FALL and WINTER 2026 30th EDITION

The Proctor Area Educational Foundation

REA^{3}D

RAILS ENDOWMENT FOR ACADEMIC, ART & ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT



ANNUAL REPORT



Letter from REA^{3}D's new president—Ryan Krajewski

A Million Reasons to Be Grateful

As I begin my term as president of REA^{3}D, I find myself thinking less about the position and more about the people who brought this organization to where it is today.

That begins with Sherm Carlson. For more than a decade, Sherm provided steady, tireless leadership as president. His enthusiasm and belief in our mission helped shape REA^{3}D and strengthen its ability to serve our community. While Sherm has stepped away from the president's role, I am grateful he remains on our board, where we will continue to benefit from his experience and perspective.

Following Sherm is an honor, but mostly, it's a reminder that REA^{3}D has never been about any one person.

We closed our most recent fiscal year with assets exceeding $1 million for the first time. There are, quite literally, a million reasons to be grateful.

That milestone was built by businesses that support us year after year, volunteers who tirelessly give their time, people who attend our events and open their wallets, and Proctor Schools employees who give from every paycheck. It was also built through lasting acts of generosity, like the recent $10,000 gift from the estate of Mary Catherine Murphy, whose memory we are honored to recognize at our next REA^{3}D by Candlelight dinner.

Some gifts are large. Some are small. Some come in dollars and others in hours. Each of them matters.

REA^{3}D once worked for years to build its first $100,000 endowment. Today, we have reached a milestone our founders could only have imagined. But the number matters less than what it makes possible: more opportunities for teachers with good ideas, students discovering new interests and talents, and projects that enrich our community.

Reaching $1 million doesn't mean that work is finished. It means we have a stronger foundation on which to build. The more we strengthen the endowment today, the more REA^{3}D can do each year while preserving that support for the future. That's the promise of an endowment: gifts made today can continue creating opportunities for students, educators, and our community for generations to come.

REA^{3}D is built on a simple idea: people who care about this community give what they can, and together we turn those gifts into opportunities for others.

I couldn't be prouder to be part of that effort. Our responsibility is to care for what Sherm and so many others have spent three decades building and, with the help of our board and community, leave it stronger for those who come next.

To Sherm, our board members, business partners, Proctor Schools employees, volunteers, donors, and friends: thank you. This milestone belongs to all of you. And because of you, the opportunities for lifelong learning and enrichment belong to us all.







WE SUPPORT LIFELONG LEARNING WITHIN PROCTOR SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITIES

Save the Date!
2027 REA^{3}D by Candlelight Event



February 19, 2027
Pike Lake Golf and Beach Club,
Pike Lake, MN

- **Featured speaker**
- **Live and Silent Auctions**
- **Plated Dinner**
- **250 Tickets Available**

Tickets are $50 each and can be purchased at rea3d.org/events, from any REA^{3}D board member, or by calling 218-391-0016

Lieutenant General Leonard F. Anderson IV Headlines the 2027 REA^{3}D by Candlelight Event



Coming off the 2026 REA^{3}D by Candlelight event, which had proven to be the most successful in the 30 years of the foundation's existence, the REA^{3}D Board was now challenged as to how to keep up the momentum. Yes, the record number of guests in attendance, the 115 direct donors pushing the endowment fund balance to over a million dollars, along with a stellar guest speaker, appeared to be a hard act to follow.

As potential names for the 2027 guest speaker were considered, REA^{3}D Vice President Barb Steen shared that her niece, Cammie Young, a loyal REA^{3}D supporter, is friends with Lieutenant General Leonard F. Anderson IV, PHS '89 grad, and asked him if he would consider speaking at our Candlelight event. The REA^{3}D board was thrilled when Lieutenant General Anderson responded that he would be extremely pleased to fulfill the request.

The military accolades of this Proctor grad are too numerous to list within this newsletter, other than to say his rank is only secondary to a full, four star general. He currently is Commander of the United States Marine Forces Reserve and U.S. Marine Forces, Southern Command.

However, according to a Wikipedia record of his earlier years, he once performed a vocal solo in a production of an opera with famed operatic star Luciano Pavarotti. He was a graduate of the "Top Gun" Navy training program; flew the U.S. Marine Forces plane in the famed Blue Angels formations; and as a "side job" was a certified charter boat captain for three years.

