

# Co-Funding Models to Support Local & Statewide GLR Efforts

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# Presenters



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Read On Arizona



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## Commentator



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# Moderator



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Campaign for Grade-Level Reading



**IOWA**  
CAMPAIGN FOR  
**GRADE-LEVEL  
READING**

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3RD GRADE READING  
SUCCESS MATTERS



# IN A NEW LIGHT

Philanthropy-Serving  
Organizations and  
Co-Funding Projects

THE POWER OF SHARED GOALS,  
NEW ROLES, AND STAYING AT THE TABLE

# IOWA CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING

JAN 2014 – DEC 2021



## Sharing Success

This report captures the shared success of Iowa funders and the Iowa Council of Foundations (ICoF) through our involvement in the Iowa Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. This endeavor began with a few simple questions:

- 1 How can funders come together around an issue?
- 2 What happens when funders align to support shared goals?
- 3 What if they support those goals with grantmaking resources, but also with time, skills and leadership?
- 4 What if a philanthropy-serving organization (PSO) broadens the vision of its role, in both serving and guiding its network?
- 5 And what happens when these organizations choose the long view over short-term successes?

# Where It All Began

In 2013, ten members of the Iowa Council of Foundations Education Funders Network explored co-funding models as a strategy to support education in our state. (You can view the full 2013 ICoF Education Funders Network co-funding report at: [www.iowacounciloffoundations.org/2013-ed.](http://www.iowacounciloffoundations.org/2013-ed.)) At the end of that year, the group decided to collectively invest in the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (CGLR) by utilizing two co-funding strategies as defined by Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO):



## Targeted Co-funding:

*Funders deliberately but independently make a grant to the same program, organization or issue.*



## Strategic Alignment:

*Funders or partners agree to adopt joint or complementary strategies, in pursuit of a common goal.*

Participating funders made several commitments to support collective work, including agreements to:



Sign a **Memorandum of Understanding** defining shared goals;



Provide community and school-district level data to support statewide metrics and progress monitoring;

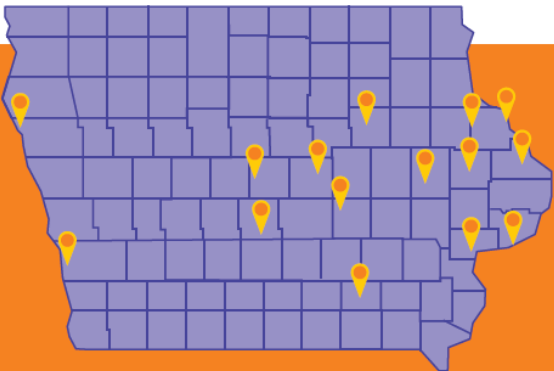


Participate in peer-sharing and learning through the ICoF Education Funders Network; and



Complete monthly reports to track grant investments, emerging needs, and the ways funders were supporting their local work.

**COLLECTIVE, STATEWIDE IMPACT:**



Ames • Cedar Rapids • Cedar Valley • Council Bluffs • Des Moines  
 Dubuque • Dyersville • Grinnell • Jackson County • Jones County  
 Marshalltown • Muscatine • Ottumwa • Quad Cities • Sioux City

<p><b>GREW FROM</b></p> <p><b>6 TO 15</b></p> <p>Campaign communities</p>	<p><b>REACHED</b></p> <p><b>61</b></p> <p>school districts</p>	<p><b>SERVED</b></p> <p><b>7 OF THE 10</b></p> <p>largest districts in Iowa</p>
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**OVER HALF** of low-income children in Iowa were in GLR communities.

Source: www.datacenter.kidscount.org (2019)

**OVER 25,000 VOLUNTEERS**

supported local Campaigns



in local, regional and national public and private funds leveraged for the Iowa Campaign



ICoF members – nearly half of the ICoF network – made at least one grant to support the Iowa Campaign

**OVER 350 PARTNERS**



Statewide partnerships were strengthened, including strategic alignment with United Ways of Iowa and Iowa ACEs 360.



The network found a **SHARED VOICE** to advocate for public policy changes locally at school districts and at the statewide level.

