



# Information Notice

July 5, 2012

Seattle and seven South King County cities (including the City of SeaTac) were named [All-America Cities](#) by the National Civic League on Monday based on the region's ambitious plan to ensure that more children are reading at grade level by the end of third grade.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 3, 2012

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## **SEATTLE AND SOUTH KING COUNTY CITIES NAMED 2012 ALL-AMERICA CITIES BASED ON PLAN TO IMPROVE THIRD-GRADE READING**

DENVER—Seattle and seven South King County cities were named [All-America Cities](#) by the National Civic League on Monday based on the region's ambitious plan to ensure that more children are reading at grade level by the end of third grade.

Chosen from a field of more than 100 entries, the proposal for Seattle and the cities of Auburn, Burien, Federal Way, Kent, Renton, SeaTac and Tukwila was submitted by the [Road Map Project](#), a cradle-to-college-and-career initiative aimed at improving education in South Seattle and South King County. The community was one of [14 awardees](#) selected from 32 finalists.

The awards were handed out at the conclusion of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading conference in Denver. Awardees will compete again in 2016 based on results obtained from efforts to improve third-grade reading.

Objectives of Seattle and the South King County cities' plan include building and sustaining a major regional commitment to improving grade-level reading and developing broad public awareness efforts to make third-grade reading a regional priority. The award also recognizes the impressive accomplishments and work already under way in our area:

- [Let's Read](#) is a regional campaign that is underlining the importance of summer reading for children through a partnership of cities, districts, libraries, nonprofit organizations and other groups. So far, the campaign has distributed 40,000 flyers at 123 King County elementary schools and enlisted local mayors to record public service announcements. The effort also aims to connect families to library resources, book recommendations and events.
- Many City of Seattle departments are joining forces with community groups and parents to help improve third-grade reading at Northgate Elementary School. Seattle voters also just passed a new Families and Education Levy, which has a strong focus on improving third-grade reading outcomes.
- Summer Boost, a new project in Highline, aims to support children's learning over the summer and connect families to the library system. Families participating in the project are connected with library story times and are given materials and activities to take home.

“We are thrilled to win the All-America City Award. It is an honor to have our region's ambitious plan for improving third-grade reading recognized on the national stage,” said Auburn Mayor Peter Lewis. “Local efforts, such as Let's Read, are already boosting awareness of the importance of reading in our communities. All these initiatives are possible thanks to hard work and strong partnerships between schools, cities and families in our region.”

Beyond the award contest, Seattle and South King County's plan makes the region a charter member in the [Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Communities Network](#), a national movement of local and state leaders, nonprofits, and foundations putting a stake in the ground on third-grade reading. That milestone marks the point when children shift from learning to read and begin reading to learn. Students who haven't mastered reading by then are more likely to get stuck in a cycle of academic failure, drop out of school, and struggle throughout their lives.

The awards are given each year by the [National Civic League](#) for outstanding civic accomplishments. Ordinarily, applicants choose their own local projects to showcase, but this year NCL is teaming with the Campaign to encourage community-based partnerships to improve reading proficiency among young students.

“This partnership with the Campaign has been an amazing experience for our All-America City Awards,” said Gloria Rubio-Cortes, president of the National Civic League which has sponsored the award for more than 60 years. “We were overwhelmed by the quality, passion and thoughtfulness of all the action plans submitted by more than 100 cities, towns and regions. There is a real and deep commitment to ensuring that our children are prepared to succeed.”

The 124 cities and counties in the network, representing 350 school districts with 8 million students, are adopting a collective impact strategy, engaging the full community around the goal of supporting low-income children from birth through third grade.

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*About Community Center for Education Results*

*CCER staffs the Road Map Project, a civic initiative aimed at improving education in South Seattle and South King County. All stages of education are important -- from early learning to college -- and all need improvement and innovation. We know it is possible to get great results and we are committed to doing whatever it takes. For more information, visit <http://www.ccedresults.org>.*

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*The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is a collaborative effort by dozens of funders across the nation to: close the gap in reading achievement that separates many low-income students from their peers; raise the bar for reading proficiency so that all students are assessed by world-class standards; and ensure that all children, including and especially children from low-income families, have an equitable opportunity to meet those higher standards. For more information, visit [www.gradelevelreading.net](http://www.gradelevelreading.net)*

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*The National Civic League is a 117-year-old nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that strengthens democracy by increasing the capacity of groups and individuals to participate in and build healthy and prosperous communities. In addition to giving the All-America City Awards, NCL publishes the Model City Charter and the National Civic Review. [www.ncl.org](http://www.ncl.org); [www.allamericacityaward.com](http://www.allamericacityaward.com).*

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City of SeaTac Website  
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