More to come, but REA^{3}D anticipates ticket sales will sell out fast, and close at 250 seats. Tickets can be purchased from any REA^{3}D board member.

Celebrating 30 Years: A Request for Proposals

On September 11, 1996, REA^{3}D (Rails Endowment for Academic, Art and Athletic Development) was officially established as a non-profit organization. At the time, the newly formed REA^{3}D board set a goal of growing its endowment to $100,000, with the dream of using earnings from this investment to heighten academics, arts, and athletics in Proctor School District communities.

Now at 30 years old, REA^{3}D and its generous supporters have far surpassed this initial endowment goal, and the earnings have supported more than $200,000 of academic, art, and athletic programs in Proctor Schools communities.

It's a good start, but look around. Could the City of Proctor, Bay View Heights, and Midway, Solway, Grand Lake, and Canosia townships be even better places to work, play, grow, and learn? Yes, absolutely. That's where you come in.

REA^{3}D wants you to put your thinking cap on and bring forward your proposals for what can improve life and learning in the communities served by Proctor School District.

Maybe it's something you've seen in another community that might be a good fit here. Maybe it's a brand-new idea, tailor-made for our area. Maybe it's something Proctor used to have that needs to be brought back.

Bottom line, the REA^{3}D board wants to hear your proposal. After funding 200 projects supporting academics, arts, and athletics over the past 30 years, we know a good idea when we see one. We are waiting to see yours.

Proposals for up to $2,500 are accepted by the REA^{3}D *board at any time and reviewed in October and January of each year. Funding proposals of more than $2,500 require a pre-submission conference with a* REA^{3}D *board member and are considered year-round. Get started at* REA^{3}D*.org/grants.*

Many REA³D Grant Projects Live On Past Funding Year

Beyond the immediate excitement of bringing a new learning project to life, one of the best outcomes of grant funding is when an award lights a spark that continues to glow beyond the initial year of funding. To determine how many of the 95 REA³D grants over the past ten years were still having an impact, the REA³D Board of Directors asked former REA³D grantees for input about their project's sustainability. What we found is that well over half of REA³D projects were sustained in some way past the year of grant funding. While every project is intended to be a meaningful learning experience at its outset, many stayed alive well beyond their implementation years.

For instance, the Bay View Kids Closet began as a REA³D funded initiative in 2015, with a $1,000 grant. Today, this important resource is still going strong, and has provided hundreds of children with snowpants, jackets, boots, and other winter gear, as well as new and used clothing. Another project funded by a REA³D grant in 2015 helped refurbish a children's "book bus," which has been steadily maintained and upgraded with continued community support. Today, the arrival of the book bus still brings a lot of smiles and excitement about reading to area children.

REA³D grants have helped with school forest development and outdoor projects at Pike Lake, Bay View, and PHS, all of which continue to thrive, providing wonderful outdoor spaces for learning. Proctor's Playground for EveryBODY received a $15,000 REA³D grant in 2022 which helped with its completion.

The materials from the STEM curriculum support project purchased with a $1,000 REA³D grant in 2017 continue to be in use. The remote control airplane kit and electronics are the foundation for most of the first semester's pre-engineering projects. Likewise, an assortment of manufacturing equipment, technology and assistive learning devices and accommodations purchased with REA³D funding continue to play important roles in student learning.

REA³D grants have purchased hundreds of age and ability appropriate books for use in classrooms across the district. Many of these books continue to be enjoyed by students year after year. REA³D was one of the original funders for local children's access to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library books, which became available to Proctor pre-schoolers in 2022.

Taxidermy displays which were part of the Animal Adaptations, project, funded in 2023 with a $1000 REA³D grant, continue to support that PHS curriculum.

A REA³D discretionary grant of $7,225, awarded to the PHS Band program in 2025, replaced a very old and deteriorating marimba with a brand new model which will last for at least the next 20 years.

REA³D has supported several new and many existing athletic programs including boy's volleyball, boys LaCrosse, swimming, softball, basketball, football and hockey, all of which continue to thrive. A $10,000 scorer's table which will serve for many years was purchased with a REA³D grant in 2024.

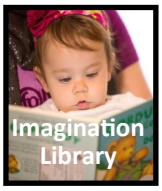
Displays at the Proctor Area Historical Society which will be enjoyed by visitors for many years to come have been supported by $1,000 REA³D grants in 2018 and 2023

REA³D has awarded significant funding to Rails TV over the years, starting in 2017 with a $2,000 grant. Rails TV continues to provide great learning experiences for students engaged in community broadcast service.