This included multiple meetings with legislators, three advocacy days at the State Capitol, strategy meetings with the Iowa Department of Education, participation in a Governor’s Task Force, and specific outreach to House and Senate Education Committee members.





## HONORS AND RECOGNITION:

- **44 Pacesetter Awards** from the National Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, more than any other participating state. Communities are honored for exemplary work and reporting observable progress in one or more of the Campaign's priorities.
- **The entire state of Iowa** was recognized with two Pacesetter Awards.
- **5 All-America City Award Finalists** and **3 All-America City Award Winners** in 2017 from the National Civic League.
- **7 Bright Spot Honors** from the National Campaign for recognition of support for early school success. Two of these recognitions were for exemplary or innovative responses to the pandemic.
- **6 Iowa communities** included in 2021 National Campaign Practice Briefs

## CO-FUNDING OUTCOMES:



Investment into local Campaign communities and statewide efforts came from a variety of sources including local, state, and national philanthropy dollars, as well as state and federal public dollars. Engagement in the Campaign has positioned many communities and districts to **better leverage funding long-term.**



This was a long-term strategy commitment and investment for many Iowa funders. Iowa funders persisted with seven of the original co-funding partners still engaged with their local Campaigns today.



Funders engaged in various ways, with many playing traditional funder roles by providing grants. However, we were interested in exploring other roles a funder could fulfill. Funders reported stepping into a variety of roles, including many playing new roles. *(See pages 10-11 for more details.)*



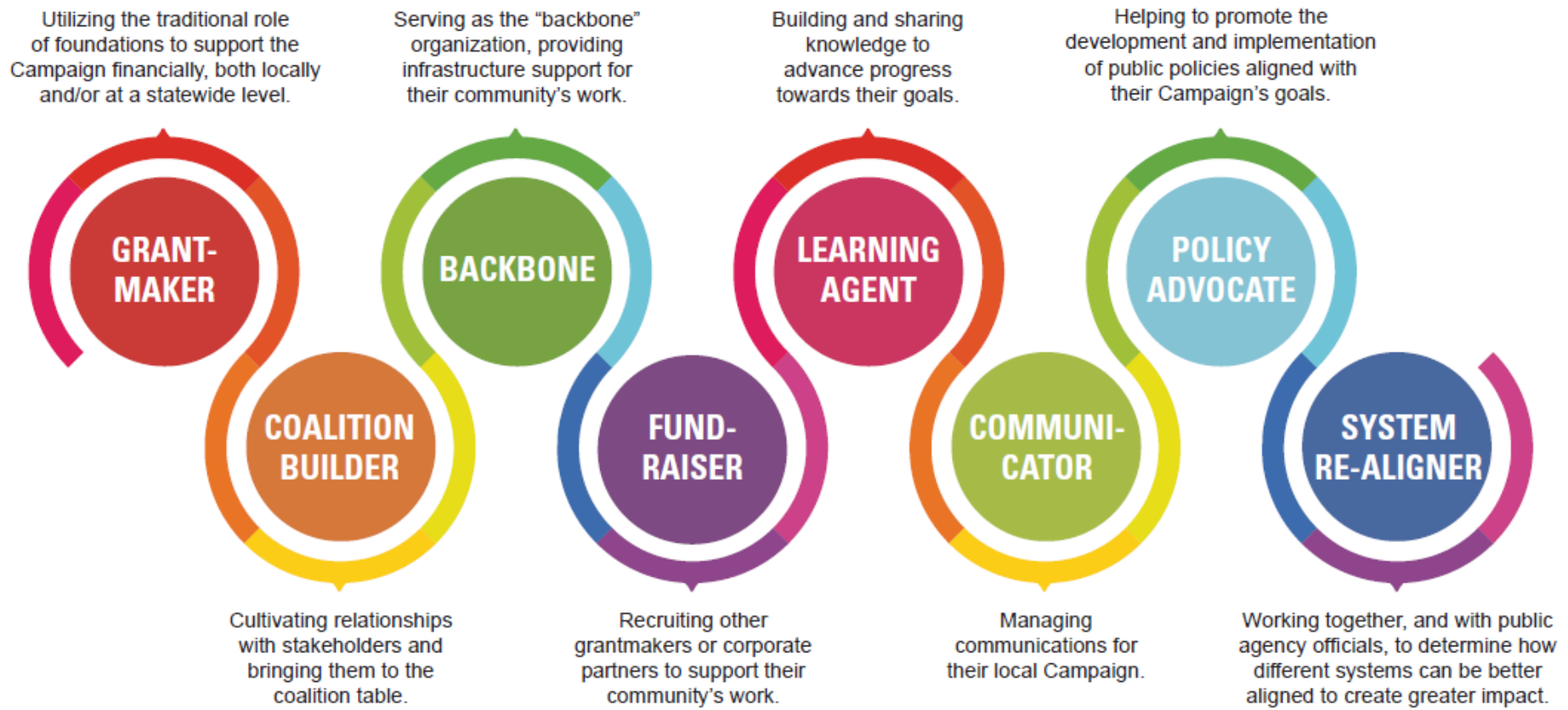
While funders were committed to supporting local projects, participants reported that peer-sharing and the network of support they gained from working together substantially advanced and accelerated their efforts. One funder shared: *“The strength of the network is really being able to take a step back or above to see, ‘What did we learn that we need to carry into other collective impact [work]?’”*



