Stories of Innovation and Resilience
FIRST BOOK 2020 IMPACT REPORT
LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

It has become a cliché to describe the challenges of 2020, so I will simply say this: The needs have never been greater and the opportunity for real change has never been more hopeful.

First Book started the year by bringing together policy, non-profit, and executive leaders from our corporate partners for our first-ever Co-Authoring Impact Summit. The January Summit showcased how these partnerships have accelerated educational opportunities for millions of children, and engaged leaders in discussions of innovative ways to build momentum.

Just two months later, life was drastically changed by the global pandemic – making our work together even more critical.

The COVID-19 pandemic not only exacerbated the educational crisis for children in poverty, it also caused enormous hardship for millions more families. In addition, the issues of racism and inequality came to the forefront again after the killing of George Floyd and others.

In the pages ahead, you’ll read how First Book’s integrated models – amplifying the collective voice of more than half a million educators in the First Book Network – and cross-sector partnerships enabled powerful, educator-driven responses to these challenges.

You’ll also hear from the real heroes: our nation’s educators. They are on a high-wire act, juggling remote and hybrid learning, delivering books to students’ front doors, and going above and beyond. Educators need our help like never before.

As we look ahead to 2021, it’s clear that the effects of COVID-19 will impact our children and families long after the vaccines are distributed.

First Book’s systemic approach, driven by educators on the frontlines, provides a powerful and proven combination to address educational inequities. By actively engaging educators throughout our process, we are piloting, testing, refining, and scaling innovative resources and new collaborations to support educational equity and to further the sector for anyone working in the lives of children in poverty.

We thank each and every one of you for your support.

With gratitude,

Kyle Zimmer
President, CEO, Co-founder

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2 Letter from the CEO
3 About First Book
5 COVID-19 Response Highlights
8 A Close-up on Three Partnerships
10 Racial Equity
12 OMG Books Awards
13 Innovative Pilots
14 Highlights and Milestones
16 Looking Ahead
17 First Book Board and Team
First Book: Building a Path Out of Poverty Through Educational Equity

Our purpose is as bold as it is urgent: To create systemic change. To ensure equal access to quality education. To empower every educator and all the children in need whom they serve.

How do we do it?

First Book is a social enterprise, applying proven strategies of the private sector to fuel our work as a non-profit with a growing ecosystem of models that work both individually and collectively to create impact. We have aggregated the First Book Network, North America’s largest group of educators (more than 500,000 professionals) serving kids in need. The Network keeps growing by nearly 1,000 new members each week.

Original ResearchHarnesses the Voice of Educators

We conduct original research that amplifies the voices of our Network members and identifies their needs. We then engage field experts to create tools and resources to address those needs. We curate culturally relevant educational resources that resonate with our membership and the diverse children they serve, and leverage the power of aggregated buying to make these books and resources free or affordable through the First Book Marketplace, our award-winning eCommerce site.

Continuous Innovation to Elevate Impact

We drive constant innovation and collaborate with field-leading organizations to continue elevating our models and bringing the best insights and new practices to the field of education while generating sustainable revenue to continue our work. We form win-win relationships that benefit those we serve, as well as the publishers, suppliers, purposeful corporations, governments, and other key stakeholders committed to improving educational equity.

System-changing Models Addressing the Whole Child

Finally, we address the needs of the whole child, supporting their education, basic needs, and wellness – all of which are essential to educational equity. Through our sophisticated distribution system, we efficiently deliver help where it is needed. The First Book educator-centric integrated design, grounded in rapid-cycle feedback, and powered by innovation and entrepreneurial thinking, provides hope and promise to children living in poverty and the educators who serve them.
Our Model

First Book Network
Comprises North America’s largest community of educators working on the frontlines with children in need at schools and programs across the U.S.

First Book Marketplace
Provides the First Book Network with 24-hour, year-round access to an award-winning repository of affordable and new books, educational resources, and basic necessities curated for kids in need ages 0-18.