In 2024, REA³D awarded a $10,000 grant toward the total transformation of the PHS library space into the Rails Academic and Cultural Center, with redecoration and wall mural creation provided by REA³D board members and volunteers.


Rails Academic and Cultural Center


Proctor Big Bat League Startup


Imagination Library

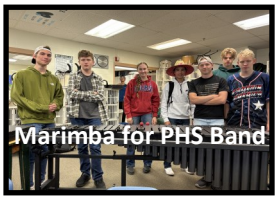

PHS Scorer's Table


Playground for EVERYbody


Kids Closet


Animal Adaptations


Book Vending Machines


Marimba for PHS Band


Outdoor Learning Classroom Equipment


Rails TV Jackets and Equipment


Instruments for JMS and PHS


Rowdy Mascot

2025-26 REPORT OF CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions made by those listed are much appreciated and increase our capacity to award funding to academic, art and athletic projects, which align with the REA^{3}D mission. Those listed contributed to REA^{3}D between July 2025 and June 2026. We sincerely regret any errors or omissions and ask that if you have a correction, please contact us at: rea3d@proctor.k12.mn.us.

Alethea Montgomery
Alyssa Swanson
Ameriprise
Ana Urban Augustyn
Andrea Ruth
Anita Fraundorf
Anna Kidd
Anna Sederski
Arrowhead Auto Body
Ashley Brooks
Aspirus
Audrey Kellar
Barb &Todd Steen
Barker's Island
Beryl Peyton
Beverly & Darol Kaufmann
Bill Gates
Bill Watson
Bob and Kelly Smith
Bob and Luanne Paquette
Brandon Carlson
Brandon Delacey
Brendan Pekkala-Corbin
Brian Wickenheiser
Brianne Johnson
Britta Kauppila
Brittany Nanti
Brittany Schubitzke
Bruce and Jerolyn Watkins
Bruce & Judy Giannunzio
Bryan Benson
Carl Provost
Carlie Anderson
Carole Cotruvo
Cartier Insurance
Centricity Federal CU
Charlene Reno
Charlene Talbot
Charles Downs
City of Proctor PD
Claire Horn
Claudia Otos
CMRA
Colette Gustavson
Connie Olson Male
Connie Olson Stanley
Dale Johnson
Dan Dougherty
Daryl & Linda Harper
David Schreck
Dawnelle Johnson
Deb Strohm
Deeanne Hoffman
Desiree Daniel
Desiree Strand
Diane Morin
Diane Rauschenfels
Diane Wippler
Dorothy Knudsen
Dougherty's Funeral Home
Dr. Clint Moen
Dubh Linn Brew Pub
Duluth Accounting & Tax
Duluth Children's Museum
Duluth MN Bourbon Fun Club
Duluth Whiskey Project
Dwight Swanstrom Insurance
Elite Sports Complex
Elizabeth Laakso
Erica Amborn
Erick Perala
Erik Edmunds
Erika Fellbaum
Fleta Carol
Focus on Living
Fortune Bay Resort Casino
Fred & Alana Friedman
Fryberger Law
Genereau Jewelry
George & Mary Saarela
Gerald & Mindy Gruber
Gerald & Karen Ruona
Gina Mogen
Glen Gilderman
Glenn Tridgell
Going Banana's Run
Grandma's Marathon
H&R Block
Hartels Disposal
Heather Budisalovich
Heidi Voss
Howard & Barb (Nettleton) Ignatius
Imperial Dade
Irving Community Club
Jack & Nancy Eilefson
James Bridges
Jayme Thorson
JD & Margaret Walker
Jennifer & Lowell Harnell
Jennifer Hochban
Jesse Smith
Jim Podgornik
Jim Rohweder
Jim & Betty Merling
Jim & Cher Ward
Jim & Emily Vos
Joann Larson
Joanna Just
John Awsumb
John & Sally Ward
Johnson Bakery
Johnson Wilson
Jonathan Kresha
Joseph Krasselt
Josh & Jen Gookins
Julie Lysher
Julie & Galyn Short
Julie Kolojeski
Justin Strom
JwMillz Salon
Kaitlin Roll
Kalli Dugstad
Kathryn Sandor
Kathy Hannan
Keely Upton
Kelly Okstad
Kennedy Graven Law
Kerry Juntunen
Kerry Welsh
Keyport Liquor
Kolar Toyota
Krause Anderson
Lacey Merritt
Laura Juntunen
Leah Berg
Leah Kane
Leah Spaeth
Lincoln Park Crafting Comm.
Lindsay Moen

