

DYERSVILLE
CAMPAIGN FOR
GRADE-LEVEL
READING

3RD GRADE READING
SUCCESS MATTERS

DYERSVILLE CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING
COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS ACTION PLAN

DECEMBER 2015

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Dyersville is a rural community with a lot of rich history and a strong, thriving community spirit. With a population of just over 4,000 and the nearest city, Dubuque, being 30 minutes away, Dyersville takes pride in making sure there are many options and support available for families and youth.

Dyersville is a perfect fit for the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. After learning about the campaign from other networks and communities and seeing the need and struggle from many families in Dyersville, a group of educators, foundations, and non-profit partners worked together to begin the first steps of rallying the community around the cause. Through a network of more than 30 individuals and more than 20 organizations, this Community Solutions Action Plan was written to outline the steps needed to support the community and help its youth to be ready for school, actively participate in school and maintain reading proficiency during the summer.

The known history of Dyersville begins in the late 1800s. In 1847, at the age of twenty-six, James Dyer arrived in the area from Somersetshire, England. Under his leadership, an intensive building program was initiated. The town built by Dyer was known as Dyersville as early as February 13, 1849.

The panic and depression of 1857 and 1873 caused many of the English to leave for more promising places. As the migration of the English continued, they sold farms, homes and stores to German Settlers.

In 1888, many farmers and merchants mortgaged their properties to build a new Catholic church large enough to hold 1,000 people. Pope Pius XII elevated St. Francis Xavier Church to the rank of a Minor Basilica in 1956. Today, Dyersville is known to be made up of predominately Catholic and German families.

In 1945, Fred Ertl, Sr. began to make scale models of farm tractors using molds he created and fired in his basement furnace. This hobby led to a family business and eventually to the Ertl Company. Dyersville is now

known as the “Farm Toy Capital of the World” and is home to the National Farm Toy Museum.

Dyersville is also a place for international baseball fans and dreamers alike. In 1982, screenwriter Phil Robinson became interested in the novel, “Shoeless Joe.” He recognized the potential for this heartwarming story and looked for a setting for the film. In the early months of 1988, Robinson came upon a farm near Dyersville. The movie produced was called “The Field of Dreams,” starring Kevin Costner and James Earl Jones.

According to the 2010 census, Dyersville has a population of just over 4,058 people, with youth ages 0-17 comprising 24.61% of the population. In 2000, the population was 4,035 with 28.01% of the population ages 0-17. Dyersville is made up of a population that is .91% African American, 1.31% Hispanic, and .81% mixed races, with the remaining population Caucasian. This lack of diversity could be seen as a barrier for the community as there is little understanding of diversity and lack of knowledge of the adversity that others face in our community. The median household income is \$44,469, 21.4% of adults have received a Bachelor’s degree or higher and there is also a lack of adequate housing available for lower income families that is conducive to fostering a nurturing environment.

Other barriers and challenges that families face in Dyersville include: lack of public transportation, the geographical size of the school district, and the distance from many family and human services. Besides school buses to transport students to and from school and school activities, there are no other means for families to travel to work, medical appointments, or for other support services unless they have a personal vehicle. The rural population and setting separates the Dyersville community from more urban areas that many people may need to travel to for services such as: Dubuque; Madison, WI; or Iowa City.

The Western Dubuque School District is the largest geographical school district in Iowa and is roughly

half the size of Rhode Island. There are also private Catholic schools that are ranked top in the state in both academics and athletics in Dyersville and the surrounding communities.

The rural setting of Dyersville also makes it difficult to define “community.” Dyersville Elementary is part of the Western Dubuque School District, which cuts into five counties and 25 different communities. In fact, Dyersville Elementary alone not only serves students within Dyersville city limits, but also students who live in the communities of Worthington and Petersburg. This has made it difficult to ever track data in the past such as graduation rates related just to Dyersville as the High School is in a completely different community and has not been aggregated based on Dyersville. An ongoing process will include looking at what is defined as “community” and how to best serve students and families in the area.

Despite the challenges from being situated in a rural area, the school system has proven to be strength for Dyersville. Dyersville has 1,180 students enrolled in school, Pre-K to High School. Currently, 71% of third grade students are reading at grade level, which puts them on the path to graduate high school on time and ready to enter college and the workforce. Dyersville has only a 1.5% dropout rate and is well on its way to closing gaps and reaching every student.

While there are many in-home options for childcare in the area, there is only one public childcare center. This center alone serves 141 children, 90 families, and offers a free preschool program for 4 year olds that is funded by the State of Iowa through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program. The size of the community can also be viewed as a strength, with support through civic organizations such as: the Lion’s Club, Dyersville Federated Woman’s Club, Knights of Columbus, and Young Professionals. Being a rural and agricultural community also instills an ideal of work ethic and a spirit of supporting those in your own backyard.

