

Reading Buddies

- When a third grader doesn't read at grade level, they are 4 times more likely to drop out before graduation. If they also live in poverty, they are 8 times more likely to drop out.
- 34% of SC fourth graders are not reading at grade level.
- Students from low-income communities are three grade levels behind their peers in wealthier communities by the time they reach fourth grade. (US Dept. of Education)
- 81% of South Carolina students are graduating from high school. Of these, 42% are college ready and 73% career ready. (2019-2020)
- 1 in 5 adults in the US struggle to fill out a form.
- Results of the pandemic: On average, 7 out of 10 South Carolina students in grades 2 - 8 were projected not to meet grade level proficiency standards in mathematics and English Language Arts in the spring of 2021.
- Literacy is the key to solving healthcare, poverty, crime rates, and unemployment. (Barbara Bush Foundation)

Backpack Buddies

- One in seven children in South Carolina face hunger.
- Children experiencing hunger are more likely to: repeat a grade in elementary school, experience developmental impairments in areas like language and motor skills, have more social and behavioral problems. (Feeding America)



Teacher Support

- 46% of teachers report high daily stress (tied with nurses for the most stressful occupation in America today).
- 25% of SC first year (2018-2019) teachers left their positions during or at the end of that school year, with 5,300 no longer in any public school (10% increase over 2017-2018).
- About 1/3 of all new teachers, nation-wide, leave education within the first 5 years of their career.
- Over a four month period during the middle of the 2020-2021 school year, 680 teachers left their jobs. (WIS News)
- A survey by SC for Education indicated 39% of teachers did not intend to return to their positions in the 2021-2022 school year.
- Over 1100 international teachers came to SC in 2018-2019. They arrived with 2 suitcases and limited funds to lease and furnish an apartment and arrange transportation. They have needs of friendship and support as they become acclimated to a new culture.