Lisa Erickson
Lizzard's
Lodge Cast Iron
Lori Johnson
LPL Financial Advisor
Luke & Alli Ratike
Lynn Dart-Nelson
Lynn McDonald
Lynn & Ted Peterson
Maddy Heine Tatoo
Marcie Keppers
Mark Hughes
Marline & Associates
Marlys Lee
Marnie Gould
Marty Running Fishing
Mary Hains
Mary Hall
Mary Beth Olsen
Mathieu Service Center, Inc. dba Troy's Service
Matt Lind
Maura Halverson
Melissa Ross
Metamorphosis CCT
Michelle Larson
Midway Sewer Service
Midwest Communications
Mike Maeckelbergh
Miller Mall Car Wash
MillerTrunk Family Dentistry
Miners Inc (Super One)
Minnesota Power
Monica Lambert-Lind
Morin's Siding
Natascha Ellis
National Bank of Commerce
Nemadji Golf
Nicole Appelwick
Nicole Kedrowski
Noah Dennis
North Shore Bank
North Shore Inline Marathon
North Star Ford
Northern Lights Cutting Center
Northwest Outlet
Operation Parendo
Pam Miller
Patricia Lehr
Paula & Ron Yff
Peter & Kathy Sylvester
Phil & Terri Johnson
Philip Mogen
Phillip & Louise Lind
PHS Drama
Pike Lake Golf & Beach Club
Proctor Athletics
Proctor Career & Tech Ed
Proctor Journal
Proctor Pizza
Proctor Public Schools
Purple Car Cafe
Rachel Austreng
Rachel Burlet
Rachel Johnson
Rebecca LaPlante
Reliable Agency, Inc.
Rene Munger
Rich Heine
Rich Petersson
Ridgeview Country Club
Rita O'Connell
Rochelle Cleary
Ron & Sheron Johnson
Ron & Nancy Johnson
Ron Gajewski
Russ Berntson
Russell, Cynthia & Daughters Lundeen
Russell Habermann
Ryan & Leianne Krajewski
Sammy's Pizza West Duluth
Sandra Ruhnke Collins
Sara Yost
Security Jewelers
Seth Oliver
Seven West, 310, Boulder Pubs
Shack Restaurant
Shelly Vanneste
Sherm & Louise Carlson
Sherry Frerichs Vail Harnell
Skalko Family Farm
Skip & Sandra Fontaine
Stephanie Sheldon
Steve & Anne Meyer
Steve & Sherry Johnson
Stewarts Bikes Sports & Trophies
Sue Solberg
Super One Liquors
Susanne Soderburg
Tanner Hall
Ted Kiefat
Teresa Olson
Terry Olson
Terry Radzak
Thereasa Hansmeier
Tim & Kara Rohweder
Travis Nelson
Twin Ports Cremation
United Truck Body
Urshan Retirement Group Inc.
Valentini's
Victoria Behrman
Vista Fleet
Walter Rapp
Weis Eye Care
Wendy Carlberg
Wendy Johnson
Western National Bank
Wild Rose @ Norway Hall
William & Patricia Zuck
William & Lynette Bonkowske
William Junnila
Zak Radzak
Zandra Bail-Lalonde
Zen House

Sponsor and Donor Generosity Increases the Impact of REA³D

REA³D has awarded $223,320 in grants since 2007.

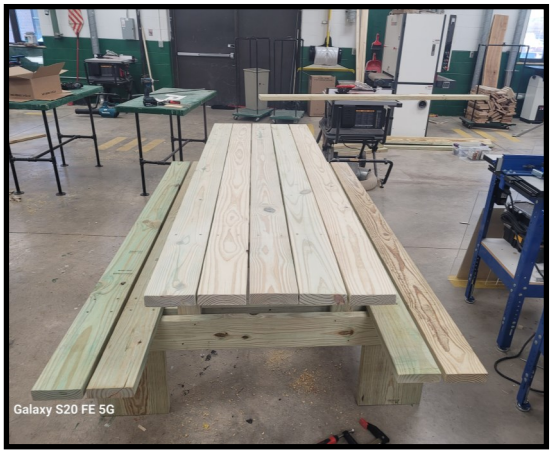
Nearly 1,000 generous individuals and corporate sponsors propelled REA³D's growth over the past two years.