Those supporting their community through the founding steering committee of the Dyersville Campaign for Grade-Level Reading include:

American Trust and Savings Bank
Beckman Catholic High School
Child Care Resource and Referral
City of Dyersville
Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque
Dubuque County Early Childhood
Dyersville Chamber/GLR Coordinator
Dyersville Area Community Foundation
Dyersville Elementary School
Dyersville Federated Women’s Club
Dyersville Residents/Parents
Foster Grandparents
Girl Scouts
Iowa State Extension Office
James Kennedy Public Library
Kid Project Community Childcare Center
Life Connections
Mercy Medical Center
Northeast Iowa Community College
Operation: New View
Project Concern
St. Francis Xavier School
St. Mark Youth Enrichment
Victory Ford
Western Dubuque Schools
Woodland Eye Clinic

These volunteers dedicate their time, knowledge and resources to raise awareness of Grade Level Reading to the community as well as assist with development of events, volunteer coordination and program implementation.

ASSURANCE #1: THE PROBLEM

The three Campaign focus areas of school readiness, school attendance and summer learning, are areas that Dyersville has been invested in and working to improve. The Campaign will help to coordinate efforts throughout the community to be able to identify goals and outcomes, work towards them as a unified front, and be able to measure the impact. As a rural community, Dyersville works hard to improve the quality of life so that young families stay in the area to raise their children and eventually join the workforce. The coalition, made up of private and public schools, non-profits, businesses and community members, is confident that this plan will help pave the way to make these efforts come possible.

Dyersville is fortunate to have two exceptional elementary schools that both provide preschool programming. It also has a childcare center that serves children from four weeks to 12 years old. Dyersville had an estimated median household income of \$44,469 in 2012, which was lower than the state average of \$50,957. Dyersville is also facing a declining and aging population, as well as increasing levels of poverty despite low unemployment. This is related to the types of low-paying, service-oriented jobs that comprise much of the current job market.

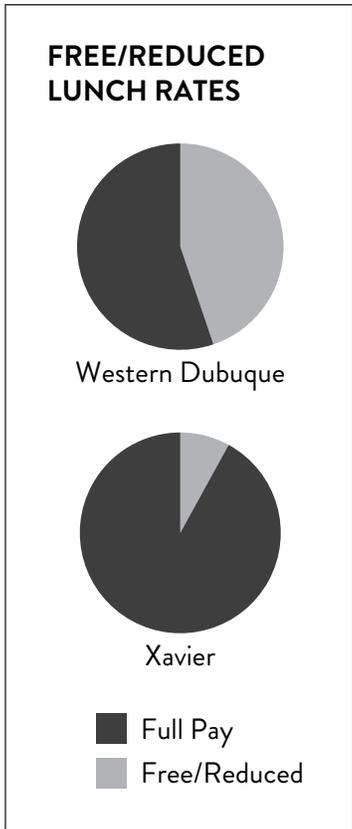
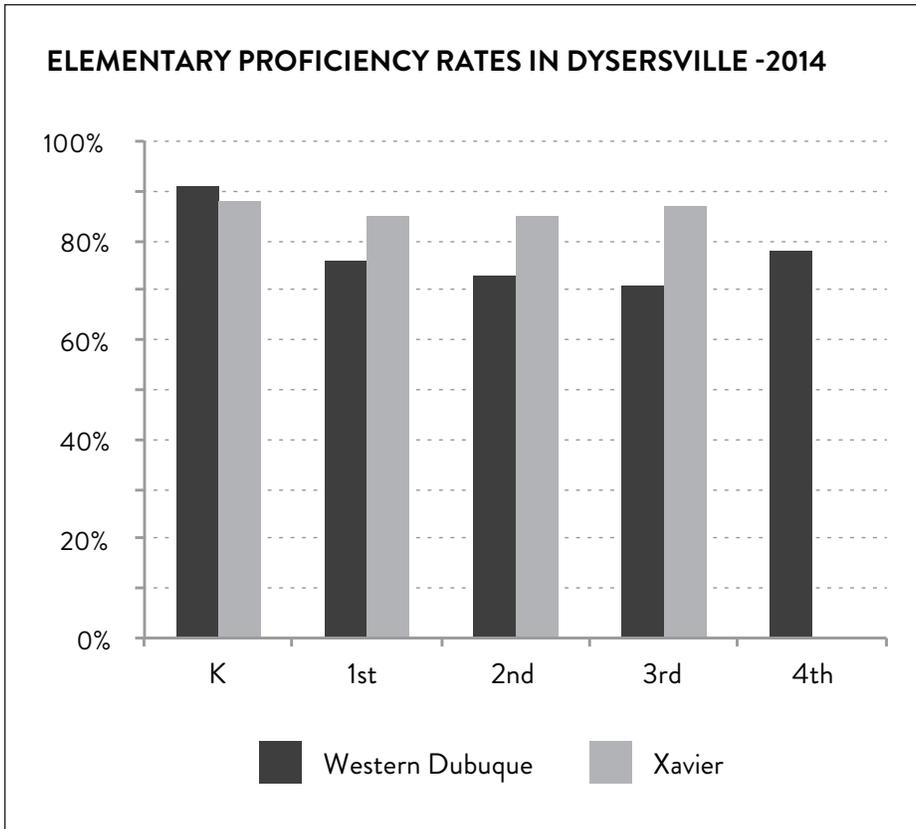
Dyersville Elementary, one of six elementary schools in the Western Dubuque Community School District, serves 278 students which includes preschool through fourth grade. Of those students, 44.8% are eligible for free or reduced lunches. During the 2014-2015 school year, Dyersville Elementary had a 7% absentee rate and a 9% mobility rate. Research reveals that students who frequently move can be negatively impacted academically and socially. The mobility rate in Dyersville is not alarming in comparison to surrounding larger cities such as Dubuque and Cedar Rapids, but it has an incredible impact on a small community.

