

**GREATER GRAND RAPIDS READS
2006 – 2014 Community Literacy Plan**

VISION STATEMENT: Leading Kent County to literacy for all.

MISSION STATEMENT: We will increase literacy levels to improve the quality of life in our community by:

- **Providing resources and building capacity**
- **Keeping the community informed**
- **Advocating for literacy**
- **Building partnerships**
- **Evaluating our work and reporting progress**

BELIEF STATEMENT: We believe that literacy is the key to our community's quality of life, economic self-sufficiency, and family stability.

WE VALUE:

- **Collaboration**
- **Sharing resources**
- **Diversity**
- **Open communication**
- **Listening to our community**
- **Respect**

IMPACT STATEMENT: By 2014, GGRR aims to raise literacy levels in Kent County by:

- 1) **Increasing the early literacy of children entering kindergarten in Kent County**
- 2) **Increasing K-12 standardized test scores and decreasing disparities among school districts in Kent County**
- 3) **Increasing adult literacy in Kent County to 95% in order to:**
 - **Increase basic academic and employability skills**
 - **Increase educational attainment**

**GOAL #1: EVALUATE,
MONITOR, AND MEASURE
RESULTS AND PROGRESS**

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Strategy 1.1: Evaluate progress by assessing gaps and needs on a regular basis.

											<i>MEASURES:</i>		
											<i>Success toward accomplishing outcomes in literacy plan</i>		
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
1.1 A: ANALYZE DATA AND report PROGRESS to the community on an annual basis regarding needs and gaps in literacy services.	GRRR Coordinator, Executive Team, Steering Committee, Communications Committee, UW	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UW Marketing Dept	Development of annual needs/gaps report
1.1 B: Develop an annual survey for literacy providers to identify assessments used	Data & Evaluation. Committee, GRRR Coordinator			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		UW Community Investment Councils, 211, External Consultants	Development of annual literacy provider survey Results of survey

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<i>Strategy 1.2: Create/conduct a learning history/process evaluation of coalition activity and achievement.</i>													
											<i>MEASURES: Analysis of learning history</i>		
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
1.2 A: Conduct a critical review of the literacy plan on an annual basis.	Data & Evaluation. committee, GRR Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	External Evaluator, Funding Committee, UW	Record of review, revisions to plan
1.2 B: Gather stakeholder feedback on a regular basis (focus groups, key informant interviews, etc.)	Data & Evaluation. committee, Age group committees, GRR Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	External Evaluator, Funding Committee, UW	Results of stakeholder survey
1.2 C: Reflect on and analyze data periodically in order to monitor progress.	Steering Committee, GRR Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	External Evaluator, UW	Record of regular qualitative data review

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<i>Strategy 1.3: Create an overall evaluation plan for the coalition, to include process, coalition outcomes, and broader community impact measures.</i>												
											<i>MEASURE: Evaluation plan is created and followed</i>	
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline									Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14		
1.3 A: Develop a common format for literacy providers to report outcome data.	GRRR Coordinator, Age group committees, Data & Evaluation. committee	X									Funding Committee, UW, External Consultants	Development of reporting format
1.3 B: Develop mechanism for funders to report data on literacy programs to GRRR.	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation. Committee, Steering Committee		X								Funding Committee, UW, External Consultants	Record of funders reporting data to GRRR
1.3 C: Establish a mechanism for gathering input on a regular basis from the community.	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation. Committee, Steering Committee		X								Funding Committee, UW, External Consultants	Record of input gathered from community