17 REA³D grants totaling $28,479 helped realize quality learning initiatives during 2025-26.

Since the first REA³D grant awards in 2007, 278 grant requests have been submitted, and 228 of those proposals were funded.

Memorials and Honorariums to REA³D in the name of those loved and respected are encouraged and appreciated. Those listed below dedicated gifts between July 2025 and June 2026. We sincerely regret any errors or omissions and ask that if you have a correction, please contact us at: rea3d@proctor.k12.mn.us.

Anita	Fraundorf	In Honor of Sherm Carlson
Beryl	Peyton	In Memory of Mary Murphy
Bill	Watson	In Memory of Tom Watson
Bob & Kelly	Smith	In Memory of Todd Eliason, PHS Class of 1981 - my brother
Brandon	Carlson	In Memory of Charles Carlson
Charlene	Reno	In Memory of PHS Class of 1970 deceased classmates
Claudia	Otos	In Memory of Susan Klosowsky Sullivan - PHS Class of 63
Connie Olson	Male	In Memory of brothers Frank Olson (PHS Class of '65) and Phillip (Tony) Olson (PHS Class of '70)
Diane	Wippler	In Memory of Ronald Johnson
Dorothy	Knudsen	In Memory of Richard Knudsen
Fleta	Carol	In Memory of Danielle Wines and Evelyn Withrow Piersall
George & Mary	Saarela	In Honor of the School Bus Drivers Who Safely Drive Our Children
Gerald & Mindy	Gruber	In Memory of Joe Lane, Jerry Wedlund and Jerry Wilmot
Glenn	Tridgell	In Memory of Jim Parmeter
Jack & Nancy	Eilefson	In Memory of Ray Pelletier - PHS Class of 1970
JD & Margaret	Walker	In Honor of Sarah (Sederski) Walker, Anna Sederski and Connie Olson Stanley
Jim	Rohweder	In Memory of Jan Rohweder
Joann	Larson	In Memory of Al Larson
John & Sally	Ward	In Honor of all Proctor Educational Staff
Julie	Kolojeski	In Memory of Jan and Carol Bort; Dean, Joe and Geri Kolojeski; Jo Sjodin
Lynn	McDonald	In Honor of Barb Steen
Lynn	Dart-Nelson	In Honor of Lynn Peterson - A Very Special Person
Marlys	Lee	In Memory of Myrtle Hoverson and Evelyn Withrow
Marnie	Gould	In Honor of Dave and Patty Muckala
Mary	Hains	In Memory of Margaret Kinetz
Marybeth	Olsen	In Memory of Margaret Kinetz
Mike	Maeckelbergh	In Memory of Bonnie Maeckelbergh - PHS Class of 1963, and Andrew Maeckelbergh - PHS Class of 1997
Pam	Miller	In Memory of Virginia Miller
Phil & Terri	Johnson	In Memory of Laura Condon
Phillip & Louise	Lind	In Memory of Ron Johnson - Retired Proctor High School Librarian
Ron & Sheron	Johnson	In Memory of Jeane Voltzke, Addie Dardis, LaVonne Peterson, Marge Thoreson and Ruth Gustavson
Ron & Nancy	Johnson	In Memory of Bruce Nelson
Russ	Berntson	In Memory of Beverly Berntson
Russell, Cynthia & Daughters	Lundeen	In Honor of All Educators in Minnesota
Sandra Ruhnke	Collins	In Memory of Byron, Lois and Ken Ruhnke; Cindy Ruhnke Stauber
Skip & Sandra	Fontaine	In Memory of Roger Brayden; In Memory of Carol (Jeannie) Soderberg - PHS Class of 1956; In Memory of Phyllis (Paulson) Marshall - PHS Class of 1955
Susanne	Soderburg	In Memory of Ralph Soderburg
Travis	Nelson	Dedicated to the PHS Class of 1955
Wendy	Johnson	In Honor of Barbara Johnson Steen
Wendy	Carlberg	In Memory of Jan Resberg and Pat Lowe
William & Patricia	Zuck	In Memory of Margaret Kinetz



