



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

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### **WASHINGTON KICKS OFF STATEWIDE EXPANSION OF DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY**

Olympia, Washington-United Ways of the Pacific Northwest (UWPNW) and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) announce the statewide expansion of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, which delivers age-appropriate books to children five and under every month.

Entertainer, businesswoman and philanthropist Dolly Parton started the program in 1995 as a way to distribute books to the impoverished Tennessee county where she grew up. The state of Tennessee quickly adopted the program statewide. Since then, the nonprofit program has expanded into five countries. Washington is the eleventh state to commit to achieving statewide coverage, with the latest development happening this week, as the Washington legislature voted final passage of House Bill 2068 that will recognize Dolly Parton's Imagination Library as a statewide program with one last stop, Governor Inslee's desk for signature.

"I am so excited to be working with Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chris Reykdal and United Ways of the Pacific Northwest to bring my Imagination Library to more children and families across Washington! Together we can inspire a love of reading that will last a lifetime," says Dolly Parton.

Through this statewide program, books will be made available free to children ages birth to five years old in every county in Washington, regardless of the families income. Washington's Imagination Library has 28 operating affiliates covering portions of the 39 counties in Washington, and 17,000 eligible children in the state are receiving free books through these existing programs.

"We're thrilled to be able to expand literacy in Washington through this partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and UWPNW," said State Superintendent Chris Reykdal. "We know the birth to five age range is a critically important time in reading development and expanding access to underserved areas across the state will help set up the next generation of readers for success."

The statewide expansion effort, led by UWPNW's Executive Director of Washington Imagination Library, Brooke Fisher-Clark will partner with current local program affiliates and assist in establishing new programs in all 39 Washington's counties. Programs in every county ensure that every early learner is eligible to register. Prospect affiliates must be a 501c3 nonprofit. Interested parties should reach out to Fisher-Clark at [brooke@uwpnw.org](mailto:brooke@uwpnw.org). Affiliates receive a monthly 50 percent match funding support to assist in growing enrollments. The expansion funding is made possible by OSPI who has contracted with UWPNW to lead the expansion efforts.

"This is so exciting for the children and families of our state! This program will help uplift our communities with its short and long-term proven results and will show the world our children and their opportunities to learn and succeed is our priority as Washingtonians," said Fisher-Clark.



United Ways of the  
Pacific Northwest



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To enroll Washington children or get involved, go to [www.imaginationlibrarywashington.org](http://www.imaginationlibrarywashington.org). Check back often to see if Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has an affiliate in your area or stay tuned to expansion progress and news!

### **About Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**

Since launching in 1995, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has become the preeminent early childhood book-gifting program in the world. The flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has gifted well over 172 million free books in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and The Republic of Ireland. The Imagination Library mails more than 1.8 million high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to enrolled children from birth to age five. Dolly envisioned creating a lifelong love of reading, inspiring them to dream. The impact of the program has been widely researched and results suggest positive increases in key early childhood literacy metrics. Penguin Random House is the exclusive publisher for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. For more information, please visit [imaginationlibrary.com](http://imaginationlibrary.com)

### **About United Ways of the Pacific Northwest**

United Ways of the Pacific Northwest (UWPNW) is the regional trade association for 34 local United Ways in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. United Ways in the Pacific Northwest are committed to improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities to advance the common good in the areas of education, income, and health. Our mission is to advance the common good throughout the Pacific Northwest by enhancing the individual and collective ability of member United Ways to impact their communities and collaborate on regional and statewide issues.

### **About the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Led by State Superintendent Chris Reykdal, OSPI oversees K-12 public education in Washington state. Our mission is to provide funding, resources, tools, data, and technical assistance that enable educators to ensure students succeed in our public schools, are prepared to access post-secondary training and education, and are equipped to thrive in their careers and lives.