



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## LITERACY KC TO RECEIVE \$6.2 MILLION DOLLAR GRANT TO EXPAND PROGRAMMING IN KC METRO

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Literacy KC is set to change the landscape of adult basic education in our city and is honored to be the recipient of a combined \$6,241,890 million dollar award for Adult Education and Literacy and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The grants, which will be dispersed over three years, will make it possible for Literacy KC to expand English language learning, high school equivalency, workforce development, and remedial reading programming to better serve the over 225,000 adults in the metro that currently read below an eighth grade level. The only new grant recipient in the state, Literacy KC will expand to 15 locations across the metro, from Excelsior Springs to Grandview – key partners include Metropolitan Community College, Housing Authority of Kansas City, and Don Bosco School of English.

Adult basic education becomes even more vital to our community in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenges arising become exponential for the 36 million low literate families across the United States. “Literacy KC’s current and future students are among those being hit hardest by COVID-19 and its economic repercussions. Even as we ensure our community’s immediate and basic needs are met, Literacy KC is focused on the upcoming recovery phase, and this grant helps to make certain that we will be prepared to meet the inevitable increase in demand for adult basic education and workforce development programs,” said Literacy KC Chief Executive Officer Gillian Helm.

For the past 35 years, Literacy KC has served thousands of low literate adults and empowered them to improve their quality of life through literacy. In March 2019, Literacy KC launched high school equivalency programming in partnership with Independence School District’s award-winning program. Enrollment has since increased by 41% due to the significant need for adult basic education in our community.

Independence School District’s Director of Adult and Community Education Deborah Briggs will be officially joining Literacy KC July 1 to co-lead the new programming with Literacy KC Director of Programs & Student Services Autumn Burton. “I greatly appreciate the generosity of the Independence School District and look forward to working with them in a partnership capacity for many years to come,” said Briggs who has over 15 years of experience in adult education administration and has built a nationally recognized program.



This historically unprecedented collaboration will allow Literacy KC to continue to invest in our city's greatest asset - our people.

*About Literacy KC:*

*Literacy KC offers a welcoming community for adults and families to improve literacy skills and enhance quality of life. With support from volunteers, donors, partners, and the community at large, Literacy KC invests in Kansas City's greatest asset – our people.*

*Each term, staff, tutors, volunteers, and instructors build a collaborative learning environment where adult students expand their reading, writing, math, and digital skills. The personalized approach allows students to shape the instruction they receive and delivers a balanced curriculum, leading to improved literacy and life skills.*

*More information about Literacy KC and how you can help can be found at <http://www.literacykc.org>.*