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<i>Strategy 1.4: Create a centralized database/collection point for literacy data.</i>												MEASURE: <i>Database is established and utilized.</i>	
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
1.4 A: Establish a common definition of literacy/low literacy for all age/grade levels	GRRR Coordinator, Steering Committee, Age Group committees	x										LUSA, NIFL, KISA Literacy Committee, WDB, Data & Evaluation. Committee	Record of discussions; minutes from meetings; definition is established
1.4 B: Identify measures that are commonly used to track literacy rates	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation. Committee	x										LUSA, NIFL, KISA Literacy Committee, WDB, Data & Evaluation. Comm	List of measures
1.4 C: Identify standard types of data to be collected	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation. Committee	x										LUSA, NIFL, KISA Literacy Committee, WDB, Data & Evaluation. Comm	List of types of data to be collected
1.4 D: Identify current sources of data and who is the collection agent: - service providers - educational institutions and organizations - city/county/state departments - health care providers - corrections	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation. Committee	x										Age Group Committees, UW, External Consultants,	List of data sources
1.4 E: Develop and implement a user-friendly data management system that streamlines and shares funding, assessment, evaluation, and performance data.	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation. Committee		x									Funding Comm., External Evaluator, database developer	Documentation of data system; user satisfaction data based on literacy provider survey

**GOAL #2: PROVIDING
RESOURCES &
BUILDING CAPACITY**

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Strategy 2.1: Needs and gaps in local literacy services will be identified and communicated to the community-at-large.

												<i>MEASURES: Mapping and identification of needs and gaps</i>	
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
2.1 A. Utilize available statistics – census – NAAL, school data, CRI, etc. – to develop a quantitative profile of community need	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation.. Committee, UW	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Funding Committee, UW, External Consultants	Annual publication of quantitative data
2.1 B. Complete/collate qualitative needs assessment activities (key informant interviews, focus group summaries, etc.)	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation.. Committee, UW	X		X		X		X		X		Funding Committee, External Evaluator	Publication of biannual qualitative needs assessment report
2.1 C. Develop community literacy surveys to administer on a periodic basis to measure need.	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation.. Committee, UW		X		X		X		X			Funding Committee, External Evaluator or External Consultants	Publication of community survey results
2.1 D. Identify and survey all literacy providers across all ages in order to develop a current services directory. (information to gather: capacity – current populations – funding – goals for growth)	GRRR Coordinator, Data & Evaluation.. Committee, age group committees, UW	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Funding Committee, UW, 211	Completed current services directory, updated annually
2.1 E: Connect current services directory to 211.	GRRR Coordinator UW	X										211	Connection made

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Strategy 2.2: Work to increase community literacy resources for operational support, sustainability, and programming.

MEASURES:
Increased resources coming into community, as compared to baseline measured by funding analysis

Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
2.2 A: Conduct a funding analysis to determine the current funding situation and to identify funding streams that are not currently being accessed..	United Way, Data & Evaluation Committee	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Funding Committee, External Consultants, info from others (i.e. Finance Project, LUSA, etc.)	Completion of annual funding analysis
2.2 B: Provide information regarding funding sources to literacy providers	GRR Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Communication mechanism (i.e. website, newsletter)	Tracking information sent to providers
2.2 C: Provide technical assistance to providers to assist them in accessing funding (help with grant writing, grant notification, etc.)	GRR Coordinator, UW Grant writer	X (beginning in 2006 & ongoing)										Literacy Provider Network	Track/documentation of technical assistance efforts
2.2 D: Identify and apply for grants in order to bring additional funds into the community	GRR Coordinator, Executive Committee, Funding Committee, Steering Committee	X (beginning in 2006 & ongoing)										UW Grant writer, Literacy Provider Network, External Consultants	Copies of grants submitted
2.2 E: Bring literacy organizations together in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the formation of partnerships Apply for funding opportunities 	GRR Coordinator	X (beginning in 2006 & ongoing)										Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network	Documentation of meeting dates, attendance; survey of providers to track increase in

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share resources (i.e. training, in-kind, staff, volunteers) 										partnerships, funding and sharing of resources	
2.2.F: Use existing funds to leverage additional funding for increased literacy services.	UW, Executive Team, Funding Committee									Gap Analysis data, External Consultants, other funders	
2.2 G: Increase the number of trained literacy volunteers through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising community awareness of the need for volunteers Providing or coordinating volunteer training with other agencies Partnering with businesses to cultivate volunteers for tutoring, technical assistance, capacity building, etc. 	GRRR Coordinator, Steering Committee, UW Volunteer Center, UW Marketing Dept.		X (Beginning in 2007 and ongoing)							Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network	Records of activities conducted; measure # of volunteers via annual provider survey
2.2 H: Increase the amount of non-financial resources that flow into the community, such as books, computers, office space, etc.	GRRR Coordinator, Steering Committee		X (Beginning in 2006 and ongoing)							Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network	Documentation of resources; measuring increase in resources via provider survey

