

SUMMIT PROGRAM



NYC Reads Together

Literacy Ecosystem Summit

Friday, March 13, 2026

10:00 AM - 4:00 PM | 2920 Broadway, New York, NY 10027

A stylized, isometric illustration of a city skyline with various buildings of different heights and shapes, rendered in shades of blue and white. The buildings are arranged in a perspective view, creating a sense of depth. The word "Welcome" is overlaid on the top part of the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Welcome

Dear Partners,

We are excited to have you here today.

It means something powerful that so many leaders from various sectors are gathered in one place. Your presence reflects our shared belief that every child in New York City deserves the opportunity to become a confident, capable, and joyful reader.

Together, we've set an ambitious—yet achievable—goal: By 2035, all school-aged youth in New York City will be fully literate. That means they will be able to read, write, listen, and speak in ways that allow them to achieve their goals and realize their potential.

Setting the goal was an important first step. Achieving it will require something more complex: deep alignment and collective action across our entire literacy ecosystem.

It takes a village. We know that no single institution can create systemwide coordinated action on its own. The work happening in schools is essential, and it is strengthened and accelerated by everyone in this room. Schools provide daily instruction. Teacher preparation programs shape the educators who lead classrooms. Community-based organizations extend literacy beyond the school day. Libraries nurture reading identity and lifelong access to books. Early childhood providers and healthcare partners lay the foundations for language and learning long before kindergarten. Philanthropies fuel innovation and scale. Policymakers create the conditions that sustain progress.

Lasting change happens when these efforts align. When curriculum connects to professional learning, instruction aligns with assessment, school-day learning connects to summer and afterschool experiences, and policy and funding reinforce shared priorities—that’s when durable progress is possible.

And that is why this Summit matters.

Today is not simply a moment to reflect. It is a space to connect with and learn from one another, to surface challenges honestly, share what is working, and clarify what comes next. Most importantly, it is an opportunity to strengthen the relationships and shared ownership that enable real change.

This Summit also marks an important milestone in our journey. Over the past two years, what began as pilot efforts across sectors has grown into something more cohesive and powerful: a citywide movement.

Today, we officially launch our shared identity:

NYC Reads Together.

This name reflects who we are and how we intend to work—together. It signals that this effort is built to last, to scale what works, and to ensure that every child in New York City benefits from high-quality literacy experiences.

Thank you for being here, for leading, listening, and believing in what’s possible. We are excited to work with you so that every child reads, writes, and thrives.

The CPRL Team

Ecosystem Roadmap

Our shared plan to achieve citywide literacy by 2035

SOLUTIONS

1

Start Young

The earliest years of a child's life set a critical foundation for academic success. To prepare young children for kindergarten, families should have access to knowledge and resources to support their children's early language and literacy development, including appropriate developmental screenings, access to books and exposure to oral language, and high-quality preschool experiences.

2

Maximize Reading and Writing In and Out of School

While classroom instruction is a critical lever for literacy development, most students also need opportunities to build vocabulary and knowledge outside of school hours.

3

Mobilize Our Literacy-Rich Communities

NYC is one of the most racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse geographic areas in the world, and children do not learn in a vacuum. On average, children spend less than 20 percent of their time in school. Family contexts, cultural and religious communities, and the unique features and institutions of their neighborhoods all contribute to children's literacy development, including building background knowledge and vocabulary. Mobilizing these community resources can bolster the impact of in-school literacy efforts.

ACCELERANTS

4

Build the Will

An effort of this scale and ambition will require that diverse actors across the ecosystem are motivated to do the challenging work to change outcomes for NYC school-age children.

5

Bring (and Keep) the Talent

To support high-quality literacy learning in and out of NYC classrooms, it is essential that we recruit strong educator candidates, prepare them to deliver evidence-based, high-quality learning experiences, and retain their talent over time.

6

Activate and Coordinate Resources

To drive outcomes for students in a system where only half of the students read on grade level, additional resources (both financial and non-financial) are needed to encourage actors to do more of what works and systematically test new approaches where evidence is lacking.

7

Pinpoint Challenges and Improve

To tackle NYC's literacy crisis, we need to spot the issues, big and small, understand what is causing them, and continuously refine our efforts based on what we learn.

Curious to explore the full roadmap?

Scan the code to dive into the research, strategies, and shared vision behind NYC Reads Together.



