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## **Nancy Kerr to Retire as Foundation President** ***Local Group Grew to National Nonprofit Supporting Children's Literacy in 30 States***

**KENNEWICK, Wash.** The Children's Reading Foundation® national headquarters this week announced Nancy Kerr, co-founder and president, will retire on April 30. Kerr will remain on the national board of directors.

Kerr co-founded The Children's Reading Foundation in 1996, which later expanded to become the national organization and Mid-Columbia Chapter, both headquartered in Kennewick, Wash. She served as president of both nonprofits, first Mid-Columbia (1996 – 2001), then the national organization (1998 – present).

"Nancy is a remarkable leader and champion for parents in their role as a child's first and most influential teachers, said Paul Rosier, Ph.D., national board chairman of The Children's Reading Foundation.

"For the past 20 years, she has led the nonprofit from a local organization in Washington to a prominent national foundation. Today, we serve parents, caregivers and children in 30 states and support families from all walks of life in preparing their kids to succeed in school."

Kerr developed and launched multiple programs for the foundation. They include Team Read (volunteer reading tutors for grades 1-3) and READ Up (activities to prevent summer learning loss, distributing more than 150,000 free books annually).

Kerr was also the lead author of the foundation's widely respected, research-based program READY! for Kindergarten® (birth to age 5 school readiness program). She is currently helping produce a READY! for Kindergarten app to reach an international audience.

She co-authored three books on childhood literacy and school improvement, which have been widely used by educators. Her efforts made reading with a child 20 minutes every day a nationally recognized parenting practice.

During her tenure, the foundation was awarded two Innovative Approaches to Literacy grants, totaling \$6.67 million, from the U.S. Department of Education to expand its work in high-need communities and further early literacy initiatives nationwide.

Kerr has earned broad recognition, including the U.S. Department of Education's America Reads Challenge Recognition, an invitation to the White House Conference on Literacy, and the International Reading Association Literacy Award for Washington State.

A former high school teacher with a master's degree in Educational Leadership, she has served on local, state and national boards that support childhood literacy and education.

"It has been an honor and blessing to be part of this important work. Our success is the result of dedicated staff, committed volunteers, and caring partners," said Kerr. "Today, I know more than ever that strong reading skills are essential to a child's future. And reading success begins at home during a child's earliest years."

Rick Donahoe, business and grant manager of The Children's Reading Foundation, was named Kerr's successor by the board of directors. Donahoe has been with the organization since 2013. He has more than 30 years of experience managing grants and contracts from the federal government.

He also serves on the Richland (Washington) School Board. Donahoe earned his Education Administration credential from Washington State University.

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**About The Children's Reading Foundation:** The nonprofit foundation headquarters are in Kennewick, Wash. The organization was founded in 1996 with the vision that every child learns to read at grade level by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, thereby reaching his or her full potential in school and life. The foundation developed and delivers national programs focused on reading skills and school readiness for children birth to age 8. All programs invest in children's early learning and are complemented by resources for parents and caregivers. The Children's Reading Foundation also helps establish local chapters in communities across the country. Learn more at: [www.ReadingFoundation.org](http://www.ReadingFoundation.org).

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