Reading proficiency rates for each grade at Dyersville Elementary are as follows: kindergarten-91%, first grade-76%, second grade-73%, third grade-71%, fourth grade-78%. These baseline scores were taken at the

end of the 2014-2015 school year using AIMSweb and were monitored closely throughout the year by the school faculty and administration. Using a “data wall,” students are tracked based on their reading proficiency at the beginning of the year, as well as other data such as gender, lunch status and grade. Students are tested again mid-year and at the end of the year for proficiency and cards, which represent individual students, are moved along the continuum of the wall to show what progress they have made. 66% of students at Dyersville Elementary who receive free or reduced lunches are meeting reading proficiency and 83.5% of students in non-white ethnic groups are meeting reading proficiency standards. Data based on ELL students who live in the Dyersville area is not available as those students attend a different school center in another community where ELL services are more readily available. The Assessment Wall data for the school also indicates that only 73% of male students are proficient, while 83% of female students are proficient.

St. Francis Xavier School is a private Catholic elementary school in Dyersville that serves students from preschool through sixth grade. The enrollment of St. Francis Xavier is 375 and of those students, 8% are eligible for free or reduced lunches. During the 2014-2015 school year, St. Francis Xavier had a 1% absentee rate and a mobility rate that is not tracked but is incredibly small, according to administration.

Reading proficiency rates recorded during the 2014-2015 School year for each grade at St. Francis Xavier School using FAST were as follows: kindergarten-88%, first grade- 85%, second grade- 85%, third grade- 87%. While there is a large difference between proficiency rates at Dyersville Elementary and St. Francis Xavier, there are also differences in families who attend the schools including socio-economic status and race, which changes the number of resources and supports that are available to them in a smaller, rural community.



The National Summer Learning Association reports that summer learning programs targeted to low-income students can help close the achievement gap that has been attributed, at least in part, to cumulative learning loss during the summer. Additionally, longitudinal studies indicate that the effects of summer learning programs endure for at least two years after participation. The Afterschool Alliance and National Summer Learning Association report that regular attendance in high quality after-school and summer programs is associated with a range of positive academic and social developmental outcomes including: improved literacy skills, self-esteem growth and leadership development. There is also an emerging focus on research and practice on strategic partnerships that link school, community and family resources. This is a particularly important area of study for summer programs, since it affords community partners the opportunity to collaborate with schools and other agencies in a different way.

The most recent summer learning program had an outcome goal of 88% of the students maintaining or

growing in reading proficiency during the summer and used a Quick Phonics Screener (QPS) to measure the students. At the end of the 2015 summer, 100% of the students in the program maintained or saw growth, but there is still work that needs to be done to measure summer learning loss for the community as a whole.

Although Dyersville has a rich history and has people of influence that started and continue the traditions of worldwide tourism and reverence, there are some key challenges that the community has identified which impact grade-level reading.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Although parents in Dyersville are involved in their child’s life, there have not been many studies or opportunities to look at what parents value. Athletics in Dyersville, especially soccer, ball (baseball, softball, or T-ball) and gymnastics are very widely attended and participated. More than 1,034 youth take part in some sort of city organized sport throughout the year.

However, academic opportunities that involve parents revolve around the school or the library and the numbers show that there is room and need for improvement. Between the two elementary schools, 12 parents actively serve on the Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO). The PTO serves as a great way to get families involved and each school hosts events such as Fun Days, Movie Nights, or holiday parties that bring families into the schools. Academics play a small role in these, in that they are held at the schools and there is nothing available for children who are not yet school-aged. Additionally, the library holds events such as Wee Read, Story Hour, and a Summer Reading Program that invites youth to log their reading to win prizes or get hands-on enrichment learning opportunities.

In 2013, 492 children participated in the library's summer reading program. In 2014, for unknown reasons, the number slipped to 351. Parental involvement could be increased with more opportunities that apply to all children in the household and to the family unit as well. Additionally, increased focus on children from birth to preschool is recommended as there are currently no opportunities aside from library offerings that are readily available and marketed to the general public. . Parent involvement helps unite a family and helps parents to support their family's learning.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a large issue for residents who live within and outside of the city limits of Dyersville. Currently there is no public transportation and families are faced with difficulties getting their children to school, traveling to and from work and accessing healthcare resources. While Dyersville does have biking and walking trails, such as Heritage Trail and trails/sidewalks that go through the majority of the city, it is not always an option for families with children due to the harsh winter that Dyersville endures.

It is a small enough community that many children could walk or bike to school, but currently there are not sidewalks on all streets, including the streets that lead to Dyersville Elementary, making walking or biking a dangerous endeavor for young children. The largest issue with transportation is that many families who need to travel to Dubuque or further for specialized

healthcare, resources, or support from providers have no way of traveling to the location unless they have a personal vehicle.

AWARENESS/BIAS

Although awareness and personal bias is difficult to measure, it was an area that came up multiple times during fact finding sessions with community members and parents. To outsiders, Dyersville is seen as wealthy and closed off-somewhat of a gated community. Through conversations with neighboring community leaders and internal community leaders, some have felt that the issues that Dyersville faces must be dramatized or heightened as they are difficult for some to comprehend.

