



# NEA'S READ ACROSS AMERICA

YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD, TOO WACKY, TOO WILD, TO PICK UP A BOOK AND READ WITH A CHILD

Celebrate Dr. Seuss' Birthday March 2

## Background on Read Across America

### What is NEA's Read Across America?

NEA's Read Across America is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on March 2, the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Seuss.

NEA's Read Across America also provides NEA members, parents, caregivers, and children the resources and activities they need to keep reading on the calendar 365 days a year.

In cities and towns across the nation, teachers, teenagers, librarians, politicians, actors, athletes, parents, grandparents and others develop NEA's Read Across America activities to bring reading excitement to children of all ages. Governors, mayors and other elected officials recognize the role reading plays in their communities with proclamations and floor statements. Athletes and actors issue reading challenges to young readers. And teachers and principals seem to be more than happy to dye their hair green or be duct-taped to a wall if it boosts their students' reading!

### The Beginning

In May 1997, a small reading task force at NEA came up with a big idea. "Let's create a day to celebrate reading," the group decided. "We hold pep rallies to get kids excited about football. We assemble to remember that Character Counts. Why don't we do something to get kids excited about reading? We'll call it 'NEA's Read Across America' and we'll celebrate it on Dr. Seuss's birthday." And so was born on March 2, 1998, the largest celebration of reading this country has ever seen.

### The Purpose of Read Across America

Motivating children to read is an important factor in student achievement and creating lifelong successful readers. Research has shown that children who are motivated and spend more time reading do better in school.

### Read Across America Partners

In addition to the 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers who make up NEA membership, some 50 national organizations and associations give their support.

### A Year-round Mission to Build a Nation of Readers

NEA's Read Across America doesn't stop with the March 2 celebration. In fact, Read Across America keeps the spotlight on reading all year long through such events as Teen Read Week, Drop Everything and Read Day, and International Literacy Day. This year, NEA takes a greener look at reading, launching NEA's Lorax Student Earth Day, April 22, with resources and grants for educators. For more information, go to [www.nea.org/readacross](http://www.nea.org/readacross).



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