

every child | reads

**JONES COUNTY
COMMUNITY ACTION
PLAN**

CAMPAIGN FOR
GRADE-LEVEL
READING

3RD GRADE READING
SUCCESS MATTERS



IN 2018, THE JONES COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION BEGAN EXPLORING THE NEEDS OF YOUTH IN JONES COUNTY AND HOW THE COMMUNITY COULD COME TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD IS PREPARED TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND LIFE.

Supporting children to succeed in school and life is not the sole responsibility of our schools. That's why the Jones County Community Foundation has taken action to invest in a collaborative effort with the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque to explore bringing the National Campaign for Grade-Level Reading to our community.

Inspired by the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading models in Dubuque, Dyersville, and Jackson County, the Jones County Community Foundation invested in an exploration of the educational needs of children in our community. The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

outlines a framework with three key focus areas: school readiness, school attendance, and summer learning. This document outlines current relevant data, the process used to identify needs, and recommendations for community action to support the children in our community.

The purpose of this initiative is to provide an opportunity for our community to come together to ensure that every child is successful in school and in life. We enthusiastically invite community members, parents, business, and local organizations to get involved.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Reading proficiently by the end of third grade enables students to shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Studies show that students who fall behind in reading proficiency at the end of third grade are less likely to graduate from high school, and research

shows that children from low-income households are disproportionately affected. Reaching this milestone is important for both our students' and our community's future.

Population

20,744 total in Jones County

4,439 population under 18 years of age

1,079 population under 5 years of age

95.2% white **1.6%** hispanic

2.7% black **0.5%** other

26.5% of families with children are
single parent households

Income

\$72,970 median family income

3.1% of the population is unemployed

9.5% of the population lives below
the poverty level

Childhood Poverty

11.5% of children in Jones County
ages 0 to 17 who lived below
the poverty level in 2017

Childhood Abuse & Neglect

per 1,000 children aged 0 to 17

5.5 **11.6**
2016 2017

High School Graduation Rate

92.4% of students completed high
school in 2017 in Jones County

GEOGRAPHY

Jones County is one of Iowa's 99 counties located in the east central part of the state. Jones County is within a 30-60 minute drive to the Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Iowa City, Davenport, and Waterloo metro areas. Major highways include U.S. Hwy. 151 and Iowa Highways 64, 38, 136, and 1.

Jones County has a land area of 575 square miles and is rural in nature with approximately 36 persons per square mile. The nearest metro area is Cedar Rapids. The county seat is Anamosa.

Jones County encompasses 9 incorporated communities and their surrounding rural areas, including Anamosa, Cascade (part of), Martelle, Monticello, Morley, Olin, Onslow, Oxford Junction, and Wyoming.

Mean travel time to work is 25 minutes.

Residents of Jones County travel to four school districts, one regional hospital, four medical clinics, limited retail services, and often to a more urban area for other services. WIC Clinics visit Jones County four times a month, DHS offices are in Cedar Rapids, Maternal and Child Health Services are in Cedar Rapids, and limited mental and behavioral health services are available. Transportation is the number one barrier to receiving and utilizing services.

POPULATION

The US Census estimates total population in Jones County at 20,744 with Anamosa and Monticello being the major population centers. This represents a decrease of .8% from the 2010 census compared to a 2.0% increase in population for the State of Iowa.

Persons under 5 years of age represent 5.2% of the population and persons under 18 years of age represent 21.4% of the total population. There are approximately 4,439 persons under the age of 18 living in Jones County.

There are approximately 200 births to families residing in Jones County annually. The 2018 figure was 184 births representing a decline from 226 in 2013.

The county has a similar age distribution to the rest of the state, with a higher percentage of people aged 65 and older, 18.5% in Jones County compared to 15.8% in the entire state of Iowa.

INCOME

Median Family income in Jones County is \$72,970 and slightly lower than the state average of \$74,794.

Unemployment was higher in Jones County at 3.7% compared to the state average of 2.9% in 2018.

9.5% of the population was below the poverty level compared to 10.7% for the State of Iowa.

Child poverty levels are lower than the state at 11.5% for Jones County and 12.6% for the state for 2017. These figures represent a four year decline. 26.5% of families with children are headed by a single parent.



EDUCATION

Jones County has 4 public school districts, Anamosa, Midland, Monticello, and Olin and 2 nonpublic schools, St. Patrick's, Anamosa and Sacred Heart, Monticello. All elementary schools operate 4-year preschool programs with 10 hours of free instructional time funded by the State of Iowa through the Iowa Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program. High Schools in Jones County work collaboratively with the Kirkwood Jones Regional

Education Center to provide post secondary opportunities for students while still in high school.

Approximately 75% of students enrolled in a community school in Jones County attend either the Anamosa or Monticello Community School Districts.

Graduation Rates in Jones County were 92.4% for 2017 compared to 91.1% for the State.

17.2% of persons over the age of 25 have a Bachelor's Degree or higher compared to the state average of 27.7%.