The poverty rate in Dyersville is so well hidden and is only in certain parts of the community, that some people fail to recognize it exists. On the flip side, there is also an air of fear centered on what people will think if their neighbors find out they are struggling. Many times, people are not aware of the issues that a family may be facing so they cannot make them aware of resources that are available to them.

Similarly, there are biases and stereotypes based around gender that need to be addressed. Currently, 70.6% of male and 90.9% of female students are reading proficiently. Looking at this comparison, males are scoring significantly lower than females, which indicates that measures must be taken to ensure that males are better engaged. According to a report from Dubuque County Early Childhood, parents reading to their child starting from birth is on the rise. 68.23% of parents in Dubuque County reported reading to their child from birth to one year old. 86.8% of parents reported reading to their child 3-6 times per week while their child was enrolled in kindergarten.

Awareness for screenings also needs to be created. This ties in with the transportation challenge, but screening opportunities for school readiness, healthcare, and other personal family needs are not available in the rural community at this time or there may be ineffective use of resources due to personal bias and lack of awareness.

ASSURANCE #2-DESTINATION

The overall outcome and goal of the Dyersville Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is that 90% of students will read proficiently by third grade.

To get out of a static state of proficiency, the entire community will need to take steps to ensure they are reaching out to and impacting the 35.33% of students that are not reading at grade level, not prepared to enter school ready to learn, and are chronically absent.

The Dyersville Area Community Foundation, city leaders and Grade-Level Reading steering committee are committed to finding ways to lead the community towards the goal. Through focusing on collective impact efforts, strengthening existing programs, and improving or creating programs where needed, a community dialogue will begin and grow.

Through collective impact, our goals will be realized and every child in the Dyersville community will be

supported in their learning. Families will also sense the presence of community support as biases are reduced and awareness is increased. Focusing on third grade reading means concentrated efforts must begin for every individual from birth to career.

GOALS

For the purpose of this CSAP, goals have been broken down into categories. The goals are based on the recurring themes that look at community need, current services and barriers. The themes have then been divided into short-term goals or long-term goals. Short-term goals are to be accomplished in the first year and long-term goals are to be accomplished by the end of the third year. Long-term goals with an asterisk (*) may not be fully accomplished by year three but will be going through data analysis and planning to determine next steps as deemed necessary by the community at that time.

SUMMER LEARNING

We aim to have each of the elementary schools decrease their rate of summer learning loss or enhance their rate of summer gain by 5% every two years. By 2020, all schools will be on the plus side, showing regular gains each year. This will be measured by determining baseline scores in proficiency at the beginning and end of structured summer programs, as well as in the spring of the school year and the start of the new school year.

SUMMER LEARNING		
THEMES	SHORT-TERM GOALS	LONG-TERM GOALS
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through a community forum, parents and community members will learn about the GLR campaign, have an opportunity to ask questions and get more involved. Awareness will be created and measured through a parent survey sent out by the Dyersville schools. Put 3 new or (promote) existing initiatives in place to get free books to students during the summer months. Streamlined marketing across all medias such as Facebook, website, partner newsletters and press releases to reach all audiences consistently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leaders will continue to support and offer insight in GLR by participating on the Steering Committee or through support of community events. Infuse academic programming through all summer programs and camps (Parks and Rec, Total Fitness, etc). Increase the number of students involved in the JKPL summer reading program by 10%. By 2020, 75% of youth in Dyersville will be signed up.

SUMMER LEARNING

THEMES	SHORT-TERM GOALS	LONG-TERM GOALS
Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys will be sent out or distributed through the schools and at events and analyzed to determine what types of trainings parents, child care providers and community members have an interest in. • At least one training will be planned and implemented in the first year • A list of available trainings in the tri-state area will be compiled and distributed to parents and child care providers. These would include QRS trainings provided through Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) as well as trainings on the importance of reading and how to integrate reading in everyday activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent, community and child care provider trainings centered on GLR will be assessed and developed as needed. • A focus on accessibility will help bring more training opportunities to the Dyersville area through partnerships and existing programs.
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote reading through Reading in the Park event with local celebrities and sponsors. • Host yearly parent engagement events focused on reading and basic health needs during the summer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plans to extend and offer more home visit based services to families in need during the summer months. • Increase the number of family reading events and “wee” reading opportunities through partnerships with the JKPL and other community partners.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and grow St. Mark’s summer learning program, JKPL program and Victory Ford’s program by 3% each year. • Engage city officials and initiatives to include a GLR focus. • Share success stories and opportunities through mainstreamed medias. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding streams will be created through businesses and individual sponsors. • Transportation will be provided to families to travel to summer learning programs by 2018. • Collaboration with the school district will be strengthened and communication will include ways to support the schools through Iowa State Law Chapter 62.
Data	<p>Summer learning programs will increase in attendance by 3% each year starting in 2016.</p>	<p>Expanded hours of summer learning programs will be offered by 2017 to include an opportunity of a full day collaborated program.</p>

SCHOOL READINESS

In an effort to make sure students are reading at grade level by third grade, our overall goal is to ensure students are ready for school and ready to learn when they enter kindergarten.

