

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Lead to Read Crowned Community Champion *School Board honors volunteer organization for helping improve literacy in KCPS*

**Kansas City, December 15, 2016:** Superintendent Mark Bedell and the Board of Directors recognized Lead to Read as a Kansas City Public Schools Community Champion during a meeting on Dec. 14.

Lead to Read's mission is to help kids in grades 1 through 4 improve their basic reading skills by reading one-on-one with a trusted, caring adult from the community. Once a week, for 30 minutes, readers and kids explore the world by reading books provided by the children's teachers, in the safety and security of an elementary school classroom.

Lead to Read Interim Executive Director and Director of Reader Development Pauly Hart was at the meeting to accept the award.

Lead to Read provides about half of the approximately 1200 volunteers total who serve KCPS students. That includes 74 members of the Kansas City Police Department who volunteer to read each week through Lead to Read KC.

During the six years that Lead to Read has been in operation, the literacy rate among third-graders in Kansas City, Mo. has increased from 33 percent to 49 percent.

"Just 30 minutes of reading with a child every week, consistently, can change their life," KCPS Community/Partners and Engagement Services Coordinator Nicole Collier White said. "It not only shows that someone cares about you and your education, but that people in this community are invested in the lives our students."

Learn more about Lead to Read by visiting [www.leadtoreadkc.org](http://www.leadtoreadkc.org). Visit [www.kcpublicschools.org/Volunteer](http://www.kcpublicschools.org/Volunteer) to explore opportunities to serve KCPS students as a volunteer.