Agenda

Scan to learn more about
today's speakers and sessions.



10:00-11:00 AM

Opening

Remarks by NYC Public Schools Chancellor, Kamar Samuels
Keynote Address by SUNY Chancellor, Dr. John B. King, Jr.
Collective Session with Columbia's Center for Public
Research and Leadership (CPRL)

11:10-12:00 PM

Morning Breakout Sessions

Building a Coherent Out-of-School Time Literacy
Ecosystem: A Toolkit for Alignment by NYCPS, DYCD,
ExpandED Schools & Columbia's Center for Public Research
and Leadership (CPRL)

Building Public Will: The Early Literacy Ecosystem Approach
by City's First Readers

NYC Reads and NYS Policy: Alignment opportunities and
challenges by EdTrust-New York

Sparkling Reading Joy in Third Spaces by The New York
Public Library

Teacher Practicum at LAC: A Model for Adult Learning and
Leadership by Literacy Academy Collective

12:00-1:10 PM

Lunch Panel

Moderated by Troy Closson, Education Reporter with the
New York Times

Panelists

Jo Anne Simon, Assemblymember for New York District 52
Ashleigh Thompson, University Dean for Education at CUNY
David Cintron, Superintendent of District 14

1:20-2:10 PM

Afternoon Breakout Sessions

Achieving a Multilingual Literacy Ecosystem by Literacy Partners
Bridging the Parent Information Gap in NYC's Literacy Moment by Learning Heroes

Building a Hyperlocal Literacy Ecosystem: Lessons Learned from the NYC Reads Neighborhood Initiative by NYC Reads Neighborhood Initiative

Examining NYS K Standards for a Stronger Pre-K to Kindergarten Transition by NYU Literacy, Technology, and Culture Lab

High Impact Tutoring: What, Why, How by Katie Pace Miles, Ph.D.

Teaching Literacy in the Age of AI by Teaching Lab

2:20-3:10 PM

Afternoon Breakout Sessions

All Systems Go: How Shared, High-Quality Curriculums are Helping School Districts Reach Higher, Together by Columbia's Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL)

Beyond the Page: AI as an Ally in the Journey to 2035 Literacy Goals by DREAM Schools

Designing a "Reading City": The Next Step to Supporting Lifelong Readers by The New York Public Library

Focused Impact: Innovating on Core Initiatives for System-Wide Change by The Reading Institute

From Classroom to Coalition: Amplifying Teacher Voice to Drive Literacy Transformation by Educators for Excellence (E4E)

When the Village Shares the Map: Building a Citywide Early Literacy Pathway from Birth to Kindergarten Readiness by Literacy in Community (LINC)

3:20-4:00 PM

NYC Reads Together: Commitments and Next Steps
with Columbia's Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL)

Morning Session Descriptions

Building a Coherent Out-of-School Time Literacy Ecosystem: A Toolkit for Alignment by NYCPS, DYCD, ExpandedED Schools & Columbia's Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL)

Strengthening student literacy requires coherence across the full day—not only in classrooms, but in out-of-school time (OST) programs. This session will introduce the new Out-of-School Time NYC Reads Toolkit, developed in collaboration with OST leaders, schools, and city partners to strengthen alignment between school-day literacy instruction and out-of-school learning. Panelists will share examples from practice, and participants will help shape the next phase of this work—exploring what it will take to sustain and scale literacy coherence across New York City's learning ecosystem.

Building Public Will: The Early Literacy Ecosystem Approach by City's First Readers

This session explores how an ecosystem approach—like City's First Readers—links early childhood literacy to the city's 2035 kindergarten readiness goals and universal childcare policy. We'll share practical strategies to boost visibility and impact: aligning messaging, building public will with clear, shared talking points for policymakers, and coordinating efforts across health systems, family engagement, and schools to accelerate progress toward 2035 literacy goals.

NYC Reads and NYS Policy: Alignment opportunities and challenges by EdTrust-New York

A panel discussion to dive into the intersection of state-level policy and funding with citywide literacy initiatives. This session will feature key state and city partners to explore the current New York State literacy policy landscape, connect state advocacy efforts with NYC Reads and the city's literacy ecosystem, and highlight the impact of state funding (like potential HIT funding) on early childhood and K-12 school components. Attendees will leave with a clearer understanding of how state support can fortify local efforts and how to get involved in advocating for sustained progress.