SCHOOL READINESS		
THEMES	SHORT-TERM GOALS	LONG-TERM GOALS
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and collect baseline data from the School District and Dubuque County Early Childhood to effectively measure school readiness. Through a community forum, parents and community members will learn about the GLR campaign, and have an opportunity to ask questions and get involved. Awareness will also be created and measured through annual parent surveys sent out by the Dyersville schools. Initiatives in place to get free books to students starting at birth (Dolly Parton Imagination Library to those living in Dubuque County). Communication to parents and child care providers on what quality child care does, what it should look like and how to find it. Awareness of all trainings, family engagement opportunities and community support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a community and culture where school readiness is measured and made a priority. Develop screenings through the school that will more effectively engage parents identify strategies that the community can help initiate to close the school readiness gap. Screenings such as vision, well child, dental and hearing would be made more readily available and would include information for parents on what the screenings identified as possible issues and the importance of them. Develop a funding plan to ensure the sustainability of programs to help students and families from birth to age five.
Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys will be sent out and analyzed to determine what types of trainings parents, child care providers, and community members have an interest in. At least one training will be planned and implemented in the first year. A list of available trainings in the tri-state area will be compiled and distributed to parents and child care providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent, community and child care provider trainings centered on GLR will be assessed and developed as needed. A focus on accessibility will help bring more training opportunities to the Dyersville area through partnerships and existing programs.

SCHOOL READINESS

THEMES	SHORT-TERM GOALS	LONG-TERM GOALS
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide materials for parents to do at home with their children to help them prepare for school. • Provide follow up consultation from trainings to continuously aid parents and offer support. • 3 Family Engagement Nights will be planned and implemented throughout the year based around needs parents identify through surveys and communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore programs and opportunities to develop/extend and offer more home visit based services to families in need. • Increase the number of family reading events and wee reading opportunities. • Develop, plan and implement a kid’s resource fair for Dyersville that will include information for parents, as well as health screenings. • Provide workshops and follow up consultations from trainings to continuously aid parents and offer support.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Kid Project as they advance in QRS ratings for quality child care. • Engage 100% registered in-home child care providers with supports and resources that are currently available throughout the county. • Begin fostering a relationship with Dyersville Family Practice and Medical Associates as well as local dental and vision providers. • Partner with Operation: New View and Head Start to connect with parents and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding streams will be created through businesses and individual sponsors. • Explore opportunities to begin Reach Out and Read program with expectant or new mothers and their infants and health care providers; this will provide books to youth starting at their first wellness check-up. • Develop methods and ways to bring screening and health care services to families who cannot travel out of town. Through continued conversations and annual parent surveys, we will continue to identify barriers that can be a deterrent for establishing relationships for proper screenings and medical support.

ATTENDANCE

With chronic absenteeism rates at 7% and 1% at Dyersville Elementary and St. Francis Xavier respectively, we aim to decrease these by continued success at St. Francis Xavier and cutting the rate in half at Dyersville Elementary by year three.

ATTENDANCE		
THEMES	SHORT-TERM GOALS	LONG-TERM GOALS
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to spread awareness of the attendance policy with parents and students through Attendance Awareness Month in September, parent communication via digital school newsletters and extended out of school time reminders such as around holidays. Ensure students are aware of what good attendance means and reward positive attendance. Initiate dialogue with the health sector (Dyersville Family Practice, Medical Associates, Mercy, etc) to discuss health and the impact it has on attendance. Continuously provide data and programs for the school districts on attendance through webinars, Attendance Works, conferences and other school programs. Schools will start or continue to monitor chronic absence rates, as well as the reasoning factors behind them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leaders will continue to support and offer insight in GLR. Implement policy in schools that will support increased attendance and reduced chronic absence. Each year, Dyersville schools will work to reduce Chronic Absenteeism by 1%.
Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys will be sent out and analyzed to determine what types of trainings parents, child care providers and community members have an interest in. Distribute trainings or webinars that are available to key policy makers and administrators within the school on how to decrease chronic absence rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide trainings centered on attendance to parents, community and child care provider.
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyze data to determine the reason for chronic absenteeism. Each year, Dyersville schools will work to reduce Chronic Absenteeism by 1%. Provide or continue to provide student attendance success plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop mentor program to connect and build community support and excitement for school. Provide supports to families who are missing school due to outside factors (transportation, daycare, work schedules, etc).

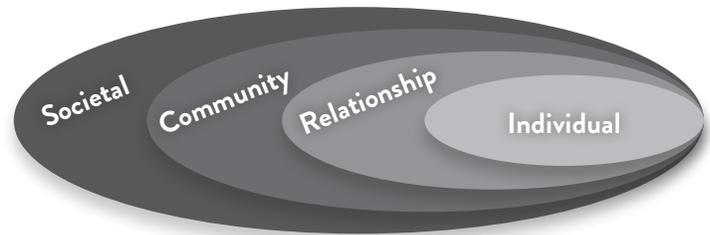
ATTENDANCE

THEMES	SHORT-TERM GOALS	LONG-TERM GOALS
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign attendance buddies to students. • Develop partnerships with health care providers to determine ways to educate families on the importance of attendance. • Continue to build on partnerships with the schools to be able to offer any needed support. • Look at possible partnerships with established groups that have the same goals and strategies (i.e. Lion’s Club). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer plans or support for health care providers so students do not need to miss school. • Develop student success plan for transportation to school. • Support and work with health care providers to offer wellness checks and sports physicals outside of school time as much as possible. • Develop long-term partnership with the Dyersville Lion’s Club to look at vision as one barrier to students missing school, and develop strategies to help students and families have affordable eye care options. • Raise funds and establish plan to bring Vision to Learn program to Dyersville community.

