This young man’s name is Lavarey. He’s in second grade and on the path to high school graduation.

This wasn’t always the case. When he entered first grade, he was reading well below the level he should have been.

Fortunately, his school is participating in the Haskins Literacy Initiative, which focuses on improving reading among children in the early grades by enhancing teacher knowledge of the science of reading and how to teach it. The project is funded in five Hartford elementary schools by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, as part of its Brighter Futures Initiative.

Now halfway through second grade, Lavarey’s reading is where it should be and his comprehension is excellent. He actively participates in group discussions about books. This is great news to his mother since third-grade reading proficiency is the number one predictor of high school graduation.

Of course, if you ask Lavarey, the graduation thing is OK. But reading bedtime stories to his twin five-year-old brothers is the best.

Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is the community foundation for the 29-town Greater Hartford region, dedicated to improving the quality of life for area residents. The Foundation receives gifts from thousands of generous individuals and families, and last year, awarded grants of more than $26 million to a broad range of nonprofit organizations.

For more information about the Foundation, visit www.hfpg.org or call 860-548-1888.

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