



# ALL-AMERICA CITY FINALIST

## SOUTHERN PINES

### Community Snapshot

Southern Pines was founded in the late 1800s following the construction of the railroad through the pine barrens of south central North Carolina. Since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area has been known for its golf courses; it is also known for its approximately 4,000 acres of equestrian riding trails. Weymouth Woods, a 900-acre preserve, features old-growth longleaf pines. The area's economy combines manufacturing, tourism, health services, education and retirement living. The site of major golf championship play, it is also a destination for pottery and antiques shopping. Despite Southern Pines' many great qualities, there are still disparities in education statistics among groups, particularly when data is disaggregated by age, household type, education levels and income.

### Community Solutions Action Plan

An analysis of the needs around school readiness, summer learning and school attendance has led the community partners in the Southern Pines Campaign for Grade-Level Reading to develop the following goals:

- Increase the number of Southern Pines children enrolled in high-quality child care/early childhood education and bolster learning opportunities for low-income children not enrolled in formal care
- Increase the level of communication between early care providers and kindergarten teachers
- Increase educational outreach to parents of at-risk children about the year-round school schedule and the number of children who participate in quality intersession and summer learning programs

### Partnerships

The plan to ensure that more Southern Pines children are reading at grade level by the end of third grade was submitted by the Southern Pines Public Library with help from key stakeholders including the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sandhills, Citizens' Pet Responsibility Committee, Communities in Schools, Friends of the Southern Pines Public Library, Moore County Chamber of Commerce, Moore County Literacy Council, Moore County NAACP, Partners for Children and Families, Rotary Club of the Sandhills, Sandhills Children's Center, The Country Bookshop, Town of Southern Pines, United Way of Moore County and West Southern Pines Citizens for Change.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

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- **12,300 residents**
- **2,800 students**
- **26 percent of students live in poverty**
- **71.5 percent of students read at grade level (state tests)**
- **77.9 percent graduation rate**
- **36 percent of kindergartners need early literacy intervention**
- **5 percent of students are chronically absent**
- **Summer programming is available**

### GOALS (BY 2020)

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- **Increase the number of preschool classrooms and the number of children in Head Start**
- **Increase school preparedness to 90 percent**
- **Educate 95 percent of parents of at-risk children about year-round learning opportunities**
- **Have 95 percent of K-3 students who are reading below grade level attend a summer/ intersession learning program**

*“Despite the many great qualities of Southern Pines, there are still disparities between school attendance, school performance, high school graduation, and ultimately economic stability.”*