizona-Florida learning exchange

**2023**

## ROA launches new and improved MapLIT 2.0 data center

Arizona awarded \$42M for collaborative Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 renewal application coordinated by ROA

Arizona receives \$2M federal CLSD supplemental grant  
ROA convenes Arizona Chronic Absence Task Force



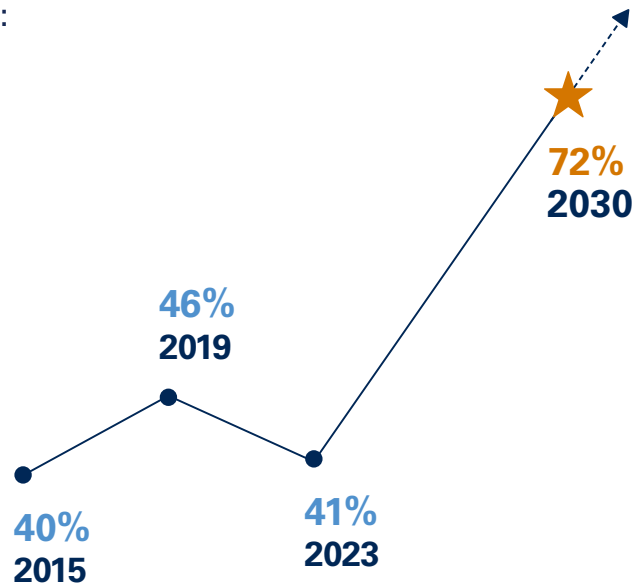
# Moving Forward

Our shared goals are for 72% of Arizona's third graders to be reading proficiently by 2030 and 90% by 2040. Reaching these goals requires a comprehensive, collective approach. No single strategy, program, or policy will get us there.

## We need to prioritize early literacy in Arizona.

That means working together to take the bold action required to get better literacy outcomes faster:

- 1 Build educator capacity in the science of reading.
- 2 Provide the evidence-based instruction, interventions, and support that each student needs.
- 3 Give families the tools to support their children's language and literacy development.
- 4 Expand access to high-quality early learning.



Our success is not guaranteed. Chronic absence has spiked to unprecedented levels, and many other challenges remain. We won't reach our goals without the commitment to collaborate and coordinate our efforts. **Let's get on the same page.**

**"We look to Read On Arizona for the leadership and vision to drive change, reduce achievement gaps, and improve literacy in Arizona."**

Paul J. Luna, President and CEO  
*Helios Education Foundation*



## Join the Collaboration

Learn more at [ReadOnArizona.org](https://ReadOnArizona.org)

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