ASSURANCE #3-STRATEGY

The strategy for the Dyersville Campaign for Grade-Level Reading will focus on the themes outlined above (awareness, trainings, family engagements and partnerships) with a plan to look at who is being impacted in the community and how they are being served. In order to best work through collective impact, the themes and strategies will be framed around the social-ecological model to encompass every person, from child to parent and from school administrator to local government officials.

The social ecological model is typically used in the health care setting or to help identify strategies to prevent violence. It will be used in this plan as a way to prevent students from not meeting grade level reading proficiency. The model looks at how the community works in complex but associated levels: individual, relationship, community and societal. Individual is based on what one person is doing or gaining from a program. Relationship would include parental interaction. Community would be community-based programs.



Societal would be defined more through policy or societal change and awareness through action.

The ongoing strategy will also involve defining the term “community” for the Dyersville community as well as the school district community. Dyersville is in the Western Dubuque School District and the school district serves 17 communities. Cascade, a neighboring community and also a part of the Western Dubuque School District, will continue to explore the ways and means through which the Campaign for Grade-Level reading can impact their schools, which are currently identified as Schools In Need of Assistance (SINA). In an effort to have full engagement, the Dyersville

campaign will continue to explore how impact can best be made.

Existing establishments and programs will serve as an invaluable resource for information, as well as to provide baseline data and a starting point. The Dyersville Campaign will stand to support and help grow existing programs that currently help support the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading.

SUMMER LEARNING

The strategy for summer learning is to continue to support the existing programs including: St. Mark Youth Enrichment, the James Kennedy Public Library (JKPL), Victory Ford and the Dyersville Parks and Rec Department. St. Mark Youth Enrichment received a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant in 2015 that will help support the Dyersville summer reading program for three years for 60 students each year. This program is led by certified teachers and is held at Dyersville Elementary for seven weeks, five days a week from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. The program is open to all students in the area who are entering kindergarten through fifth grade the following year, and is designed to be hands-on and focused on literacy with physical literacy and science activities combined.

The JKPL program is offered annually and is open to all children in the Dyersville area. The program provides incentives for children who read or participate in the free library programs. In 2015 the summer reading program has a “Heroes” theme and asks children to read and fill out a BINGO card. They may fill a space on a BINGO card by reading the designated amount of time on the spot, reading a certain genre of book, going a full day without TV or electronics, or other related items.

The Victory Ford Summer Reading program is in its first year after providing a reading program to students at Dyersville Elementary and St. Francis Xavier School during the past school year. This summer reading program also provides students with a BINGO card where they are able to fill in spaces by reading books in a particular location or of a particular genre. Victory Ford provides incentives based on what type of BINGO the student wins.

Communication and collaboration with the Western Dubuque Community School District will continue to grow and deepen as 2017 approaches and Chapter 62 is implemented. Iowa Code 281—62.1(256,279) states that “all actions under this chapter must provide reasonable expectation that a student’s progress toward reading proficiency is sufficient to master appropriate grade four level reading skills prior to the student’s promotion to grade four.” Furthermore, the state code 62.5(2) states “If the parent or guardian does not enroll the student in the intensive summer reading program and the student is ineligible for the good-cause exemption under rule 281—62.8(256,279), the student shall be retained in grade three pursuant to rule 281—62.7(256,279).” Discussion will also focus on ways to support summer learning for students even before they enter school to be proactive in helping students reach reading proficiency.

The Dyersville Parks and Recreation Department will continue to grow and include literacy as a core component of their programming. A Little Free Library is available to be placed and the green space outside of the Dyersville Aquatic Center is being considered as a placement location. A book give-away is also being planned during sports programs to infuse literacy and an excitement for reading in all scheduled recreational programs. Ongoing communication with families will help to drive families and students to these programs. Strategies include word of mouth, paper flyers for students and families, and social media. Examples of these include:

- Family Reading events in the park to publicly share the importance of literacy and to engage families through community building.
- Handouts passed out at community or family events. These would also be available at other locations such as the library and hospitals. Topics covered would be general information on GLR and how families can get involved.
- Facebook and Twitter accounts have been created to establish a common ground and forum for individuals to share and learn more about GLR. Additionally, a page on the Dyersville Area Chamber of Commerce has been created with upcoming events and contact information.

These examples are all ways to reach the individual, relationship, and community levels of the social ecological mode. Further, once “community” is defined more thoroughly, discussions will be initiated with the neighboring communities of Worthington and New Vienna. Currently, these communities do not have contracts with city or county libraries. Students from these communities feed into Dyersville Elementary or St. Francis Xavier School and impact the entire community. Identifying ways to provide books to these students and have access for these communities will address societal change.

SCHOOL READINESS

The strategies for School Readiness will also begin with a focus on awareness. Parent surveys will be sent out through the schools and other child service providers to determine what families are already aware of and using for supports. Awareness will be created using the methods listed above for summer learning (verbal, paper, digital/social media) with a goal of helping families and the community to understand the importance of school readiness and look at ways to work together. Focus groups with parents and community members, and dialogue with city council members and other city officials will create a culture where school readiness is critical to the success of the community and economy.

