



## PRESS RELEASE

### **WNY EDUCATION ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES NEW LITERACY PARTNERSHIP** ***The 'WNY Literacy Initiative' Aims to Increase Student Literacy Rates***

**Buffalo, June 6, 2022** – WNY Education Alliance is pleased to announce the formation of an important new partnership aimed at improving literacy rates and educational outcomes across schools in Western New York.

The partnership, known as the **WNY LITERACY INITIATIVE**, represents a collaborative effort comprised of teachers, parent groups, community organizations, education non-profits, and literacy experts, including Dyslexia Allies of WNY, The Education Trust – New York, Literacy Buffalo Niagara, Neuhaus Education Center, The Reading League, Read to Succeed Buffalo, Say Yes Buffalo, Teach My Kid to Read, We the Parents of WNY, WNY Education Alliance, and WNY Literacy Collaborative.

The mission of the WNY Literacy Initiative is to increase awareness of the science of reading and facilitate partnerships between local schools and educational organizations that support evidence-based reading instruction through teacher training and the implementation of high-quality, content-rich curriculum.

The science of reading is a multi-disciplinary body of research that explains how the brain learns to read. Backed by that research, nearly 20 states have enacted legislation aimed at expanding evidence-based reading instruction in schools. While New York is not yet one of those states, several school districts in New York are in the process of implementing literacy programs aligned with reading science, including the New York City Department of Education.

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), less than 35% of fourth grade students in New York State are proficient readers. The data shows that students who are not proficient in reading by third grade end up, on average, experiencing much lower educational outcomes.



To support this initiative, the partners will host a local conference in the fall dedicated to the science of reading. Teachers and school administrators interested in learning more are encouraged to join the WNY Literacy Initiative Facebook group.

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About:

**Dyslexia Allies of WNY**

Dyslexia Allies of WNY is a local chapter of Decoding Dyslexia – NY, and we are allies of all dyslexia groups. Our focus is connecting families to resources, support, educational interventions for dyslexia and improving instruction for students in New York State.

**The Education Trust – New York**

The mission of EdTrust–NY is to eliminate the gaps in equity and opportunity that hold back too many students from reaching their full potential, especially those who are low-income or students of color, in order to enable all students in New York State to achieve at high levels — from early childhood through college.

**Literacy Buffalo Niagara**

We are the only provider of free, one-on-one tutoring for adults in Erie and Niagara counties. Adults looking to read better or learn English are welcome to reach out to us. Our vision is that all people in Erie and Niagara counties are literate. Our mission is to develop literacy skills by providing free tutoring in Erie and Niagara counties through engagement and training of diverse community volunteers.

**Neuhaus Education Center**

Neuhaus Education Center is a non-profit educational organization located in Bellaire, Texas. Our mission is to promote reading success for all by providing evidence-based professional development to educators, information and resources to families, and direct services to adult learners. Learn more at [www.neuhaus.org](http://www.neuhaus.org).

**The Reading League**

The Reading League is a national education nonprofit led by educators and reading experts dedicated to promoting knowledge that will accelerate the global movement toward evidence-aligned reading instruction. We train and support educators and school leaders, and by extension, we also serve parents, specialists, and researchers.

**Read to Succeed Buffalo**

Read to Succeed Buffalo believes that through exposure to high quality, intentional, literacy instruction and literacy-rich environments from birth through 3rd Grade, all children, regardless of economic or social challenges, can achieve success. Read to Succeed Buffalo administers evidence-based literacy coaching programs in licensed child care, Head Start and Kindergarten - 3rd Grade classrooms throughout Buffalo.

**Say Yes Buffalo**

The mission of the Say Yes Buffalo partnership is to remove barriers to educational attainment, workforce participation and economic mobility for students in public and charter schools in Buffalo, NY. Our collective impact partnership, centered on racial equity and inclusion, provides a postsecondary tuition promise and cradle-to-career comprehensive supports to increase the rates of high school and postsecondary completion and the achievement of fulfilling professional employment.

**Teach My Kid to Read**

We are committed to creating awareness and providing education about how we learn to read and where the different resources fit, so librarians, parents and guardians are empowered to help more kids learn to read and discover the joy of reading.

**We the Parents of WNY**

We the Parents of WNY is an intergenerational collaboration of parents, community organizations, faith-based leaders, and concerned educators.

**WNY Education Alliance**

The WNY Education Alliance is a non-profit organization committed to improving education in the Western New York area through advocacy, community engagement, and strategic partnerships.

**WNY Literacy Collaborative**

At WNY Literacy Collaborative, our mission is simple: to help ALL children learn to read. Our goals are to help ensure educators are equipped with the knowledge of evidence-based reading instruction, to provide collaborative implementation and support aligned with the science, and to compile resources into one easy to access, shareable location.

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