



# Reading Partners Annual Report 2010-2011

## SUMMARY

PENCIL Foundation's Reading Partners program involves the Nashville community in supporting the academic achievement of students attending Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. For the past 11 years, the program has shown positive results in student improvement, with the ultimate goal of helping students improve their skills enough to score at or above proficiency for their grade level on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP). Community volunteers are recruited, screened, trained, and placed in elementary and middle schools (grades K-6) where they help students practice key reading skills or serve as classroom readers, sharing the enjoyment of reading and helping build pre-reading skills. The program has provided services to 22,756 children with an in-kind value of volunteer time of \$1,748,460.

## OUTCOMES

Reading Partners evaluates outcomes for the program each year by measuring student gains in reading skills using measurements of progress as recommended by MNPS. Objective student outcomes are measured by an improvement of at least two MNPS reading levels for each student who receives one-on-one volunteer reading assistance. Subjective measurements of student improvement are evaluated by students' teachers using an observational survey of student progress, with the goal of students showing an improvement in at least one area, including comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, motivation to read, confidence in reading ability, and self-esteem.

- ***In the sample group of 189 students, representative of all schools and students served, 88% met or exceeded the performance target of improving at least two MNPS reading levels. These students gained an average of 6.4 reading levels.***
- ***In addition, teacher surveys of student progress show that 96% of students improved, on average, 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 2010-2011:

- Reading Partners recruited, trained and placed volunteers in 49 elementary and 9 middle schools, an increase of 9 schools over last year's number, and reaching 94% of the goal to serve 62 schools.
- A total of 1,850 students were served through the program, with 551 students receiving one-on-one reading assistance, and 1,299 participating in read-aloud sessions with Classroom Reader volunteers.
- Of the 58 schools served, 51 were Title I schools in which 1,700 students received services, representing 92.2% of all students served.
- 361 volunteers and work-study students served as Reading Partners, donating 9,816 hours with an in-kind value to MNPS of \$209,669.76.
- Collaborated with Mayor Karl Dean's IMPACT Nashville service project to coordinate the educational portion of the citywide volunteer effort for the city's lowest-performing schools, and to engage Metro Government employees as volunteers in schools.

## HIGHLIGHTS

"I have had the privilege of reading with 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at Whitsitt Elementary for the last 14 years. I'm grateful to work for a company that expects community service participation from its employees. And I'm grateful to the PENCIL organization for creating a brilliant program for businesses to have a way to give back to our community by working in Metro Public Schools. Without the leadership at my company and Pencil, I would have absolutely no idea how much need there is for extra help in the school system. Without a reason to step into a public school each week, I wouldn't know how gratifying it is to see firsthand, each week, that you are helping a child become confident and smarter by helping them improve their reading, comprehension, and testing skills. The best part of being a reading tutor through PENCIL? I get to re-read all my favorite children's books (and read all the new ones). Volunteering with PENCIL is an enriching experience. I'm sad that school has ended and we have to wait until August to see all the kids again!" (Shannon Casey, CAA volunteer)

"I just wanted to thank you for the opportunity you gave me to work at Hickman Elementary as a work-study student from Nashville State Community College. It definitely enriched my life to work with the students I was lucky to work with. I will miss them dearly. Please don't hesitate to contact me in the future if you have a need for my services. I would be more than willing to return to Hickman on a voluntary basis. (Jeff Laudieri)

"I wanted to express Hickman Elementary's support for PENCIL Foundation's Reading Partners program. The young men who volunteered at Hickman were the best and the data shows the improvement in the children's reading skills! I appreciate the support you provide to us." (Dr. Dottie Critchlow, Principal)



Reading Partners volunteer Katherine Ciggaran and Jackson Alexander at Eakin Elementary

## FUNDING

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