First Book Research & Insights
Advances education and poverty research by generating original data that amplifies educators’ voices, drives First Book’s models, and informs content on the First Book Marketplace.

First Book Accelerator
Turns current research and evidence-based strategies from leading experts into actionable tools that are shared with our network — so educators don’t have to wait months or years to use innovative best practices in their classrooms and programs.

2020 IN REVIEW

5M children served
500,000+ registered members
200M books and resources distributed to date
18.6M+ books and resources distributed through the First Book Marketplace
50,000+ Educators who joined First Book Network in 2020
Activating a Nationwide Response to Support Educators and Kids in Need

The gap between the haves and the have nots is increasing tenfold during this crisis. The learning we are providing is not equitable. The families who will succeed are those that were going to succeed anyways; the kids who were on the cusp will now slide so far back.”

Educator in Hillsdale, Michigan

COVID-19 caused an education crisis across the nation, and students from low-income communities have been the most affected. When schools closed to slow the spread of the virus, millions of children were essentially locked out of their education without access to remote learning. For those in the poorest families reliant on free or reduced-priced meals, it meant more than just academic backsliding; it meant increased food instability, social-emotional isolation, and increased trauma on top of the toxic stress related to poverty.

But for every student in need, First Book, its network of educators, and amazing partners have been working day and night to provide resources to support them. After surveying educators to identify their concerns and needs, First Book enlisted an Activation Network of more than 7,500 educators who volunteered to distribute books and resources in their region – at food sites, outside their schools, delivering books to students’ front doors, even driving through neighborhoods to cheer on their students in person.
In partnership with PolicyMap, First Book launched the COVID-19 Activation Network map, a powerful interactive tool that shows the locations of thousands of educators who volunteered to distribute books and educational resources to their communities during the pandemic. Clicking on the map locations also revealed educators’ specific requests for books and supplies to sustain their students’ education.

With support from Intel Corporation®, First Book conducted a nationwide COVID-19 Response Survey in April to identify our educators’ key areas of concern regarding how the pandemic will impact their students and the resources needed to support them. With more than 2,600 respondents, the survey revealed four main challenges identified by educators concerning the children they serve. **A key finding:** 80% of educators cited books as the #1 resource they need to support learning and address students’ feelings of loss, isolation, and uncertainty.

**4 MAIN CHALLENGES EDUCATORS WERE CONFRONTING**

| The mental/emotional health of kids and families | • 91% were deeply concerned about the mental/social-emotional health of students and families upon returning to “normal” class/programs.  
• 87% were more concerned about students’ mental/emotional health than they were prior to COVID-19.  
• 71% feared they wouldn’t have the resources they need to support their students’ mental health. |
|---|---|
| Access to learning tools and resources | • 80% cited physical books as the item they currently need.  
• 86% were concerned about students having no books at home for extended periods. |
| A widening digital divide making remote learning impossible and access to books and resources even more critical | • 40% of students in need didn’t have access to reliable internet and 37% didn’t have access to functioning devices.  
• 80% were more concerned about students having no access to the internet for learning than they were prior to COVID-19.  
• 85% were more concerned about the impact of the digital divide between students who have access to technology and those who don’t than they were prior to the pandemic. |
| An extended “summer slide” or regression in academic proficiency due to a long break from formal education | • 78% were concerned about the impact of the extended learning gap on their students. |

Publishers and Corporate Partners Join Hands with First Book

To support these inspiring educators, First Book quickly reached out to engage our partners. The response from First Book’s publishing partners deserves special recognition. Publishers across the board immediately answered the call, collectively donating an additional 8 million books to support our nation’s most disadvantaged students through the pandemic and beyond. This is in addition to the books they so generously donate throughout the year. This donated inventory, available for only the cost of shipping and handling, has been a lifeline that thousands of educators – without any budget for books – depend on for their classrooms and programs.

