



Reading Partners Annual Report

2009-2010

SUMMARY

Through its ten years of work in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, PENCIL's Reading Partners program addresses the need to support reading development in young children attending public schools. It has proven to be an extremely effective and well-regarded volunteer reading assistance program and since its inception it has served 20,906 children in 87 schools with an in-kind value of \$1,492,343. The goal of Reading Partners is to increase the reading ability, comprehension and enjoyment of MNPS students in grades K-6 who score "below proficient" on the standardized tests of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) in reading. Community volunteers are recruited, screened, trained, and placed in schools where they serve as one-on-one reading partners, helping individual students practice key reading skills, and/or as classroom readers, sharing the enjoyment of reading.

OUTCOMES

Student improvement in reading skills is measured by objective and subjective assessments which are administered by MNPS school staff and reported to PENCIL. Upon recommendation of Metro Schools, student success is measured by an improvement of at least two MNPS reading levels for each tutored student. Objective measurements of student improvement in comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, motivation to read, confidence in reading ability, and self-esteem are also evaluated by tutored students' teachers and reported to the program director using a survey of student progress, with the goal of students showing an improvement in at least one area.

- ***In the sample group of 181 students who had beginning and ending reading levels reported to PENCIL, 161 or 89% of students who had one-on-one reading assistance met or surpassed the performance target of improving at least two MNPS reading levels, with an average increase of 6.4 levels.***
- ***In the group of 106 students whose teachers returned the teacher survey of student progress, students showed, on average, improvement in 4 out of 6 areas (reading comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, motivation to read, confidence in reading ability, and self-esteem).***

Reading Partners also achieved the following in 2009-2010:

- Volunteers and college work-study students served 638 students with one-on-one reading assistance, surpassing the goal of serving at least 580 students by 11%.
- Classroom Reader volunteers served an additional 1,309 students, for a total of 1,907 students served through the program during the year.
- A total of 323 volunteers and 11 work-study students were active in 49 schools, an increase of nearly 13% over the number of schools served last year.
- Forty-five of these schools were Title I schools in which 1,839 students received services, representing 94.5% of all students served.
- Volunteers contributed 9,022 hours, and college work-study students contributed 2,960 hours, for a total of 11,982 hours, with an in-kind value to Metro Nashville Public Schools of \$249,825.

- The number of hours contributed by work-study students increased by 87% over last year, increasing the in-kind value of hours donated by work-study students from \$32,035.50 last year to \$61,716.00 - an increase of 92.6%.
- The Reading Partners program as a whole increased the total in-kind value of volunteer and work-study hours donated to MNPS by 24% over last year.

HIGHLIGHTS

- *“My name is Milicent Perkins and I am a read aloud volunteer at Gower Elementary. I read to Ms. Summer’s 1st grade class and to Ms. Brown’s 2nd grade class. I have always had a love of reading and love tutoring young children to give them an opportunity to be successful. I am excited to have found the Reading Partners program. The children are ALWAYS excited to see me and I am always excited to see them. I have found my passion, and it is to help as many children as I possibly can learn to read. I want them to have better reading skills and to have a passion for reading BEFORE she or he makes it to the 4th grade. Our children need all the help we can give and this is just something from my heart that I can do!”*
-Milicent Perkins
- *“I read with a 3rd grader at McGavock Elementary and after just a few session I have already seen an improvement in the student's multiple-choice reasoning skills and reading comprehension. It is very exciting to see how just a little bit of help can go a long way with these youngsters!”*
-Cheryl Stem
- *“I volunteer as a reading tutor at Norman Binkley Elementary School. I enjoy the opportunity to give back to the community, helping kids with the basic skills they will need throughout their lives. Each week, it is a great honor to assist the 4th grader I work with on reading comprehension. I think the real power is working individually with a child outside the classroom where he can focus without all the distractions from peer students. I ask the student a lot of questions about the material we read together to gauge his understanding while also challenging him to think.”*
-Mark Mitchell



Volunteer Holly Cooper and her Reading Partner at Granbery Elementary School

FUNDING

PENCIL Foundation gratefully acknowledges the following funders who make Reading Partners possible:

- Ingram Charitable Fund The Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
- Comcast Foundation
- Dollar General Literacy Foundation
- Bank of America Charitable Trust
- Belk Foundation
- Creative Artists Agency Foundation
- Cal Turner Family Foundation
- The Memorial Foundation
- CarMax Foundation
- Dan and Margaret Maddox Charitable Trust
- Rogers Group
- Scarlett Family Foundation
- BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Community Trust
- Marsh
- Wal-Mart Foundation
- United Way of Metropolitan Nashville