**GOAL #2: PROVIDING
RESOURCES &
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<i>Strategy 2.3: Advocate for research-based models and practices to support literacy instruction, including reading, writing, math and communication.</i>													
<i>MEASURE: Literacy programs utilize research-based best practices when providing literacy services. % of literacy programs utilize common learner assessment tools.</i>													
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
2.3 A: Establish a best practices inventory for literacy programs that will be updated annually, based on industry operational standards specific to each type of program - Literature search re: best practices - Research what other areas/communities have done	Age group committees, GRRR Coordinator		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Literacy experts on each committee; college/university experts; United Way best practice research, LUSA, NIFL, etc.	Establish best practices inventory, updated annually
2.3 B: Define “quality” – develop community-approved best practice standards	Steering Committee		X									Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network	Record of process to determine standards; resulting definition
2.3 C: Connect best practices and community report data to literacy resource directory	GRRR Coordinator		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UW Marketing, 211	System for connection of resources developed
2.3 D: Provide opportunities for program improvement: 1) Create a calendar of technical and educational assistance opportunities for literacy providers (conferences, workshops); 2) Identify/provide technical assistance resources to literacy programs that want to improve	GRRR Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network, LUSA	Technical assistance calendar; record of attendance at events; participant evaluation of events
2.3 E: Create a literacy provider network for the sharing of best practices related to program outcomes, assessment and research, to create a culture of continuous	Age group committees, GRRR Coordinator		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Literacy Provider Network	Creation of literacy provider network; track membership and attendance; track

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improvement among literacy providers - Bring in experts in best practices to educate service providers - Provide quarterly common training on best practices and “What works” for literacy services - Ensure the involvement of colleges and universities in these forums												participant satisfaction and evaluations
2.3 F: Conduct educational forums across other systems (after school programs, jail programs, etc.) to identify ways to incorporate literacy into all types of programs/settings	Age group committees, Steering Committee, GRRR Coordinator		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network	Documentation of events; attendance; participant evaluations
2.3 G: Advocate for common assessment tools to be utilized by literacy providers - Network to get buy-in from all players (business, education, etc.) - Conduct educational forums across systems to identify ways to incorporate literacy in their sector/programs and how to measure success. - Advocate to funders that providers use common assessment tools	Age group committees, Steering Committee, GRRR Coordinator										Literacy Provider Network	Identification of common assessment tools Develop an annual survey to identify assessments used Develop a way to collect and track data on assessments that is updated regularly

**GOAL #3: KEEPING
THE COMMUNITY
INFORMED**

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<i>Strategy 3.1: Increase the broader community's knowledge and awareness of local literacy issues, needs, and services.</i>													
MEASURES:													
<i>Annual survey of providers on literacy messages and issues received from GRR</i>													
<i>Community literacy survey can ask about general community perceptions on literacy issues, needs and services</i>													
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
3.1 A: Develop communication systems – website, newsletter, annual report, press releases, PSAs, events calendar – to provide literacy information to community and literacy providers.	GRRR Coordinator, GRRR Comm. Committee	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	UW Marketing Dept.	# of communication articles published within the year
3.1 B: Develop a marketing plan, including media contact procedure, to raise general awareness of the issue of literacy in the community	GRRR Coordinator, GRRR Comm. Committee		x									UW Marketing Dept.	Marketing plan developed
3.1 C: Determine audiences/populations toward which messages should be targeted	GRRR Coordinator, Comm. Committee,		x									UW Marketing Dept.	Developed as part of the marketing plan
3.1 D: Work with community leaders of education, business, healthcare, community agencies, and media to promote the importance of literacy and provide literacy learning services for learners of all ages.	GRRR Coordinator, Executive Committee, Comm. Committee											UW Marketing Dept.	# of community leaders involved with the work of GRRR # of meetings with community leaders
3.1 E Annually report to the community on successes/progress toward goals.	Executive Committee, Steering Committee, Communication Committee, Events Committee	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	UW Marketing Dept.	Report published

**GOAL #3: KEEPING
THE COMMUNITY
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Strategy 3.2: Increase potential learners' knowledge and awareness of local literacy services.