Along with our publishing partners, we are indebted to partners who stepped up in big ways: Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women, KPMG, Pizza Hut/Yum Foundation, New York Life Foundation, and countless others. You’ll read more about some of these partnerships in the pages ahead. The innovative partnerships born out of the pandemic will serve our educators and their students even after this crisis is past.

COVID-19 RESPONSE SNAPSHOT

$3.6 million raised for relief efforts

14M books distributed with the support of our corporate partners

$200K+ donated to support internet access

7,500 educators serving as mini distribution hubs

8M additional books donated by publishers

17,000+ devices and 7,500 LEGO Education solutions delivered

2,600 educators surveyed on the challenges of COVID-19

* including free three-month subscriptions to Noggin, an interactive learning service for preschool students
A Close-up on Three Partnerships

First Book’s impact would not be possible without the support of a growing list of like-minded corporations, non-profits, foundations, individual partners, and funders. You’re reading about those vital partnerships throughout the pages of this year’s Impact Report; below is a close-up of three additional partnerships.

**Reader funding and stories on First Book’s impact in the New York Times**

First Book was selected by the *New York Times* Neediest Cases Fund as one of four non-profit recipients of its month-long COVID-19 Relief Campaign. In addition, First Book was named one of 10 recipients of the *New York Times* Neediest Cases Fund annual campaign. Both funds are supported by financial contributions from *New York Times* readers. To support both efforts, the *New York Times* featured ongoing stories about families and programs that benefit from the work of First Book and the other recipient organizations. You can read some of the stories about First Book here and here.

**Funding from Pi Beta Phi expedites resources during COVID-19**

When schools started to shut down, longtime partner Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women tripled their donation to First Book to expedite access to books where they were most needed. Two examples: First Book partnered with Pi Beta Phi, the Transportation Institute, and the American Federation of Teachers to bring 2,800 STEM books (Spanish, English and bilingual versions) to elementary and middle school-age students in Puerto Rico through the Book Waves Coalition. Pi Beta Phi also helped bring critical resources to programs like UnidosUS and its affiliates, including a Head Start initiative for migrant families across Utah, Florida, North Carolina, and Washington.

**Expanding access to mental health resources**

Support from the New York Life Foundation enabled First Book to provide access to mental health resources – one of the top four needs expressed by First Book educators. Among the resources was a live webinar with a leading expert on how educators can support students coping with grief and loss during the pandemic.
In large part due to the digital divide, the pandemic locked out millions of children from their right to an education, leaving them falling further behind without access to books or remote learning resources. School districts, especially in low-resourced communities, were not equipped to provide digital learning resources to those without them – and this threatened education among families in need. Some students even sat outside their closed school or in community parking lots to try to gain access to Wi-Fi because they didn’t have it at home.

Educators in a First Book Research & Insights COVID-19 Response Survey supported by Intel® estimated that 40% of their students didn’t have reliable internet access, 37% didn’t have access to functioning devices, and only 57% had enough devices in the household.

Through a partnership with CDW-G, Intel Corporation®, and the LEGO Foundation, First Book responded by launching a first-of-its-kind Creating Learning Connections Initiative. Through a new turnkey First Book grants model, school districts in select areas were invited to respond to a Request for Proposals (RFP) to outline their need for resources to address the digital divide and enable remote learning for more students. The collaboration provided technology tools and resources to more than 46 school districts in 17 states across the country. First Book received three times as many requests than usual in the RFP process, indicating the dramatic need to further tech equity.

**Creating Learning Connections resulted in:**

- **46** school districts received Creating Learning Connections grants
- **14,554** personal computers, software, configuration services, and digital learning resources provided by Intel and CDW-G – valued at more than **$5 million**
- **17** states impacted with new devices, connectivity awards, and LEGO Education Solutions
- **$4,000** awarded to each school district to support home internet connectivity for kids in need
- **1,500** new educators received access to First Book resources
- **7,500** LEGO Education solutions, valued at **$2 million**, donated by the LEGO Foundation to support STEAM learning at home and in school
The year was also painfully punctuated by a dramatic increase in racist discourse and violence, impacting our communities, our educators, and most especially the children they serve. Racial equity and diversity have always been core to our mission at First Book, and more than a year ago, we set out with our long-term partner Pizza Hut to ask educators about the issue and what resources, if any, they needed.