Morning Session Continued

Sparking Reading Joy in Third Spaces by The New York Public Library

This session explores the roles institutions play in creating a reading city and the Library's goal to sit at the center of NYC's reading culture. We will discuss examples that are currently working to spark joy and empower readers, such as creating social reading rooms through Reading Rooms, leveraging therapy dog programs to reduce anxiety, and expanding world language book incentives. Participants will then create an action plan for collaboration to collectively mobilize literacy-rich communities.

Teacher Practicum at LAC: A Model for Adult Learning and Leadership by Literacy Academy Collective

How do we prepare teachers and teacher leaders to deliver evidence-based literacy instruction to struggling readers? Literacy Academy Collective's Summer Practicum pairs teachers new to structured literacy with experienced mentors for training. Through this gradual release model, participants learn structured literacy methods and receive expert coaching, thus developing teacher expertise while providing intensive intervention to students who need it most. Session participants will have the opportunity to think about how to incorporate elements of the LAC Summer Practicum into their own adult learning systems and structures year round.

Afternoon Session 1 Descriptions

Achieving a Multilingual Literacy Ecosystem by Literacy Partners

How can we effectively support multilingual families as they navigate their child's literacy journey? This session explores barriers and emerging opportunities in family literacy, emphasizing how a coordinated approach strengthens support across home, school, and community. Drawing on five decades of adult literacy innovation—including Library of Congress distinction and Emmy Award-winning media—presenters highlight a Science of Reading initiative featuring videos available in ten languages. Participants will learn how these tools clarify classroom instruction, guide caregiver action at home, review engagement outcomes, and discuss opportunities for scale.

Bridging the Parent Information Gap in NYC's Literacy Moment by Learning Heroes

While parents overwhelmingly support the vision of NYC Reads, a significant gap exists between awareness and understanding. Drawing on recent survey and focus group data, this session will explore what parents are experiencing, how they are currently making sense of the changes, and the core tension between their desire to help at home and their lack of clarity. Participants will engage in a problem-solving discussion to generate practical strategies for families to partner with teachers in order to align and maximize learning in school and at home.

Building a Hyperlocal Literacy Ecosystem: Lessons Learned from the NYC Reads Neighborhood Initiative by NYC Reads Neighborhood Initiative

The NYC Reads Neighborhood Initiative demonstrates a hyperlocal ecosystem approach to literacy. The initiative brings together partners, including schools, youth-serving nonprofits, libraries, and family-serving organizations to coordinate and amplify efforts in three NYC neighborhoods. This session will explore the value of neighborhood-level coordination, describing successes, challenges and lessons learned. Participants will explore how they might build more partnership facilitation and collaboration into their own practices, marshalling expertise, leadership, and resources among stakeholders to build a powerful coalition effort in local communities.

Afternoon Session 1 Continued

Examining NYS K Standards for a Stronger Pre-K to Kindergarten Transition by Literacy, Technology, & Culture Lab

The transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten often presents a challenge for young learners, frequently resulting in children being labeled as "behind" and prematurely placed in Tier 2 instruction. This interactive session, guided by Dr. Susan B. Neuman, will address the paradox between Kindergarten standards and beginning-of-year expectations, particularly in light of recent research showing the high cognitive load that fundamental skill programs place on our students.

The session will focus on collaboratively developing practical, solutions-oriented strategies to address this challenge without lowering expectations. Participants—including parents, teachers, researchers, and policymakers—will explore how to adapt teaching methods and improve small group instruction. Come prepared to share insights and co-create solutions for a stronger, more supportive start to formal schooling.

High Impact Tutoring: What, Why, How by Katie Pace Miles, Ph.D.

Dr. Katie Pace Miles will explain the ins and outs of high-impact tutoring (HIT), a form of tutoring that is equitable and effective for vulnerable populations of students. Dr. Miles will explain the research behind high-impact tutoring, the characteristics that distinguish it from traditional intervention, and how the research has been translated into practice through city and state-level HIT implementations. Dr. Miles will explain how districts incorporate HIT into their MTSS structure and how the approach builds capacity for schools to meet the needs of exponentially more striving readers.

Afternoon Session 1 Continued

Teaching Literacy in the Age of AI by Teaching Lab

Artificial intelligence is beginning to reshape how students read, write, and learn. But the future of literacy will not be determined by technology alone. In New York City, Teaching Lab and Coursemojo are partnering to explore how AI can be integrated into classrooms grounded in strong curriculum and expert teaching. Their work is generating early insights about how AI can expand access to feedback, strengthen instruction, and deepen student engagement with complex texts.

