

THE EWDC UPDATE

Fall 2026

Fall has arrived, students are back in classrooms, and EWDC programs are up and running for the 2026-27 school year. Check out what we've been up to and some of the exciting ways you can get involved and help more young kids overcome obstacles to become readers.

2025-26 Annual Report

In September, EWDC released our annual Impact Report for the 2025-26 program year. Highlights included:

- **167** students enrolled in EWDC's mentoring program
- **2,326** reading mentoring hours completed
- **1,444** students attending StoryTime events
- **12,529** free books distributed
- **Increases** in students' literacy skills, reading confidence, and positive attitudes about books

Click here for the full report to learn more about EWDC's programs and how they help kids become readers.



2026-27 Program Year Goals

Kids who read to better at school and in life. But too many kids aren't reading. Only 31% of 3rd graders in DC are reading at a proficient level and reading books for fun, as well as positive attitudes about reading, is decreasing among young children, with a marked decline by age 9 that doesn't rebound.

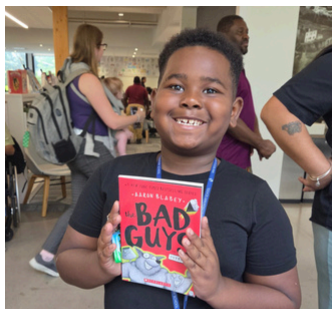
That's why EWDC helps kids overcome obstacles to become engaged and excited readers. For the 2026-27 program year, EWDC's goals include:

- Increase opportunities for EWDC to engage directly with students through Power Readers and StoryTime
- Expand EWDC's reach by adding new service sites to our footprint
- Continue helping kids build engaging home libraries by giving away at least 10,000 free books

Welcome EWDC Program Coordinators

EWDC is excited to introduce our School Year 2026-27 Program Coordinators! This amazing team manages Power Readers operations at each of our schools, ensuring the program best meets our students' needs. Having EWDC staff on-site also eliminates the school's administrative and financial burden, keeping the program free of charge:

- Juanita Dale, Leleck ES
- Kaylin Bencosme, Thomson ES
- Kamryn Bess, Thomson ES
- Nile Gunn, Amidon Bowen ES
- Bianca Palese, Innovation ES
- JR Santiago, Innovation ES
- Marie Day, JO Wilson ES



EXPANSION ALERT!

NEW POWER READERS SCHOOL: After two years of supporting Amidon-Bowen Elementary School through StoryTime and Book Project, EWDC is excited to launch Power Readers mentoring sessions this fall with a small cohort of students.

NEW STORYTIME/BOOK PROJECT LOCATIONS

- Anne Beers Elementary School: Title 1 school in Ward 7
- Kidspace at House of Ruth: a childhood development center in Ward 7
- Burnt Mills Elementary School: Title 1 Elementary School in Silver Spring, MD

Expansions at Anne Beers ES and Kidspace are supported in large part by grant funding from the Peter H. & Dana Gunn Winslow Foundation.

Ready to help a child become a reader? Sign up as a Power Readers mentor today! Scan the code or visit: bit.ly/ewdc-become-a-mentor



BACK TO SCHOOL, BACK TO BOOKS

On September 18, 2026, EWDC welcomed 130 volunteers to our Back to School, Back to Books service event. This annual gathering prepares books for upcoming distributions so kids can build engaging home libraries filled with stories they love. Volunteers prepared more than 1,700 books for young readers ages 3-12 and wrote notes of encouragement that were hidden inside the pages.

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time to help our students become readers!



**Special thank you
to Skadden for
hosting Back to
School, Back to
Books 2026!**

Thank You Back to School, Back to Books Volunteer Teams!

Special thank you to the partner organizations that joined us for Back to School, Back to Books:

- American Forest & Paper Association
- Alston & Bird
- Amazon
- American Petroleum Institute
- BCG
- Bipartisan Policy Center
- CTIA
- DAR
- FCBA
- Foley & Lardner
- IMF
- Library of Congress
- JBG SMITH
- MedStar
- Office of Eric Schmidt
- Pi Beta Phi Alumnae
- PwC
- Shell
- WestEd
- Willis Towers Watson

BECOME A POWER READERS MENTOR

Power Readers helps kids become readers by giving them consistent support through weekly reading sessions with a mentor. No testing, no judgement. Just stress-free time spent reading stories that kids actually enjoy. During the 2025-26 program year:

- 91% of students said Power Readers made them stronger readers.
- Students who reported being “very confident” in their reading abilities increased by 18%.
- Students who reported the highest level of pride in their reading grew by 21%.

Help a child build a positive relationship with reading by signing up as a mentor! Sessions available at 5 schools across the DC area, all hosted on-site during students’ lunch period. Learn more at: bit.ly/ewdc-become-a-mentor.



**SCAN HERE
TO MENTOR!**



THE FINAL WORD



Scenes from our first StoryTime read-aloud events of the 2026-27 school year!



Join the Association Book Drive Challenge

Each year, EWDC gives away more than 10,000 free books to kids across the DC area. **The annual Association Book Drive Challenge makes this possible.** This friendly competition brings together the greater association community to see which organization can donate the most books to EWDC.

Open to all associations – trade, membership, alumni, professional, and more. EWDC handles all logistics, making the Challenge an easy way for any organization to make a big impact this giving season. The Challenge will run from November 12 through December 16, with co-champions announced on December 17. To learn more or to register, visit bit.ly/EWDC-Challenge-2026-Info or email Chloe Parsons (cparsons@everybodywinsdc.org).

SAVE THE DATE: Read to Dream 2027

On May 6, 2027, EWDC will return to Pearl Street Warehouse to enjoy our annual Read to Dream Celebration! This is EWDC's largest event of the year, bringing together volunteers, supporters, students, and friends to raise the funds that keep our programs free for families, schools, and community partners.



Thank you to our recent \$5,000+ donors!

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Follow EWDC on social media to learn more about our programs, our events, and ways to support our students:

[@everybodywinsdc](https://www.instagram.com/everybodywinsdc)

