

# How Pasco County Schools Reignited a District-Wide Love for Reading

In the spring of 2023, Pasco County Public Schools embarked on a mission to revive the passion for reading among students. Faced with the absence of library media specialists in school buildings and a state mandate to digitally catalog classroom libraries, the district had to navigate these challenges quickly. At the beginning of the 2023-24 school year, Pasco County utilized Beanstack's Classroom Library Connector and launched a district-wide reading challenge known as R.A.C.E. to Read Pasco! (Read Across the County Everyday). Their goal? To collectively read 15 million minutes by the school year's end.

With a focus on meeting the diverse needs of their students and fostering a reading culture that yields positive outcomes, the district has rallied its readers, who are well on their way to surpassing the initial goal by 133%. By engaging educators and staff and motivating students through creative incentives, Pasco County has effectively ignited enthusiasm and a love for reading in just one school year.

"Beanstack is a great way to start or continue emphasizing literacy and reading for pleasure. It allows districts and individual schools to promote reading in a way that represents their overall community, whether it's through minutes, specific books, activities, or bingo boards."

**Donna Dorilio**

Secondary Library Media Specialist  
Pasco County Public Schools





## APPROACH

### Incorporate Into Daily Routines

Many educators in Pasco County use reading challenges to support topics like Black History Month, Native American Heritage, and Financial Literacy. Using Beanstack in the classroom not only boosts students' enthusiasm for reading and provides a platform to log their reading time, but it also serves as a valuable tool for teachers to monitor student's independent reading practices with accountability.

### Maintain Momentum Year-Round

Throughout the school year, Pasco County has used shorter, themed reading challenges readily available through Beanstack to incentivize students and sustain progress. Their Celebrate Literacy Week challenge saw high engagement, with popular activities like designing bookmarks. The winning designs were printed for distribution, and they plan to repeat this challenge next year.

### Incentivize With Digital and Physical Rewards

In addition to digital rewards like badges and achievements from Beanstack, physical rewards, including snacks and activities, are used as effective motivators. Popular incentives include the "Read a Latte" cart, wearing pajamas to school, reading with another grade level, cookies and cocoa, gift cards, and new books. The top three schools, based on student participation, will earn trophies.

### Communicate With Key Stakeholders

To ensure the reading culture spans across Pasco County, the district devised an effective communications plan, sending weekly updates to school administrators, providing information to coaches and staff, adding announcements to the parent newsletter, distributing posters, engaging public relations, and updating the school board regularly.

## RESULTS

Six months into the R.A.C.E. to Read Pasco! reading challenge, students in Pasco County have not only exceeded the initial target of reading 15 million minutes by the end of the school year in 2024 but they are also set to reach an impressive 20 million minutes.



## CONCLUSION

Pasco County has experienced significant growth in reading engagement. While school leaders initially anticipated Beanstack to be successful in elementary schools, there has been a notable surge in momentum within secondary schools. Middle and high schools consistently rank in the top 20 of the R.A.C.E. to Read leaderboard. Today, with the growing support of educators and stakeholders, students of all ages are discovering their passion for reading—fueled by the thrill of competition and the opportunity to earn rewards.