

State of Michigan Race to Literacy 5-Year Plan

Beyond Basics Literacy Intervention

501(c)3 Nonprofit founded in 1999





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To Whom It May Concern,

A country that does not teach its children to read cannot call itself a nation of opportunity. Every day, we meet bright, capable young people who have made it all the way to high school and beyond without ever learning how to read. They've been passed along not because they're unwilling to learn—they are capable, and our work proves it—but because no one had the time, training, or resources to help them.

At Beyond Basics, we sit beside these students one-on-one. We see the moment their eyes light up when letters that once made no sense suddenly form words they can read. It changes everything: their confidence, their hope, their future. In just six weeks, they begin to believe in themselves again.

Illiteracy is quietly killing the futures of our children and, with them, the strength of our nation. This is a silent epidemic that has been allowed to operate for four decades. Illiteracy is connected to almost every social ill: juvenile delinquency, lack of workforce, unqualified military recruitment, and an increasing social service system comprised of individuals who simply do not want to be there.

There is a solution. We have a proven method. With your leadership, we can implement a **Race to Literacy**, offered as a congressional opportunity in the state of Michigan. **In five years**, we can look back at this problem if we address it with the zeal it requires. Our strength has always come from its people. If we want to compete, grow, and lead in the years ahead, we must ensure that every child, no matter their circumstance, learns to read. You hold in your hands a plan that is necessary for all other initiatives to blossom. This plan, in the right hands, changes everything. I welcome the opportunity for a conversation and to show how Beyond Basics has already scaled this work within the state of Michigan, helping our children realize their full potential through literacy. Our children are counting on us. We must lead the way.

With gratitude,


Pamela Good
Cofounder and CEO
Beyond Basics

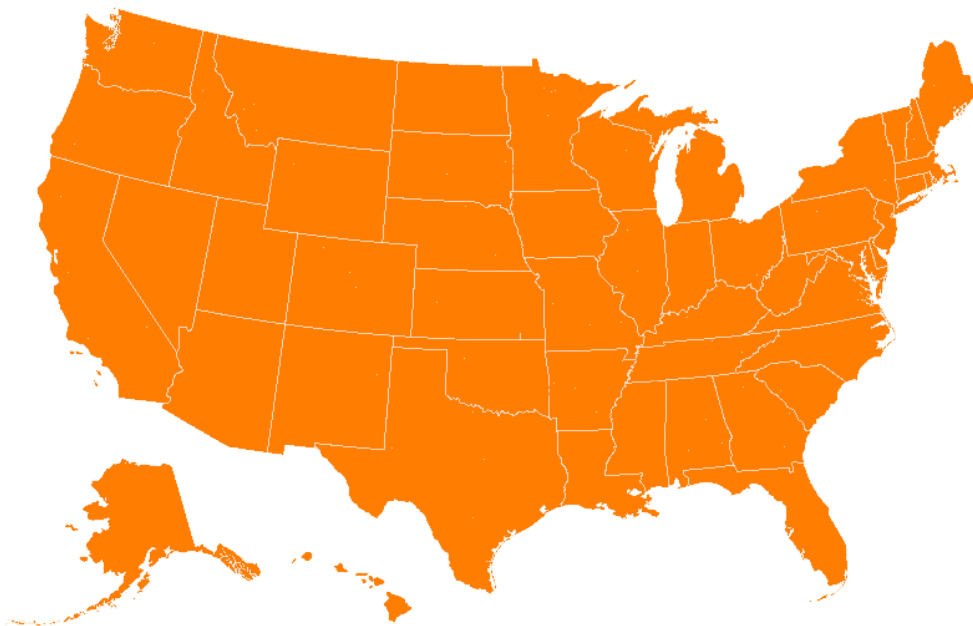
Thank you for helping to make a difference in the lives of so many children!

“America’s Educational Crisis Threatens to Unravel a Superpower,” *The Telegraph (UK), August 31, 2025.*

- Nearly **70% of American 8th graders** are not proficient in reading (*National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2024*).
- When the highest-performing state in our nation, **Massachusetts**, has only **40% of its eighth-grade students reading proficiently**, it’s clear we’re in a national crisis.
- **Literacy deserves the same level of urgency** we bring to disasters that threaten lives and communities. If a disaster left 70% of our children without safe water, we would mobilize instantly. We must address illiteracy the same way.