Our national Diversity & Inclusion Needs Assessment conducted in January 2020 revealed these key findings about race and cultural inclusion from our network of educators:

**Initiating Conversations About Race**
- 66% of respondents would like to engage their students in conversations about race.

**Lack of Resources and Support**
- 53% of respondents said their school or organization does not provide professional development opportunities for educators on the topic of race and racism.

**Lack of Educator Diversity**
- 59% of respondents are white, compared to only 25% white students.
- 38% of students are Latinx, and 32% are Black.

**Barriers to Race-related Conversations**
- Feeling self-conscious about having these conversations with kids from backgrounds different from the educator
- Concerns regarding the age-appropriateness of topics
- Fear of using the wrong language
- Fear of parent or community pushback
- Lack of personal knowledge
In response to these findings, First Book and Pizza Hut launched Empowering Educators, an unprecedented set of free resources designed to help educators engage their students in effective, courageous conversations about race and social justice. The series, informed by national leading anti-bias and anti-racism experts, includes:

- **Empowering Educators: A Convening on Racial Equity in Education**
  a four-hour webcast in partnership with the American University Antiracist Research & Policy Center that elevated discussions around teaching humanity, the importance of anti-racist teaching, and practical guidance for educators. The event gathered 7,000+ educators, impacting 210,000 students nationwide.

- **A Guidebook on Race and Racism**
  50 pages of in-depth information, research, and practical tools to support discussions on race and diversity for classrooms, organizations, communities, and families. The Guidebook registered over 8,200+ unique downloads, reaching more than 245,000 children.

- **A Two-part Digital Video Series on Race and Racism**
  which includes conversations with racial justice experts and recommendations for teachers on incorporating anti-racist pedagogy in their classes. Additional resources will be added in 2021 to promote Student Dialogue and Action.

- **New Paperback Special Editions of #OwnVoices Stories**
  Pizza Hut and First Book selected five of the most popular diverse titles on the First Book Marketplace and re-issued them in first-ever, even more affordable paperback editions.

From the neighborhood to the national level, America is on a critical journey: from identifying racism, to deeper understanding, and finally to dismantling systemic racism. To support this journey, First Book is honored to partner with Pizza Hut to launch an unprecedented effort to empower educators – and the children they serve. These resources, and the important conversations they enable, will inspire and enlighten all of us as we work together with our educators to elevate equal opportunities for all of our children.”

Kyle Zimmer, President, CEO, and Co-founder of First Book

**AIA Diversity in STEM Calendar**

First Book and the Aerospace Industries Association launched the online Diversity in STEM Calendar (in English and Spanish) to celebrate culture, diversity, and inclusion throughout the school year. It highlights game-changing contributions of women and people of color in the fields of medicine, space exploration, AI, and more; and includes fascinating facts, religious and cultural observances, and notable dates of historical or inclusive significance in STEM fields.

I don’t know what I would do without First Book resources. As an educator who has been focused on practicing racial equity and anti-racist education for 25 years, having inclusive, relevant, and current reading materials for myself and my students is essential… The teacher toolkits on Bias, Diversity and Inclusion, Race and Racism, Trauma, Empowerment, and Grief have supported me, my students, my mentees, and my peers to bring our practices to the level necessary to meet the needs of our students and beyond.”

Elementary school teacher in St. Paul, MN
OMG Books Awards: Offering More Great Books to Spark Innovation - Educators in 33 States Spark Learning and Innovation with Books

In 2018, Attorneys General in 33 states unanimously selected First Book as the beneficiary of a court settlement unrelated to First Book – awarding First Book with $4.7 million in funding to be used to provide books and eBooks for children in low-income communities in those 33 states. To steward those funds, First Book created and launched the OMG Books Awards: Offering More Great Books to Spark Innovation, a pilot grantmaking program that invited educators in the 33 states to submit ideas for using books to spark innovation and learning opportunities.