Afternoon Session 2 Descriptions

Achieving a Multilingual Literacy Ecosystem by Literacy Partners

How can we effectively support multilingual families as they navigate their child's literacy journey? This session explores barriers and emerging opportunities in family literacy, emphasizing how a coordinated approach strengthens support across home, school, and community. Drawing on five decades of adult literacy innovation—including Library of Congress distinction and Emmy Award-winning media—presenters highlight a Science of Reading initiative featuring videos available in ten languages. Participants will learn how these tools clarify classroom instruction, guide caregiver action at home, review engagement outcomes, and discuss opportunities for scale.

Beyond the Page: AI as an Ally in the Journey to 2035 Literacy Goals by DREAM Charter Schools

Examine DREAM's AI-enabled assessment-data cycle that automates scoring, gap analysis, and reteach/intervention planning, all aligned to the Science of Reading. This interactive session demos AI-assisted scoring, a gap-analysis chatbot that identifies strands of the reading rope, and lesson-generator and intervention-plan chatbots that draft RTD lessons and targeted supports for diverse learner needs. Participants will review case studies showing reclaimed educator time and academic gains, and practice using the AI tools themselves to practice generating data-meeting agendas, reteach lessons, and intervention plans ready to accelerate student literacy achievement.

Afternoon Session 2 Continued

Designing a "Reading City": The Next Step to Supporting Lifelong Readers by The New York Public Library

This interactive design challenge session will explore the roles of various stakeholders—from educators and practitioners to libraries and community builders—in transforming NYC into a truly "reading city." We will focus on strategies to overcome barriers like stigma and lack of access, considering how to embed literacy into the physical environment and daily lives of residents. Participants will engage in group work to map existing reading spaces, identify new opportunities, and design actionable solutions for a multigenerational approach to fostering a persistent, inclusive, and dynamic literary culture beyond the classroom. The session will feature genuine questions from The New York Public Library on how to deepen their impact in communities.

Focused Impact: Innovating on Core Initiatives for System-Wide Change by The Reading Institute

The Reading Institute, an NYC-based non-profit, integrates their work into existing systems for maximum impact. This session will explore the dynamic approaches that The Reading Institute takes to ensure a system-wide, integrated approach to its implementation of Science of Reading-aligned intervention/ high-impact tutoring programs and professional learning. Learn about how The Reading Institute achieved both deep focus and broad, sustainable adoption of their programs.

From Classroom to Coalition: Amplifying Teacher Voice to Drive Literacy Transformation by Educators for Excellence (E4E) - New York

This interactive session examines New York City's literacy ecosystem and the critical role of teacher voice within it. Participants will explore how educators are already influencing citywide literacy efforts by sharing their frontline expertise and shaping advocacy efforts to inform New York City Public Schools. E4E also works to integrate the teacher perspective into a broader literacy coalition, but there are often gaps that emerge given teachers are in schools all day when much of the work progresses. Through collaborative breakout discussions, attendees will next identify engagement gaps among key partners in the ecosystem and develop concrete strategies to build stronger cross-sector alignment between teachers and other critical ecosystem actors to accelerate literacy equity citywide.

Afternoon Session 2 Continued

When the Village Shares the Map: Building a Citywide Early Literacy Pathway from Birth to Kindergarten Readiness by Literacy in Community (LINC)

This session examines the critical need for a shared framework across the early childhood literacy landscape, one where every adult in a child's life, from pediatricians and parents to daycare workers and librarians, is working from the same map. When the village is aligned, every child—regardless of zip code or background—benefits from a seamless continuum of learning and care. Participants will explore strategies for building that continuum from prenatal and infant support through 2K, 3K, and 4K, and how a strong, equitable foundation connects to lasting success in the K-12 system. The session will highlight how LINC's community partnerships can provide the infrastructure, professional development, and culturally responsive family engagement necessary to ensure that every New York City child enters kindergarten ready to thrive as a reader.

Notes

**Thank you to the many organizations,
partners, and funders who contributed time,
advice, and resources to make today possible.**

**A special thanks to the students of New York,
whose brilliance and curiosity inspire this
work every day.**



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Reads
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 **CPRL** | Center for Public
Research and Leadership

 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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