8th Grade Students Reading Below Proficiency

Every State Nationwide:  60% or greater



Source: 2024 NAEP
(nationsreportcard.gov)

A Race to Literacy 5-Year Plan Congressional District Opportunity

1

Secure Funding

Secure Sustainable Funding

Launch Beyond Basics centers in one congressional district in Michigan. Combine federal, state, and/or philanthropic funding to scale impact.

2

Implementation

Leverage Existing Infrastructure

Deliver literacy support where students already show up: K-12 Schools (*private, public, charter*), homes, faith-based communities, juvenile detention centers, workforce training, college and career readiness, etc.

Build a Community-Based Tutoring Team

Recruit and train tutors from local communities—parents, college students, retirees, and professionals.

Implement The Gold Star Standard to Reading Proficiency™

Use the proven Beyond Basics model:

1. Daily one-on-one tutoring
2. Diagnostic assessments to tailor individualized tutoring plans
3. Phonics-based instruction

3

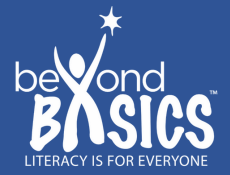
Ensure Accountability and Transparency

Track progress daily and measure outcomes to ensure effectiveness and transparency.

Expand Delivery Through Partnerships

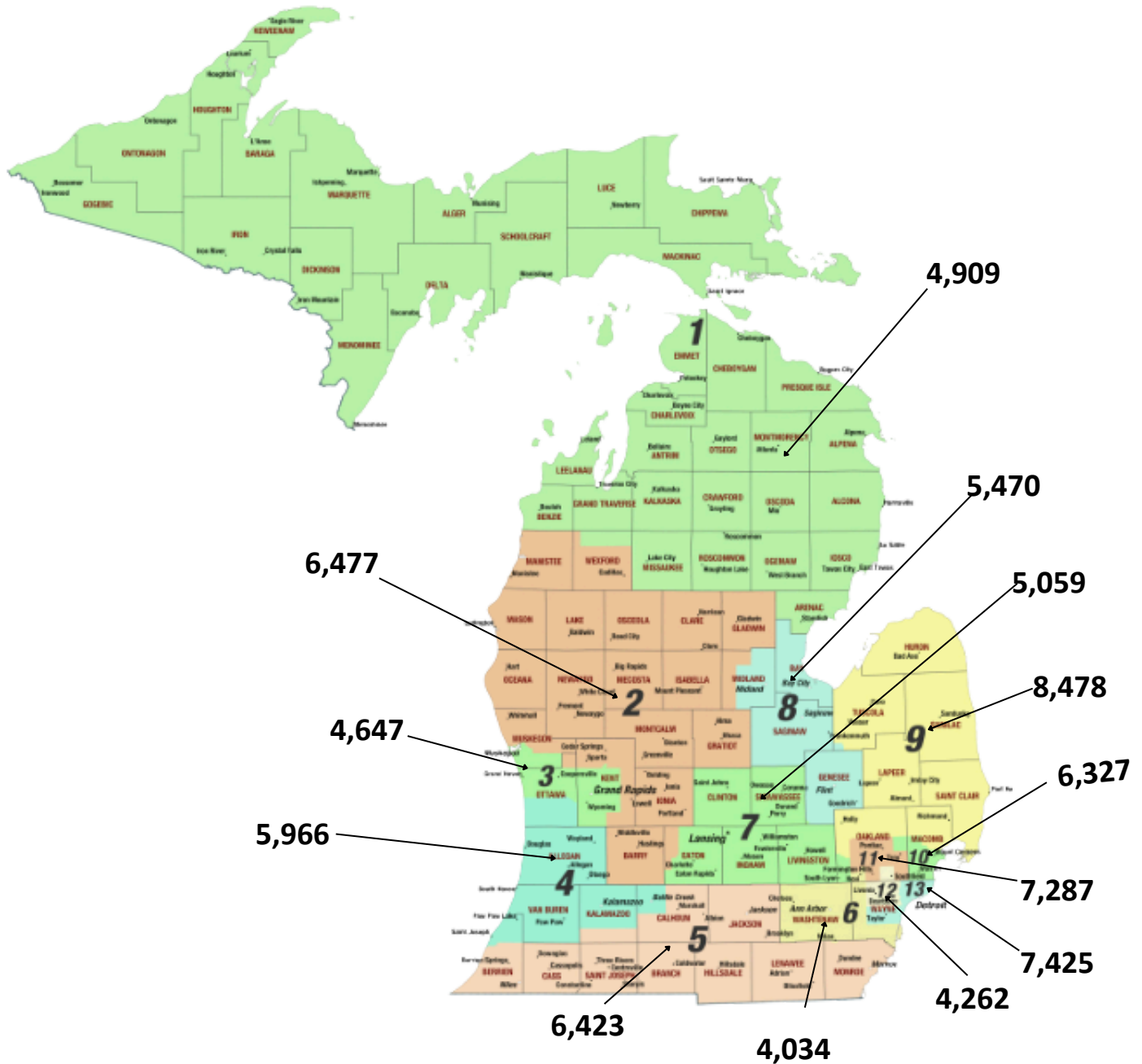
Collaborate with and train teachers, families, faith-based groups, and community organizations to extend programming beyond school hours and into summers.