First Book received more than $31 million in funding requests – more than six times the available funding – underscoring the staggering unmet need for books and educational resources. First Book’s rigorous selection process awarded 80 organizations with funding for books from First Book.

The OMG Books Awards made a quantifiable impact and provided the basis for a new First Book grants model, enabling First Book to maximize and target partner funding with educators’ input to drive better educational and life outcomes for children and families. This new turnkey First Book grants model served as the basis for First Book’s Creating Learning Connections initiative to address the digital divide.

**IMPACT TO DATE**

1.5M+ books and eBooks were distributed to children in need, with an estimated retail value of more than $12 million

- Increased feelings of hope and decreased feelings of burnout for educators
- Strengthened educators’ collaborations with community members and families
- Served as proof of concept for a new First Book grants model

82% of educators reported that OMG Books increased students’ engagement in reading

81% of educators said that OMG Books helped children realize that they are learners

90% of awardees experienced an advancement of their organizational reputations

40% growth in the First Book Network, increasing sustainable impact
New Research and New Models to Advance Educational Equity

First Book is regularly piloting new models and new approaches using research and continuous feedback from educators on the ground. The examples below reflect some of the work that came to fruition during 2020.

Games & Learning: Creating Digital Learning Solutions with Educators

First Book partnered with Games and Learning (G&L) to make digital learning accessible to all children in need. Through a human-centric design approach, First Book and G&L collaborated with educators to create Games & Learning, a comprehensive resource of e-books and games on the First Book Marketplace. Educators use the platform to make the learning experience fun, and with COVID-19 turning homes into classrooms, to engage children in remote learning.

In a study conducted with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio (FAO), First Book Research & Insights sought the perspective of educators and care providers in the 32-county region to understand the best types of support needed to help children experiencing trauma. The study, Educational Barriers and Solutions, revealed that the interventions respondents felt would provide the highest level of support for the students they serve were:

- Downloadable/Printable resources such as toolkits, handbooks, or guides with concrete action steps to help children struggling with these educational barriers;
- Family Engagement/Home visitation training for educators wanting additional strategies for building critical relationships with students’ families;
- Virtual visits from local and national professionals such as behavioral and mental health experts on relevant topics to strengthen classroom strategies.

First Book and FAO are working with educators to create these tools, which will become available to educators nationwide.

KPMG

KPMG and KPMG’s Family for Literacy (KFFL) continued their long-standing support and thought partnership with First Book. In 2020, KPMG and KFFL hosted the Co-Authoring Impact Summit and championed First Book’s plans for piloting new financing approaches to address the increased needs for educational resources. They also launched the Connect for a Great Start campaign to donate books from First Book’s Stories for All Project™ to promote understanding and empathy through stories that help children see and celebrate their similarities and differences.
A Year of Innovation and Collaboration

First Book is proud to work alongside our educators and partners to further educational equity. In addition to the partnerships and initiatives covered on previous pages, here are additional highlights from 2020:

Accolades
- First Book and New York Life Foundation won the 2020 Engage for Good Gold Halo Award for Disaster Prevention/Relief and the Silver Halo Award for Employee Engagement for creating Grief Ambassadors, providing support to grieving children and their families, and for expanding the Grief, Loss, and Healing section of the First Book Marketplace.