# New Roles & Practices for Funders in Communities

Throughout the project, funders reported to ICoF monthly – and later quarterly – the roles they played in their local GLR Campaigns. One funder noted the reporting process itself was a helpful tool. *“I appreciate it. It helps us track what we’re doing and we can look at how it’s changing over time...and know if we’re staffing enough. That has been a really good thing.”*

In these reports, a foundation credited ICoF’s Education Funders Network with helping them develop foresight into how to do the work, what the Campaign would require, and possible roles. This helped them – and other funders – reach milestones more quickly. **The frequency with which funders reported playing each role is detailed below, with those on the left being the most frequently reported or most common roles.**



# Where Do We Go From Here?

In the summer of 2020, with 18 months of funding remaining to support the project, we dedicated resources to a strategic transition – both for the Iowa Campaign for GLR and also for the ICoF Education Funders Network. We know many of our members will continue to be involved in their local Campaigns and the state and national GLR networks. Because of this, the ICoF will remain a partner in the Campaign, but will no longer be the fiscal agent or serve in backbone capacities. Informed by the Iowa Campaign network, work is underway to identify a new “home” organization for the Iowa Campaign to serve these roles in this next chapter.

We know a significant number of ICoF members continue to support education priorities in Iowa. We believe there may be opportunities for future co-funding projects in Iowa. So, we’re pulling out our 2013 playbook and beginning this process again. Together, the ICoF Education Funders Network is beginning exploration to determine: what everyone is doing and where there is alignment; willingness to commit time and resources to a shared goal/strategy; and the additional resources that could be leveraged from a co-funding model to support bigger outcomes and impact in Iowa. We are committed to serving as an opportunity broker to elevate and accelerate whatever may be on the horizon for our members. We’re eager to determine what’s next!

# Read On Arizona



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# United Way of Southwest Virginia



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# Questions & Discussion



# Upcoming GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinars:

## LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

Co-sponsored by Attendance Works

Beyond Bricks & Mortar: How Housing Agencies Can Support Showing Up To School

Tuesday, October 18, 12:30–2:00 p.m. 3–4:30 p.m. ET/12–1:30 p.m. PT

## LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

A Pivotal Year: Kindergarten's Important Role in Students' Education

Co-sponsored by New America

Tuesday, October 25, 3–4:30 p.m. ET/12–1:30 p.m. PT

## LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

What's Next? Identifying & Advancing Initiatives to Accelerate Learning Recovery

Tuesday, November 1, 3–4:30 p.m. ET/12–1:30 p.m. PT

## ELECTION DAY

On November 8, we will rebroadcast a previous high-demand session. Stay tuned for registration info!

Join us!

[gradelevelreading.net](http://gradelevelreading.net) [@readingby3rd](https://twitter.com/readingby3rd) [#GLReading](https://twitter.com/GLReading) [#LearningTuesdays](https://twitter.com/LearningTuesdays) [#GLRKeepers](https://twitter.com/GLRKeepers)