MEASURES

*Community literacy survey can ask about knowledge and awareness of local literacy services
Gather information on knowledge and awareness and gaps in services from focus groups and community forums*

Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
3.2 A: Outreach to potential learners via the mass media and other marketing strategies.	GRRR Coordinator, Age group committees, Steering Committee, UW Marketing Dept.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Literacy Provider Network	# of media coverage and marketing activities
3.2 B: Assess learner needs on a regular basis, via focus groups, community forums, and other strategies.	Data & Evaluation. Committee, age group committees		x		x		x		x			External Consultants	# of activities Participant evaluations
3.2 C: Utilize current information and referral services (i.e. the current services directory) to guide potential learners to appropriate literacy services.	Age group committees			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		211, Literacy Provider Network	Annual survey of providers to include question on use of the literacy directory for referrals 2-1-1 numbers for referrals to literacy programs
3.2 D: Act as a referral resource for learners seeking services – connect and coordinate with 211.	GRRR Coordinator											211	2-1-1 information on information and referral services
3.2 E: Regularly conduct assessments to identify gaps in services. Advocate for additional services based on results of gap analysis.	GRRR Coordinator, Executive Team, Steering Committee,		x		x		x					Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network	Assessment conducted Initial assessment will be used as

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	Data & Evaluation. Committee, Legislative Committee											benchmark- subsequent assessments will be used to measure progress (need to create a methodology for assessments- tie this up with 2.2B)
3.2 F: Evaluate the results of learner outreach efforts.	Data & Evaluation. Committee, GRR Coordinator			x	x	x	x	x			Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network, Literacy Provider Network	See 2.2 # of actual enrollments in literacy programs (was there an increase?)

**GOAL #4:
ADVOCATING FOR
LITERACY**

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<i>Strategy 4.1: Advocate for literacy issues in the legislative and public arena.</i>													
											MEASURES: <i>GRR legislative agenda is supported Legislative components of GRR agenda are passed</i>		
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
4.1 A: Establish a legislative committee to advocate for literacy issues.	Steering Committee, GRRR Coordinator		X									Staff support for the committee Establish communication linkages or send representation to existing advocacy groups (i.e. Kent County Advocacy Coalition for Children and Families, KCCCFC, UW Public Policy, GR Chamber Legislative Committee)	Committee roster Meeting minutes/attendance # of legislative alerts sent to GRRR members # of meetings with legislators held/co-hosted (see resources)
4.1 B: Inform local legislators about literacy issues.	Legislative Committee, GRRR Coordinator											UW Public Policy Committee	# Letters/position papers sent to legislators # of meetings with legislators held/co-hosted (see resources)
4.1 C: Keep coalition members informed through links to state and national literacy organizations.	Legislative Committee, GRRR Coordinator												# Newsletter alerts Annual member survey – how well

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												informed they feel about state and national efforts
4.1 D: Provide testimony at legislative hearings, etc.	Legislative Committee, Executive Team, Steering Committee, GRR Coordinator										Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network, Literacy Consumer Community	# of legislative hearings attended # of meetings with legislators
4.1 E: Identify legislative literacy champions.	Legislative Committee, GRR Coordinator										Age Group Committees, Literacy Provider Network, Literacy Consumer Community	In election years – track commitment of candidates to literacy issues. Track voting records of legislators on literacy legislation/funding Publish list of literacy champions – based on legislative record
4.1 F: Share the results of the committee's efforts with the larger coalition and community.	Legislative Committee, Steering Committee, Executive Team, Communication Committee										Events Committee, UW Marketing	# of legislative updates in newsletter