Milestones
- Disney hosted the 8th Magic of Storytelling campaign with First Book, celebrating the magic of books. In addition, First Book and Disney celebrated the distribution of the 75 millionth Disney book nationwide.
- First Book celebrated reaching 500,000 Network members, educating and supporting an estimated 15 million children in need across the country. First Book also achieved another amazing milestone: that the organization has now distributed 200 million books and educational resources to further educational equity.
- Jimmy Fallon spread the word about First Book’s Give A Million campaign to his millions of Twitter and Instagram followers to help get 1 million books to kids in need for the holidays. Macmillan, publisher of Fallon’s picture book, *Five Sleeps ‘Til Christmas*, donated books to the effort.
- Award-winning children’s author Andrea Beaty read *Rosie Revere, Engineer* at a virtual reading party hosted by First Book and Ford Motor Company. Elena Ford, Ford’s Chief Customer Experience Officer, answered questions from students.
- First Book and Netflix hosted a virtual reading party to celebrate the movie release of *Jingle Jangle*.
- In October, Aerospace Industries Association (AIA), Northrop Grumman, and First Book hosted a virtual STEMfest and virtual reading party for students in Huntsville, AL.
Partnerships

First Book’s collaboration with AMERICAN HERITAGE® Chocolate and Made By Us made educators’ and their students’ wishes for more books come true: Wishes for Books awarded 20,000 books to 1,000 educators.

A powerful PSA created and aired by First Book partner ION Media highlighted the importance of supporting educators of children in need during the COVID-19 crisis.

Celebrating the release of President Obama’s book, A Promised Land, publisher Penguin Random House announced they have donated 1 million children’s books to First Book in support of the Obama Foundation’s mission.

First Book and dd’s DISCOUNTS marked 13 years of partnership, distributing books to children in need. Celebrating store openings, dd’s DISCOUNTS and the Ross Stores Foundation held virtual celebrations, providing new books to those communities.


Through a Buy-One, Give-One campaign featuring Hill Harper and other major influencers, HOMER met its goal to donate 20,000 educator subscriptions for its digital learning program, worth a total of $3 million.

Thanks to generous funding from best-selling children’s book author Mary Pope Osborne, educators and volunteers were able to select titles from her beloved Magic Tree House series from the First Book Marketplace for free – and distribute them directly to students’ front doors.

With the help of Simon & Schuster, during the month of November, Tra Publishers donated a book to First Book for every copy of And the People Stayed Home purchased at Barnes & Noble.
Looking Forward to 2021

There are enormous challenges ahead in 2021. COVID-19 will have lasting effects, with more families in distress, and previously strapped school budgets further endangered by state/local budget deficits. First Book will address these dramatic educational challenges through:

**Expanded Funding Mechanisms**

In 2021, First Book will launch a $15 million investment fund to enable the organization to catapult its impact to the next level, with a goal of reaching 20 million children annually with a powerful array of resources. The organization will also further its plans to increase self-sufficiency from 40% to 90% sustainability by 2027.

**Network Growth**

First Book will deepen its outreach to Title I schools, early childhood caregivers, educators in rural areas, and child advocates working with communities of color – ensuring that the children they serve are at the forefront of new product and resource creation.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

In 2021, First Book will expand resources and develop programs that empower educators to engage students in age-appropriate conversations about race and racism, and launch new programs encouraging children of color to be change-makers in their communities.

**Expansion of Additional Educator-driven Resources**

First Book will continue to address the needs related to distance learning and COVID-19. Current plans include piloting additional resource categories such as masks and diapers, expanding resources to address device and internet connectivity, supporting mental health, and increasing shared best practices between formal and informal educators serving children in need.

**Delivering on our nation’s promise of a more perfect union fundamentally requires equal access to quality education.** The COVID-19 crisis has deepened the disparities, underscoring just how far we are from achieving that promise. It is also what makes First Book’s nearly 30 years of experience so important, with systemic, educator-driven models that create a powerful market force to meet these increased needs.

It is urgent that we bring together corporate, academic, and social sector partners to develop and scale innovative approaches and resources that respond to the collective voice of educators serving our most vulnerable children. Together, we will break down the barriers that stand in the way of educational equity and help millions more children realize their potential.
2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Martha Molina Bernadett
Acting Chairman, First Book
Board of Directors; President, CEO and Founder, The Molina Foundation

Christopher Cerf
Co-founder and President, Sirius Thinking Ltd.

