



READING PARTNERS YEAR-END REPORT 2008-09

SUMMARY

PENCIL Foundation's Reading Partners program, which has just completed its 9th year, works with Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) toward the goals of improving MNPS elementary and middle school students' reading ability and increasing their appreciation and enjoyment of literature. Reading Partners matches students who have struggled with reading skills to caring and dedicated volunteers in a supportive environment that builds confidence and demonstrates the importance of reading. Since the program's inception in 2000, 3,322 volunteers and 26 federal work-study students have served **18,959 children in 79 elementary and middle schools.**

OUTCOMES

Reading Partners works closely with MNPS to obtain both objective and subjective measurements of student progress each year. MNPS recommends that Reading Partners measure tutored students' reading improvement using the same assessment used by the school system, their standardized MNPS Reading Progress Levels, with the goal of students improving at least two standardized levels. In addition, student improvement in comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, motivation to read, confidence in reading ability, and self-esteem is evaluated by tutored students' teachers. These measurements are provided to PENCIL upon completion of tutoring in May each year.

- ***In the sample group of 123 students who had beginning and ending reading levels reported to PENCIL, 108 or 84% of students who had one-on-one reading assistance met or surpassed the performance target of improving at least two MNPS reading levels. The average increase was 5.7 levels for students who made progress (or 5.25 of all students in the sample). The range of improvement was 0-21 levels.***
- ***In the group of 86 students whose teachers returned the teacher survey of student improvement, reports show that 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).***
- ***Community volunteers and federal work-study students contributed 9,943 volunteer hours this year, with an in-kind value to MNPS of \$201,346.¹***

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2008-09, Reading Partners:

- Served 1,616 students in 34 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, and the International Newcomer's Academy with 475 students receiving one-on-one reading assistance and 1,158 students served through read-aloud volunteers.
- 92.5% of all students served attended Title I schools.
- Approximately 11.5% of students who received one-on-one assistance were English Language Learners.
- Volunteers represented 43 organizations, including among others, PENCIL Partners companies and organizations, Alignment Nashville, Community Foundation, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, State of TN Legislature, TN State Government, YMCA, PENCIL Foundation, and MNPS.

¹ The 2008 value of volunteer time is based on the average hourly earnings of all production and nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls (as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). Independent Sector takes this figure and increases it by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits.

- Doubled the number of federal work-study students serving as reading tutors from 5 to 11, serving 138 students at 9 schools, increasing the number of students served through work-study commitments by 66% over last year.
- Work-study students contributed a total of 1,582 hours with an in-kind value of \$32,035.50.
- Initiated partnerships with Vanderbilt and Belmont University financial aid offices to offer work-study opportunities in MNPS in fall 2009.
- Upon request, provided consultation and training to replicate the Reading Partners model for Grundy County, TN start-up tutoring program, successfully implementing the program and engaging 33 community members and high schools students who providing tutoring for students at Tracy City Elementary, with plans to expand the program to an additional elementary school in fall 2009.
- Partnered with United Way and school-based Family Resource Centers at Bailey Middle School, and Bordeaux, Cora Howe, Fall-Hamilton, McKissack, and Napier Elementary Schools to provide Reading Partners volunteers.
- Collaborated with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Middle Tennessee to provide reading training for their volunteers who mentor students on-site at selected MNPS elementary and middle schools.
- Collaborated with Alignment Nashville K-4 committee to provide character education information to Reading Partners volunteers.
- Served on Book'em's Read Me Week committee and partnered with Book'em and Comcast to videotape Read Me Day celebrity readers and children at Glenn Enhanced Option Elementary; the program was available at Comcast On Demand throughout April.
- Celebrated Volunteer Appreciation Day with an "Ice Cream Treats Day" during National Volunteer Week.



PENCIL VISTA Volunteer Jessica Ziegler, and her Reading Partner at Charlotte Park Elementary

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