



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 5, 2022

Media Contact:
Irene M. Barton, Executive Director
Cobb Collaborative
ibarton@cobbcollaborative.org
(678) 766-5574

Cobb Collaborative Achieves “21 in 2021” Little Free Library Goal

As the local point of contact for the Get Georgia Reading Campaign, the Cobb Collaborative works to improve 3rd grade reading levels in Cobb County. Data reveals that children who read proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to graduate from high school—paving the way to higher education, better employment opportunities, and improved health outcomes. Driven by the motivation of increasing access to books to improve reading achievement, the Collaborative set a goal of installing 21 Little Free Libraries across Cobb County in 2021. In December, this goal was achieved with the installation of Little Free Libraries at McCall Primary School, Argyle Elementary School, and Cumberland Community Church.

“Research tells us that starting from birth, frequent and interactive book reading is associated with cognitive and language development.” says Cobb Collaborative Executive Director Irene Barton. She further states that “One of the most successful ways to improve the reading achievement of children is to increase access to books, especially at home and in their native language. We are dedicated to the process of making that happen in our community.”

Collectively, the 21 Little Free Libraries are placed in many areas across Cobb County including schools, apartment complexes, churches, and early learning centers. Green Acres Principal Ashley Mize said, “We are very excited at Green Acres to have our new Little Free Library! Our community has a need and we have wanted to do this for several years. Many of our students live within walking distance to the school so it is perfect for the students to access after school and on the weekends.” Susan Ciavolino, who hosts The Bee Library - a Little Free Library at her home in Smyrna, says, “Thanks to Cobb Collaborative and Irene Barton for being a part and bringing other community members along.”

The “21 in 2021” LFL initiative was a quintessential collaborative effort, with support from partners including Cobb County School District, Marietta City Schools, United Way of Greater Atlanta Northwest Region, American Opportunity Foundation, Scout troops, businesses, civic associations and Greystone Power Operation Roundup. Additionally, countless supporters donated new and gently used books to help fill and maintain the Little Free Libraries.

Little Free Library (LFL) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to putting books in the hands of children and adults in communities around the world. These book-sharing boxes remove barriers to book access by being available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day with free accessibility. They operate under the “Take One, Leave One” theory which encourages readers to not only take a book, but to leave one for others when there is an ability to do so. To find out where Little Free Libraries are located in your area, please visit littlefreelibrary.org/ourmap. For those interested in sponsoring or hosting a Little Free Library in 2022, please contact Irene Barton for additional information at ibarton@cobbcollaborative.org

The Cobb Collaborative is a membership of non-profit organizations, local government, businesses, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, professional organizations, associations, and citizens who share ideas, expertise, and resources to meet the needs of Cobb County and its citizens.

###