Libby Doggett
Early Learning Expert and Consultant, Libby Doggett Consulting

Kathy Franklin
President, Franchise Development
Lightstorm Entertainment

William Matassoni
Founder and CEO, The Glass House Group

Debbie Hubley Ozanus
Co-chair, KPMG’s Family for Literacy

Karen Kehela Sherwood
Co-chair, Imagine Entertainment

Artie Starrs
Chief Executive Officer, Pizza Hut

Paul W. Whetsell
CEO, Capstar Hotel Company

Kyle Zimmer
President, CEO, and Co-founder, First Book

2020 PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

Terry Downes
VP, Publishing Operations, Disney Publishing Worldwide

Laura Geringer
Author, Editor and Publisher

Chip Gibson

Judith Haut
Senior Vice President and Associate Publisher, Random House Children’s Books

Susan Katz
Former President and Publisher (Ret.), HarperCollins Children’s Books

Craig Low
President and Owner, Lee & Low Books

Barbara Marcus
President and Publisher, Children’s Division Random House

Kristina Peterson
Former Director of International Publishing (Ret.), Workman Publishing Co., Inc.

Rick Richter
Literary and Entertainment Agent and Partner, Aevitas Creative Management

Don Weisberg
CEO, Macmillan Publishers US

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Robin Adelson
Executive Director, Books for Kids

Elizabeth Arky
Co-founder, First Book; Principal, Arky Group Consulting, LLC

Jennifer Bohler
Owner, Alliance Management

Meghan Bracken
Director, Community Impact, KPMG

Cara Dingus Brook
President & CEO Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

Kelly Butler
Chief Executive Officer, The Barksdale Reading Institute

Andrea Camp
Harold Clarke
President, Harold Clarke & Company, Inc.

David Dotson
Special Projects and Board Member, The Dollywood Foundation

Julie Baker Finck
President, Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation

Gina Goff
Former Senior Director of Community Involvement (Ret.), C&S Wholesale Grocers

Leslie Goodman
Communication & Public Affairs Consultant

Susan Grode
Partner, Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP

L Spencer Humphrey
Principal, Holton Consulting LLC

Brian Kagan
Brian Kagan Company

Ilene Leff
CEO, Leff Management Consulting

James Loy

Colleen Ludington

Elsa Palanza
Managing Director, Global Head of Sustainability & Citizenship Barclays

Jennifer Plagman-Galvin
Director of Operations, Iowa State University College of Human Sciences

Carol Rasco
Former President and CEO (Ret.), Reading is Fundamental

British Robinson
President and CEO, Barbara Bush Foundation for Family literacy

Dr. Susan Roman
Professor & Dean Emerita, School of Information Science
Dominican University

Harriet Sanford
Former President and CEO (Ret.), The NEA Foundation

John Schreiber
President and CEO, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Ralph Smith
Managing Director, Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Heather Steinmiller
Managing Director - Claims & General Counsel, Conner Strong & Buckelew

Jamienne S. Studley
President and CEO, WASC Senior College and University Commission

Mary Tatum

Randi Weingarten
President, American Federation of Teachers

Judee Ann Williams
Co-Executive Director, Creative Artists Agency Foundation and Co-head, Social Impact, Creative Artists Agency

Ginger Young
Founder and Executive Director, Book Harvest

Judith Zimmer

2020 BOARD AND EXECUTIVE TEAM

Kyle Zimmer
PRESIDENT, CEO, and CO-FOUNDER

Jane Robinson
CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER and CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Becki Last
CHIEF PROGRAMMATIC OFFICER

Daniel Stokes
CHIEF ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Carey M. Palmquist
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Stories of Innovation and Resilience 17
“It is really wonderful that you always think about educators and you even ask us how you can improve. We make comments and we actually see positive changes that were recommended…First Book rocks! Thanks for putting teachers and educators first!”

Janice T.