

### History

Through a collaborative effort of the Cleveland, George Gund, and Martha Holden Jennings Foundations, The Literacy Cooperative was established in 2006 as an oversight and coordinating entity to work on behalf of the community to improve literacy levels among children, youth and adults in

### Mission

The Literacy Cooperative works to advance literacy through an effective service delivery system reflecting the highest standards in the field.

### Vision

To ensure that all children and adults in Greater Cleveland will reach their highest literacy potential for employment, self-sufficiency and lifelong learn-

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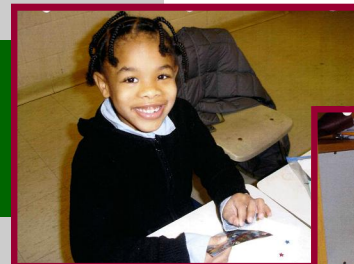
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### The Goal of STEP

Research shows that children who are not reading on grade level by the end of third grade usually fail to meet grade level expectations for reading in future years (Francis, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz & Fletcher, 1996). If students do not acquire literacy skills prior to third grade, their chances of success in school are diminished.

The goal of STEP is to improve outcomes by helping students

**The Literacy Cooperative is a 501 (C) 3 nonprofit.**



# STEP

**Supporting Tutors Engaging Pupils**



**A volunteer-based tutoring intervention  
designed to build reading skills**

Funding for STEP is provided by The Cleveland Foundation, Eva L. and Joseph M. Bruening Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, and The Lubrizol Foundation.

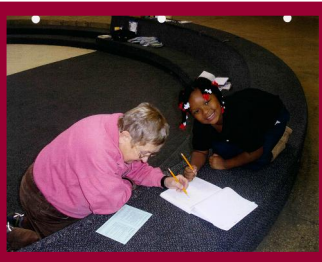
## STEP Overview

STEP (Supporting Tutors Engaging Pupils) is a volunteer based tutoring intervention developed by The Literacy Cooperative and a group of community literacy partners. The program is designed to help build reading and language skills in K-3 students who are below grade level in reading.

Research shows one-on-one tutoring programs are effective in preventing reading failure, especially in the early grades. Most school-based tutoring programs are predominately reading programs. While reading programs are important, they do not address skill deficiencies common to most struggling children. STEP targets literacy skill development in the early grades and was launched in response to the need for a more effective model of tutoring intervention.

### The STEP Pilot

A pilot of STEP was launched by The Literacy Cooperative in November 2010 for first grade students at Marion Sterling School in Cleveland's Central neighborhood. In 2011-2012, the pilot continues with first grade students at Marion Sterling School and also includes kindergarten students at Upson School in Euclid.



STEP uses a combination of two evidence based programs to build reading and language skills in students who are below grade level: *Ready Readers* and *Book Buddies*. Tutors use books to deliver a comprehensive lesson based on a scripted, research based, four-part plan

that supports the development of fluency (re-reading), vocabulary development, comprehension and word knowledge (reading new text), alphabetic principle

## STEPS to Literacy Success Through

### 1. A Plan and Structure

Children learn best from well-planned, structured tutoring sessions. STEP volunteers are equipped with scripted lesson plans, books, materials and strategies to meet children's interests, abilities and learning styles.

### 2. Frequent and Regular Tutoring Sessions

Because tutoring is about building relationships, children benefit from regular sessions with tutors that occur at the same time, day and place from week to week. Children in STEP participate in twice-weekly 30 minute sessions. STEP attempts to match the same tutor and child each session.



### 3. Coordination with Classroom Instruction

When activities are coordinated with the classroom instructional program, children receive consistent messages about reading and can practice the skills most relevant to their classroom work. The STEP coordinator regularly meets with classroom instructors to coordinate efforts.

### 4. Research-Based Methods

Volunteers should follow research-based methods to help children improve reading skills. In 2000, the National Reading Panel (NRP) identified five skills essential to literacy development: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension. Students benefit from instruction in each of these skills. The STEP curriculum addresses each skill area.

### 5. Assessment of Student Progress

Assessment of children's learning is useful to everyone. STEP has a formal assessment protocol and is being evaluated as an intervention that can improve outcomes for children.

### 6. Positive, Caring Relationships

Research shows that mentoring relationships strengthen assets in children that lead to improved skills. Strong tutoring programs foster positive