

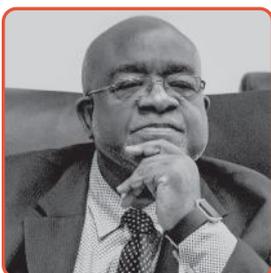
# The greatest gift

**W**hat's the most important thing you can teach a child? Empathy? Self-sufficiency? Curiosity? Critical thinking? All of these traits are important. But there is one thing that helps foster all of those traits – and more. Reading.

Experts have long touted reading as the key to a child's academic success and career opportunities as an adult. But the truth is that reading is even more powerful. Reading can help a child develop traits that deepen them as a human being. Books offer facts that feed our child's brains, but they also offer perspectives that expand their minds and lift their souls.

That's why Wayne County Community College District, one of the premier community colleges in the nation, has been committed to improving childhood literacy and fostering a love of reading. As WCCCD Chancellor, I founded the Reading Carnival for Children, which has attracted thousands of children to WCCCD's downtown Detroit campus over the years for free books and author readings. Our virtual Bookworm Club founded by my wife, Ola, has helped children expand their love of books from the safety of their homes during the pandemic. In addition, my love of reading, one I passed on to my children and grandchildren, inspired me to write, "The Wonder of Words: A Parent's Guide for Raising Children Who Read."

We at WCCCD know that reading is a bedrock of educational opportunity and an all-important ingredient in a thriving community. That's why we are so proud to sponsor this Reading Rocks section in Metro Parent. I hope it inspires you to foster a love of reading in your own children. It just may be one of the greatest gifts you give them.



**DR. CURTIS IVERY**  
Chancellor, Wayne County  
Community College District

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