A National Race to Literacy Congressional District Opportunity State of Michigan Example



5-Year Literacy Plan Grades 6-12

383,815 students reading below proficiency



**The numbers shown in each district represent the average annual number of students reading below proficiency, based on Michigan Department of Education data - 5-Year Plan*

Community Endorsements

Voices of Support



Nikolai P. Vitti, Superintendent, Detroit Public Schools Community District: “What we see in Detroit, like we see in so many large urban school districts around the country, are people that randomly throw solutions at the problems of illiteracy. What makes Beyond Basics unique is it is truly research-based, it gets at the heart of the problems with illiteracy, and it attacks it in a coherent, strategic, comprehensive way.”

General Motors is a longtime supporter of Beyond Basics’ high school work

Mark Reuss, General Motors, President: “There is no arguing that a good education is the foundation for success in the workforce. But what is the foundation of a good education? The ability to read and write. I’ve said many times talent is distributed equally. Opportunity is not.”

Stephen Seelye, Superintendent, Pellston Public Schools: “As superintendent of Pellston Public Schools I have had the privilege of partnering with Beyond Basics to support our district’s literacy goals—and I cannot overstate the transformative impact this program has had on our students. Beyond Basics brings more than just literacy; it brings a deep commitment to student success. Their one-on-one tutoring model is research-based and relationship-driven, which is critical for our students who are reading significantly below grade level. We’ve seen students who once struggled to engage with school begin to thrive—improving multiple grade levels in reading within just a few months. I wholeheartedly recommend Beyond Basics to any district seeking a proven, mission-driven partner in literacy education.”

Karina Lepkowski, Principal, Most Holy Trinity Catholic Academy: “We are so blessed to have this partnership with Beyond Basics. They have come into the fold of our community and have really been helpful in raising the standard and the rigor that our students have in our school. We’re thankful and look forward to the continuing partnership.”

Matt Stevenson, Former East Jordan Public Schools Superintendent: “We are beyond grateful for the support we have experienced with Beyond Basics tutors and staff. This literacy program has filled a definite void that our students were experiencing in their education. Through daily support, our students have been able to bridge gaps that have not only helped with their literacy development but have also positively impacted their core academic areas as well. We are seeing tremendous growth in our students who are utilizing the Beyond Basics support on our local benchmark assessment.”

Paul Fairbairn, Board President, Harbor Springs Public Schools: “It has been my pleasure to have worked with Beyond Basics for the last two years. We have had a great group of instructors working with our students at Harbor Springs Public Schools. We are seeing a steady, positive improvement with our students that are involved with Beyond Basics. This program is the best thing that I have seen to assist our teachers in improving literacy in our schools.”

Let's Begin the Conversation

Please contact me directly at:
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We are grateful for your time and
consideration.

Sincerely,
Pamela Good
Cofounder and CEO
Beyond Basics

