



A Family Engagement Newsletter

March 2021

A MAGICAL EVENING FOR FAMILIES

On March 2, 64 families from 29 schools in Manatee and Sarasota counties joined Embracing Our Differences, SCGLR, and artist Cedric Hameed on Zoom for a creative poetry experience.

During the family engagement event, Cedric shared, "making time to be proactive with our kids is important because moment to moment is all we have with the people we love."

Cedric and his children prompted guests to fill in the blanks to questions like "I hope you can see that..." and "I hope you dream because..."

Some families were eager to share their heartfelt poems...

WHY YOU'RE THE SECRET SAUCE!

Research shows that students with families engaged in their education are more likely to:

- Learn to read faster
- Adapt better to school
- Take more challenging classes
- Have better attendance
- Have better social skills & behavior
- Have higher grades and test scores
- Graduate
- Get promoted



Take a glimpse below to learn about the importance of early learning and why parent and family engagement is essential for success!



[EOD Family Engagement Night with Cedric Hameed](#)



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BRAIN BUILDING MOMENTS

Click the Vroom Tips below to access print-at-home tip sheets that include a mix of [Vroom Brain Building Activities™](#) for children ages 0-5. Share them, put them up on your fridge, or carry them around...whatever helps remind you that brain-building moments are all around you.



[EOD Family Engagement Night with Cedric Hameed](#)



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[Brain Building Basics](#)

Science tells us that **children's first years are when they develop the foundation for lifelong learning.** Every time we connect with them, it's not just their eyes that light up -- it's their brains too! In these moments, half a million neurons fire at once, taking in all the things we say and do. We can't see it happening, but the brain is growing and strengthening as they absorb the world around them.



A COOL WAY TO ENGAGE YOUR CHILD!

THIS BOOK IS COOL! promotes a love of reading by celebrating the content, style, and story of 100 high-quality children's books.



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[FOD Family Engagement Night with Cedric Hameed](#)

Participating families shared some of their reflections immediately after the event:

"I loved tonight's webinar. It was so family-oriented and brought my young family closer together in a memorable experience in an inclusive activity. We will definitely remember this forever."

"My daughter's reaction to my poem is forever ingrained in my heart and soul."

"It was so beautiful to share our hopes as a family and to hear it mirrored with other families."

[The Patterson Foundation](#) offered prizes for the schools that had the greatest number of participants.

- 1st Prize - Ashton Elementary School: A "Reading is the Key to Succeeding" cloth face mask for every student, teacher, and staff member at the school (valued at \$3 each) AND \$1,000.00
- 2nd Prize - Tuttle Elementary School: 100 "Reading is the Key to Succeeding" cloth face masks and \$1,000.00
- 3rd Prize - Louise R. Johnson K-8 International School: 100 "Reading is the Key to Succeeding" cloth face masks and \$500.00

The Bonus...All participating children received *Salt in His Shoes: Michael Jordan in Pursuit of a Dream* for their home libraries thanks to the generosity of The Patterson Foundation.

If you feel like you missed out...don't worry. More family engagement opportunities are on the horizon!



In 2020, SCGLR welcomed back the Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge and introduced [THIS BOOK IS COOL!](#) - a series of 100 webisodes to encourage a love of reading. It premiered on June 1, and more than 1,000 children from across the Suncoast region qualified to receive free books, thanks to the generosity of [The Patterson Foundation](#). In total, 5,302 children participated; reading 94,383 books!

Summer time is just around the corner, and this year will be the most fun yet, with featured Family Engagement Nights and 16 new webisodes! The best part, your child can [begin enjoying THIS BOOK IS COOL! webisodes and family activities now!](#) To start, click the [webisode library](#) appropriate for his/her age/reading level. Watch a webisode, then scroll down to access the activity guides.

Who can be a part of the Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge?

If your child is a rising pre-K or elementary school student from Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties, they can join through their summer program provider. SCGLR will also directly accept registrations for 2,000 children, who will each receive 20 books for their home libraries!

The Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge is promoted through local summer camps and businesses to encourage children to read, reducing the summer slide. Why? Because nationwide, children from asset-limited families can lose an average of 2 to 2.5 months of reading skills each summer. That loss has a cumulative, long-term effect, and reading just six books at the appropriate reading level can keep a struggling reader from regressing.

Want to explore the possibilities? Email Beth Duda, director of the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, at bduda@thepattersonfoundation.org.



Reading is the key to succeeding!



We welcome your thoughts. Contact us at info@GradeLevelReadingSuncoast.net.