Developing new partnerships with area service providers is also a strategy for the Dyersville Campaign and a focus on working with the Dyersville Head Start will be part of this strategy. The Campaign and Head Start will work together to determine how they can expand upon parent resources and increased access to books. Head Start families will be a target audience for a number of planned community engagement and events in which the Campaign will provide resources including reading strategies, academic supports, health and developmental awareness, etc. Parents and Caregivers will also be given an opportunity to volunteer and get involved with the Campaign. Long-term strategies focus on using funds or leveraging awareness to bring more services to the rural Dyersville Community. Currently, there are providers who serve all of Dubuque County, but due to lack of funding or awareness, services are not provided in Dyersville. Additionally, preliminary surveys that were sent out to measure awareness and

understanding of parents indicate that parents are interested in learning more, but do not know where to turn. These strategies would help create a more succinct place for searching and locating information needed to help students be ready for school. Parent information, resources and books will also be made available through local services such as the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program and physician offices, where families will most likely be going for on-going routine services.

A Foster Grandparent program is being presented to the community as an informal volunteer program which will help students in school, at preschool centers and at the library. Currently, barriers are preventing the program from taking off due to income limitations and requirements of the program. Local volunteers have already written letters to state legislators to change the requirements of the program and help make it more viable in the Dyersville community.

Some current partnerships that will be expanded on to help in this area include:

- Mercy Hospital and Medical Associates
- Dyersville Commercial
- Dubuque County Early Childhood
- Child Care Resource and Referral

These strategies will focus largely on individual, relationship and community levels but may include societal if there are underlying issues in quality child care that arise and need to be addressed.

ATTENDANCE

The strategies to focus on attendance and decrease chronic absence will largely center on the schools where attendance is being measured. Dyersville Elementary, which currently has a 7% chronic absence rate, is already working on adapting school policies to combat this. Through a system of identifying the responsible school personnel to measure chronic absences, increasing communication with parents and providing a system of supports for parents who may need it, the chronic absence rate will be re-assessed to see what means are working and what additional measures need to be taken. Surveys will continue to be

sent out to gauge parent's understandings and beliefs of the importance of attendance as well as look at other barriers that may contribute to the rate.

We know that many barriers can affect good attendance including things such as health, transportation and lack of priority. Good vision falls into this area and a student who has not been properly screened or has received proper vision care which would result in glasses can have a detrimental impact on academic success. In Dyersville and surrounding area, efforts to bring a mobile vision clinic are being explored. This type of program would remove transportation barriers and increase access to students who might not otherwise receive the care they need.

This type of program would be funded by philanthropy and Medicaid reimbursement and supported by the School District. One goal of the program is to establish a relationship with local optometrists while providing 2 pairs of eye glasses, for free, to those students who need them. Not only will this establish a healthy relationship with local providers, but it will also address health needs while helping students to feel supported in school without missing school to attend a vision appointment to receive the care they need.

The social ecological model levels addressed will be individual (student participation and awareness),

relationship (parent education and awareness), and community (school programs and policy).

ADDRESSING BARRIERS

Each of these focus areas will have strategies that will examine the barriers discussed earlier to the overall Campaign for Grade-Level Reading-parental involvement, transportation and awareness/bias. Parental involvement will be key to ensuring the success of these strategies and parents will be brought into the campaign to serve not only a sounding board, but also as co-leaders in collaborating to make this campaign a success. Dialogue will be opened up and continue to stay open to support their needs and other grass root efforts they may initiate to better the community.

Transportation may be solved in the future with additional funding. Due to the rural and large geographical area of the Dyersville community, these strategies will work to bring services and supports closer to Dyersville and throughout the entire community through partnerships with Dubuque County service providers. Finally, awareness/biases will be continually worked on to make sure every level of the community is informed of what the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is, the importance of it and how they can get involved.

ASSURANCE #4-CONNECTING FOR SYNERGY

The Dyersville Campaign for Grade-Level Reading currently has 32 community members who serve on the steering committee. There are three sub-committees that were created to focus on the three focus areas of GLR (summer learning, school readiness and attendance.) Each of these partners have shown an interest in the campaign because of their direct work with children, a belief and desire to serve the wider community, or as a way to support those who are doing the work. The Dyersville community schools already work to achieve goals that focus on the whole student, which fall in line with the goals of the Campaign. A

greater awareness for the Campaign, which will be a focus in year one, will bring together community members and businesses to leverage more support and funding to continue these initiatives as the results are measured and shared.

The partners at the table for the Dyersville Campaign are invested in helping to better the lives of families in Dyersville. These partners also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) stating their belief in the campaign, their desire to remain a part of it and to see it expand and grow. The Community Foundation of

Greater Dubuque and the Dyersville Area Community Foundation will also continue to serve as partners and as guides on this endeavor to monitor CSAP progress and offer support.

