



## COUNTYWIDE VISION'S VISION2READ INITIATIVE UPDATE

May 21, 2018

In September 2015, the Countywide Vision Project launched the Vision2Read Initiative to engage the public in an effort to improve reading proficiency in San Bernardino County by connecting those who need help or those who can help others to existing literacy programs. Literacy has a direct and profound impact on several elements of the “complete community” the public desires, especially jobs and the economy, education, public safety and wellness.

Vision2Read has proved that a number of sectors of the community can work together to tackle a regional need. The efforts of educators and the public may be having a positive impact on early childhood reading proficiency. County students’ scores on the State standardized test of English language arts/literacy skills have improved.

Grade	2015		2016		2017	
	≥ Standard	< Standard	≥ Standard	< Standard	≥ Standard	< Standard
Third	31%	69%	37%	64%	38%	62%
Fourth			38%	62%	39%	61%
Fifth					41%	59%

Promotion of the Vision2Read Initiative through a website, social media and community events has resulted in more than 361,000 people in the county linking to literacy resources and volunteer opportunities. The resources and successful activities of Vision2Read include:

- [www.Vision2Read.com](http://www.Vision2Read.com) – developed in partnership with United Ways of San Bernardino County – curated existing literacy and reading programs provided by cities, towns, school districts, libraries and community organizations into a one-stop shop. Through May 10, 2018, 37,900 people have visited the website.
- On September 19, 2015, more than 50,000 books were given to children at the County Superintendent of Schools’ Family Reading Rally, which launched the Vision2Read Initiative to the public.
- Starting in November 2015, Vision2Read encouraged the public to Add-A-Book when shopping for gifts for family and friends.
- In January 2016, First 5 San Bernardino invested \$250,000 to expand the Reach Out and Read program in this county, which provides books to pediatricians to give their patients to reinforce reading as a critical activity for brain development.
- In February 2016, the public was asked to nominate community Reading Heroes – individuals who learned to read late in life or who went above and beyond to help others achieve literacy. Thirty-five Reading Heroes were invited to attend a Board meeting on December 6, 2016 to be recognized.

[www.sbcounty.gov/vision](http://www.sbcounty.gov/vision)  
[wp.sbcounty.gov/cao/visionwire](http://wp.sbcounty.gov/cao/visionwire)



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- In March 2016 and 2018, Vision Element Group members helped fill elementary schools' need for volunteers to read to their students in celebration of Read Across America Day.
- In April 2016, Vision2Read announced a challenge to increase library card sign ups and participation in summer reading programs in all libraries throughout the county collectively by 15 percent.
  - Library Card sign ups increased by 14.5 percent in May 2016 (9,036 cards) compared to the same month in 2015 (7,892 cards).
  - The number of people throughout the county who participated in a library summer reading program increased by 28.3 percent in 2016 (47,632 people) compared to 2015 (37,122 people).
- In July 2016, the Inland Empire 66ers and Vision2Read co-hosted a Family Sleepover camping and movie night on the field to promote literacy following one of their baseball games. It was the 66ers' second highest attendance at a Family Sleepover event with 122 people watching "The Princess Bride" movie.
- In August 2016, the High Desert Mavericks co-hosted a book drive with Vision2Read and donated more than 800 books to Ready4Reading, a High Desert nonprofit that gives books to children in need.
- In February 2017, County Superintendent of Schools, in partnership with County Preschool Services Department, First Five San Bernardino, and Children's Fund, launched Footsteps2Brilliance, an early learning mobile technology platform that helps children become proficient readers by 3rd grade by giving parents computer and mobile device access to easy-to-use web-based tools. The tools are available to all children ages 0-5 residing in the county. Through May 11, 2018, 13,611 parent and child accounts have been created. As a result, children have read 207,480 books and 54,688,921 words at a 75.82% comprehension rate and written 38,814 books.
- In 2017, a total of 38,765 people participated in the library summer reading program at County Library branches.
- Throughout the past 32 months, County Library has held numerous events and reading challenges at its branches, promoting Vision2Read. The combined total number of participants was about 223,000.
- County and the city libraries in Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, San Bernardino, and Victorville are working together again in 2018 on a Vision2Read Summer of Reading challenge to increase participation in library summer reading programs by 3%. This would be a total of 50,000 summer reading program participants reading a total of 500,000 books. County Library has also partnered with Fontana Unified and Colton Joint Unified school districts to offer their summer meals programs at the Lewis Library and Technology Center and the Bloomington Branch Library. Also, new this year, County Library will introduce online summer reading program sign-ups for the public through its library website.

## BACKGROUND

The Education Element Group, developing strategies to achieve the Vision implementation goal to partner with all sectors of the community to support the success of every child from cradle to career, identified early childhood literacy as a critical first step on the path to success. Reading at grade level by third grade has proven to be an accurate predictor of children's success in school, their likelihood of going to college, and their future earning potential, according to a 2010 special report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Education Element Group proposed a literacy campaign, which was named Vision2Read.

On September 1, 2015 (Item No. 1), the Board endorsed Vision2Read and declared September as National Literacy Month in the county. The next day, the leaders of the Education Element Group announced Vision2Read to the San Bernardino Council of Governments Board, inviting the Directors – mayors and councilmembers for all 24 cities and towns in the county – to attend the campaign launch on September 19, 2015.