Data by district 2018

Anamosa

83 Pre-K Enrollment
1,188 K - 12 Enrollment
68.9% 3rd grade reading proficiency
96.94% Graduation Rate
45% Free and Reduced Lunch Rate

Monticello

62 Pre-K Enrollment
993 K - 12 Enrollment
81% 3rd grade reading proficiency
97.53% Graduation Rate
33.2% Free and Reduced Lunch Rate

St. Patrick School – Anamosa

28 Pre-K Enrollment
57 K - 12 Enrollment

Sacred Heart Grade School – Monticello

49 Pre-K Enrollment
89 K - 12 Enrollment

Midland

25 Pre-K Enrollment
462 K - 12 Enrollment
60.6% 3rd grade reading proficiency
88.89% Graduation Rate
47.8% Free and Reduced Lunch Rate

Olin

13 Pre-K Enrollment
72 K - 12 Enrollment
NA 3rd grade reading proficiency
NA Graduation Rate
68.1% Free and Reduced Lunch Rate

THE FRAMEWORK

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is a national collaboration of foundations, nonprofits, states, and communities focused on the number one predictor of school success and high school graduation: grade-level reading by the end of third grade. More than 360 communities throughout the United States have committed to the Grade-Level Reading effort to meet the needs of our youngest children. The Campaign framework is designed to boost academic achievement by addressing the three focus areas of school readiness, school attendance, and summer learning. Efforts also uplift the role of family, health, and the joy of reading.

Our Focus

School
Readiness

School
Attendance

Summer
Learning



OUR STRATEGY

To lead the effort, the Jones County Community Foundation hired a part-time Coordinator to convene community leaders, develop partnerships, and connect with the community to gain a better understanding of the current needs in Jones County related to the focus areas.

The introduction to how Grade-Level Reading could impact Jones County was presented to and input was provided by the following groups:

- Elementary school principals, counselors, and nurses from the Anamosa, Midland, Monticello, and Olin School Districts
- Local librarians throughout Jones County
- Jones County Moms Group
- Jones County Community Partnerships for Protecting Children (CPPC)
- Jones County Community Connections
- Various community members

Our effort is also supported by the leadership of the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, other Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Communities, as well as the Iowa State Lead for the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading.

In response to concerns for the future of young people in Jones County, an executive team was formed to support the Coordinator. Members include:

- Jen Fischer -- Director, ISU Extension, Jones County
- Jenna Lovaas -- Jones County Public Health
- Kim Brooks -- Editor, Monticello Express and Board Member for the Monticello Public Library
- Heather Weers -- GLR Coordinator, the Jones County Decat/CPPC Coordinator and leader of the Jones County Family Council.
- Sherri Hunt -- Director, Cedar/Jones Early Childhood Iowa and Coordinator for the Jones County Community Foundation.

In response to the input we have received, initial efforts have focused on the following:

- Surveyed elementary staff in each school district to determine knowledge of chronic absence and systems in place to address chronic absence.
- Promotion of local libraries and connecting with families through a project at the Jones County Fair and Back to School Bashes, where students received a free

bracelet and the opportunity to visit their local library to take home a free book and local resource information.

- Hosted meetings to expand and support the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.
- Partnered with ISU Extension to publish a one page flyer about GLR in the Anamosa and Monticello newspapers.
- Support Read Every Day (RED) Ahead programming with books and resources to distribute to families at Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Clinics.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

Recommendations for Community Level Goals

The core of our effort has been to identify opportunities for the community of Jones County to support our youngest learners. Partnerships between schools, families, community organizations, businesses, and community members are critical to a community based movement. Based on the input we have received, we recommend Jones County community partners take the following action:

Community Awareness & Communication

Build community awareness and support through education and communication related to each of the 3 focus areas.

School Readiness

Early childhood is a critical time of brain development, when the foundation for all other learning is built. Our community will work to recognize the importance of those first five years of a child's life and promote high quality early learning experiences for every child.

Early Literacy

- Ensure that all children have access to books at home, at school, and in community settings.

Social Emotional Development

- Support social emotional development through educational opportunities for families, early childhood educators, schools, and the community.

School Attendance

Students need to be at school every day. Our community will work together to reduce barriers that families face so every child is at school and ready to learn.

Community Collaboration

- Build intentional partnerships between school, families and the community to support regular school attendance.

Address Barriers

- Identify barriers to school attendance and develop a community response to break down barriers.

Summer Learning

Our community can prevent learning loss over the summer months by keeping every child safe, healthy, and engaged in enriching opportunities at home and in the community.

Summer Meal Sites

- Ensure that children throughout Jones County have access to healthy meals during the summer months.

Enrichment

- Identify and promote current enrichment opportunities available in Jones County.

There is work to be done beyond the GLR collaborations already in place. Organizations are working to bring quality programming and support to the community, which we hope to connect with in the future. We welcome anyone who would like to help build a better future, and community, for the youth of Jones County.

every child | reads
jones county

Heather Weers

Every Child Reads Jones County Coordinator
jonescountygldr@gmail.com • 319.480.8684

Jones County
Community Foundation

| an affiliate of |


Community Foundation
of Greater Dubuque