GOAL #5: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

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<i>Strategy 5.1: Work to strengthen the GGRR coalition.</i>												MEASURES:	
												<i>Annual membership assessment based on Wilder collaboration factors inventory</i>	
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
5.1 A: Continue to increase and diversify coalition membership, including membership in the Steering Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create categories of critical constituencies that must be represented on the steering committee and coalition committees • Develop recruitment plan for unrepresented constituencies 	Steering Committee/GGRR Coordinator	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	All GGRR Committees	Annual review of coalition and committee membership based on criteria Meeting attendance analysis
5.1 B: Evaluate the existing organizational structure of the coalition to determine whether to add or change subcommittees' roles and responsibilities; develop a membership plan for the coalition.	Steering Committee/GGRR Coordinator		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	All GGRR Committees	Annual review of meeting minutes/ attendance to see if committees are functioning. Review organizational goals and strategies against existing committee objectives to ensure alignment.
5.1 C: Define and clarify the roles of the Steering Committee and Executive Team.	Steering & Executive Committee/GGRR Coordinator	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					Job descriptions completed Annual review of job descriptions to ensure relevance. Administer Partnership Self

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													Assessment Tool every 6 months.
5.1 D: Develop long and short-term budgets for GRR.	Steering & Executive Committee/GRR Coordinator	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	UW, External Consultants	Annual Budget completed Monthly comparison of budget to operational/coalition goals/objectives (income/expense)
5.1 E: Establish an internal communications network/process.	GRR Coordinator	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Age Group Committees	Communication strategy developed (listserv, discussion board, etc.). # of internal communications sent # of “conversations” across teams/committees facilitated.
5.1 F: Create a development plan outlining potential funding streams and matching funding to GRR committee goals (match with funding analysis)	Funding Committee, GRR Coordinator, Executive Committee											UW	Development plan completed. # Funding opportunity alerts communicated to coalition \$ Amount of funding requests submitted. \$ Amount of literacy proposals successfully funded by source

GOAL #5: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

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<i>Strategy 5.2: Strengthen existing relationships/partnerships between GRRR and literacy-based organizations.</i>													
											MEASURES: <i>Assessment of partners' satisfaction with relationship with GRRR Annual membership survey</i>		
Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
5.2 A: Define, clarify, and strengthen the relationship between GRRR and United Way.	Steering & Executive Committee/GRRR Coordinator, UW	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Memorandum of Understanding in place Annual review/revision of MOU Annual survey of stakeholders to determine understanding of and satisfaction with relationship.
5.2 B: Continue to identify and define partnerships between GRRR and other community organizations/entities.	Steering & Executive Committee/GRRR Coordinator, All GRRR Committees	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Literacy Provider Network	# of MOUs established
5.2 C: Develop connections with state and national literacy organizations	Steering Committee, Executive Committee, GRRR Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	LUSA, NIFL, International Reading Association, Michigan Reading Association, etc.	# organizations connected with GRRR membership in state and national literacy organizations Attendance at state and national literacy conferences/meetings

GOAL #5: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

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Strategy 5.3: Facilitate the formation of partnerships between educational institutions, businesses, faith-base organizations/congregations, community-based organizations, and political entities to support literacy.

MEASURES:
*Assessment of partners' satisfaction with relationship with GRRR
Annual membership survey*

Objective:	Responsibility	Timeline										Resources & Support Needed	Measure <i>How will we measure progress?</i>
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14			
5.3 A: Collaborate with school district literacy leaders & KISD to identify district needs, successful programs, & coordinate literacy services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify literacy leaders in each district 	GRRR Coordinator KISD Literacy Coordinator, K-12 Committee, 0 – 5 Committee		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	KISA Literacy Committee, KISD	Annual report on: # and purpose of meetings between GRRR, district literacy leaders and KISD # of district programs highlighted in best practices report. # of district needs identified # of literacy services connected (MOUs, coordinated volunteer training, etc.)
5.3 B: Develop linkages between employers and educational institutions.	Adult committee, 0 – 5 Committee, GRRR Coordinator		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Workforce Development Board, Chamber of Commerce, etc.	Annual report on: # and purpose of meetings/forums facilitated by GRRR, linking education and employers # of joint programs highlighted in best practices report. Survey of education/employers