Dyersville is fortunate to be a part of Dubuque County and receive supports and resources through Dubuque County Early Childhood and Child Care Resource and Referral. Those relationships will continue to be examined for possible growth. Northeast Iowa

Community College (NICC) is also an institution that proved to be incredibly valuable with the St. Mark Youth Enrichment Summer Pilot Program, and that relationship will continue through resources and opportunities to share information. A concentrated effort will be made to focus on what programs are currently available and to strengthen or grow these programs rather than creating new ones. This will help to better utilize services that already exist as well as to reduce the costs needed to create new programs.

ASSURANCE #5-DATA

Much of the grade level literacy, attendance and school readiness data is available through the Western Dubuque Community School District and Dyersville Elementary. Dyersville Elementary and St. Francis Xavier Elementary have both agreed to share data that would be relevant and necessary to track progress through the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. This agreement was made through an MOU, which all members of the steering committee signed, and can be broken down by subcategories, including race, IEPs and income groups.

Additional data on school readiness is tracked and maintained by Dubuque County Early Childhood, which publicly shares their findings and is committed to helping Dubuque County students grow and develop on track to succeed in school and life. Any materials received through parent surveys that were administered by the Dyersville Campaign will also be shared with community members in a way that confidentiality is

not breached, and individualized information will not be received or stored.

Dyersville Elementary uses AimsWeb to track students' progress as well as a data wall that they are willing to share to examine areas that the Campaign can focus on to close any gaps in service. They will be using a new procedure to combat chronic absence starting in the fall of 2015. This procedure will focus on more school-to-home communication with students who are absent during the school year as well as more information on the importance of being in school.

There is not yet a standardized, centralized, and ongoing source of data on gains or losses in reading proficiency on the number of Dyersville children attending summer learning programs. One of the ongoing tasks of the Dyersville Campaign is to work on a system for tracking this information.

ASSURANCE #6-SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Continuously cultivating relationships and partnerships between the Dyersville Area Community Foundation, Dyersville Elementary/Western Dubuque, St. Francis Xavier School, business community and other community partners will help sustain and establish support for the Dyersville Campaign for Grade-Level Reading through the goals and strategies outlined in the CSAP.

The Dyersville Campaign will focus on continuously building support and awareness through engaging the entire community. Plans are in place, and some in progress already, to engage parents and other community members through public events, city functions, surveys, community workshops and trainings. Meetings will continue to be held on an on-going basis to deepen the dialogue around grade-level reading and grow the number of stakeholders. Meetings and conversations will also continue to unfold with the Western Dubuque School District to make adjustments and improvements in the plans as necessary as more surrounding communities become aware of the campaign and the school's leadership begins to see the effects.

Dyersville's Grade-Level Reading steering committee has formed critical partnerships that will allow the Campaign to begin seeking funding that is aligned with the strategies in the CSAP. All partners in the Campaign are aligned with similar missions and desires to help students in the area grow and flourish in grade-

level reading, as well as other social-emotional and academic areas. Having the two elementary schools, Western Dubuque administration, business personnel, nonprofit organizations, city entities and child care providers at the table helps to ensure a connectedness and openness to achieve the goals outlined in the CSAP.

Beyond the Dyersville Grade-Level Reading steering committee, we will need the help of dedicated teachers, families, parents and other volunteers to make the plan a success. By reaching out through community forums, Parent Teacher Organizations, schools, student groups, nonprofits and business partners, the community will be engaged by asking what commitments they can make to support grade level reading and the three focus areas. We will ask for commitments to the CSAP and invite everyone to play a role. Special efforts will be made to involve parents of students who are not reading at grade level or may need additional services that are not readily available to them.

Financial sustainability will be supported through local support through sponsorships for family events and programs. Grants will also be written and obtained to focus on specific strategies and programs such as Vision to Learn, family engagement events and books. The close partnership with the Dyersville Area Community Foundation will also help to connect donors and increase sustainability for the Grade Level Reading Campaign.

OVERVIEW OF THE CSAP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The CSAP development process started at the beginning of the calendar year by meeting with stakeholders on a one-on-one basis. Once the initial stakeholders were identified, a kick-off meeting was held to give an overview of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, as well as to identify if those attending were interested in pursuing the campaign for the Dyersville area. With over 30 stakeholders in attendance, the plan and decision to pursue adding Dyersville to the map of communities connected to the Campaign was unanimous.

The next main step in joining the Campaign was submitting a letter of intent, as well as hiring a community coordinator. The community coordinator's role is to bring the community together to facilitate discussion and conversation around grade-level reading, and to help steer community partners and participants on the path that will help achieve the goals outlined in the CSAP.

The key to moving forward and completing the CSAP was the willingness and commitment from stakeholders. The schools were instrumental in providing data and

outlining what some of the goals needed to be. This is especially crucial since they have the most interaction with children and parents in the Dyersville area. As stated earlier, Dyersville is unique in that it is a rural town that serves as a hub for so many communities in the area, but also relies on services that are provided from agencies that serve the entire community but are based in Dubuque. This created a challenge to not only look at ways to bridge the gap, but to also look at the best way to communicate. Due to scheduling issues and a travel time of up to 40 minutes for partners, the best way to communicate became via Email and at periodic group and sub-committee meetings. Each sub-committee met to look at what the largest barriers were, as well as strategize and discuss solutions.

The CSAP in this complete phase will serve as a guiding tool. We plan to view it as a living document that we will be able to use to track progress but also change and adapt as necessary to meet the needs of the community and grow if needed.