PHS School Forest Realized Through Community Collaboration

Thanks to the leadership of science teacher and NHS Advisor Leah Moore, the School Forest Committee, and many community sponsors, PHS students worked together to create a beautiful outdoor school forest learning space. Mr. Tyler Blom's shop students hauled truckloads of branches and brush cleared out by students to the AAA Bonfire site. Proctor Board Member, Mr. Larry Shelton graded the space and provided class 5 and wood chips for the trails. A $2,000 REA^{3}D grant purchased materials for Mr. Craig Honkola's and Mr. Blom's shop students to construct seven large picnic tables (left) so that students and teachers in any PHS any subject area can enjoy the learning space, year around. This has been a great cross curricular community effort.





CELEBRATING DOLLY

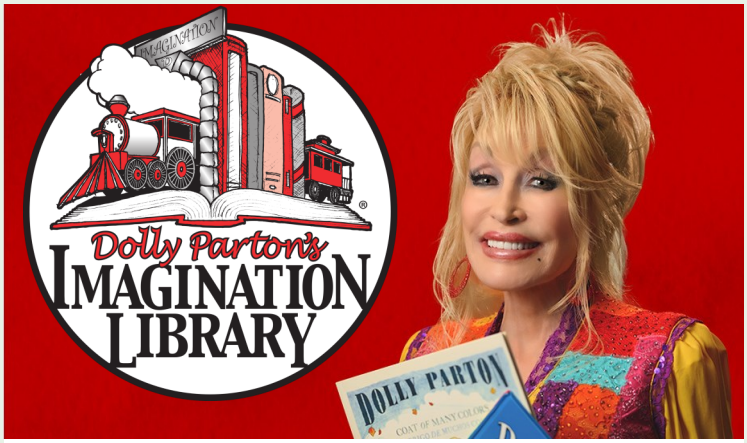
Since 2022, REA^{3}D has gifted 6,449 books to pre-school students in Proctor School District through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

You're invited to be part of extending Dolly's legacy by donating to the Imagination Library program in Proctor School District!

Check donations (payable to REA3D" with "DPIL" in the memo line) can be mailed to:
REA3D, 131 9th Avenue
Proctor, MN 55810

Credit card donations can be made online at:
REA3D.org/ImaginationLibrary

Consider sponsoring one month of book-gifting with a contribution of $400!



Thank you to our 2026 Month Sponsors!

The Proctor Area Educational Foundation REA^{3}D

BILLINGS Roofing & Siding

IRVING COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION "Pulling for Children"

Bell Bank

Lynn Dart-Nelson

CITY OF PROCTOR CORPORATE SEAL 1894

WE SUPPORT LIFELONG LEARNING WITHIN PROCTOR SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITIES

The Proctor Area Educational Foundation
REA³D
RAILS ENDOWMENT FOR ACADEMIC, ART & ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT
131 9th Avenue
Proctor, MN 55810

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Org
US Postage PAID
Duluth MN
Permit No. 238

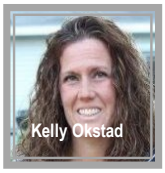
ABOUT REA³D

Rails Endowment for Academic, Art and Athletic Development (REA³D) is the Proctor Area Educational Foundation.

REA³D was established in 1996 to support lifelong learning within the Proctor School District communities. Specifically, it seeks to enable life-enriching academic, art and athletic activities which cannot rely on traditional educational funding.

The Proctor Area Educational Foundation
REA³D
RAILS ENDOWMENT FOR ACADEMIC, ART & ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT

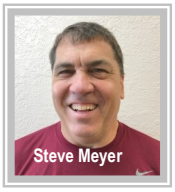








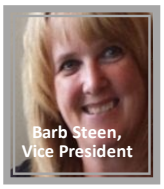




2026 REA3D Board of Directors

Chances are you know one or more of our REA³D Board of Director Members, pictured here. Feel free to reach out to any of them if you have questions about events, have ideas for REA³D grants or want to become more involved!



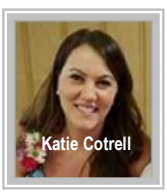






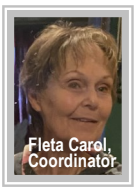












WE SUPPORT LIFELONG LEARNING WITHIN PROCTOR SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITIES