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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Established Oregon Nonprofit Gets a New Name & New Look**

**Portland, Ore.** — As the result of a year-long rebranding process, SMART (Start Making a Reader Today) has changed its name to SMART Reading and unveiled a new mission, vision, logo, and more. The rebrand comes just in time for the kick off of the 2019-2020 school year.

“We launched this project out of a desire to have our brand better represent who we are and how we’ve evolved over the past 28 years,” said Chris Otis, executive director of SMART Reading. “Our new brand gives us a clearer sense of who we are and new language to tell our story in a more resonant way, which will help us better attract supporters to our mission now and into the future.”

While the organization’s name and logo are changing, its goal of sparking a love of reading in Oregon kids remains the same, Otis adds. In the 2019-20 school year, SMART Reading will serve 11,000 students across Oregon with one-on-one reading support and access to books.

SMART Reading worked with Jason Halstead, brand strategist and creative director of Gist Brands, on the rebrand. Gist generously donated a pro-bono match, which allowed for a full rebrand including the new name, logo, and a refresh of SMART Reading’s strategy, messaging, and voice.

“Our goal with the logo redesign was to create something that embodied the essence and energy of SMART Reading,” said Jason Halstead of Gist Brands. “The body of the symbol is a book-shaped word balloon which alludes to the interactive, student-led, one-on-one nature of SMART Reading’s model. The starburst above the word balloon represents the fun of the experience, but also suggests fanned pages, a rising sun, or even a child’s head behind the book. It’s a simple brand mark, but a very rich story to tell.”

**About SMART Reading**

SMART Reading is a children's literacy nonprofit that serves kids in Oregon's highest need schools with two ingredients critical for literacy and learning success: one-on-one reading time and access to books. We mobilize volunteers to read with PreK through third-grade children, building confidence, literacy skills and a love of reading. We provide a meaningful way for Oregonians to make a direct impact in their communities. Since 1992, we have paired over 139,000 volunteers to read with 222,000 children, and have put 2.8 million books in the homes of the children we serve. Visit [www.SMARTReading.org](http://www.SMARTReading.org) or call 877-598-4633 to learn more.

**About Gist Brands**

Gist Brands specializes in helping businesses and organizations that have outgrown their brands get unstuck and evolve to the next level. As a "brand therapist" Jason Halstead helps leaders and teams find their niche and get their understandings, strategy, story, messages, and visuals into alignment, reinvigorating their brand image, but also their passion. For more information, visit [www.gistbrands.net](http://www.gistbrands.net).

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