Updates on Community Commitments

Presented by
Rachael Nygaard, Strategic Partnerships & John E. Hudson, Budget Office
COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

- Literacy Pilot Program: AVL Rise
- Homeowner Grant
- Septic Repair
Literacy Pilot Program: AVL Rise

Presented by
Strategic Partnerships
Summary

Buncombe County issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an education pilot program to improve literacy outcomes & reduce racial disparities in student achievement.

A 3-year contract (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2024) of $250,000 per year was awarded to OpenDoors of Asheville for the AVL Rise program.

This community commitment expires in FY2024, and staff is requesting direction on options for FY2025.
Background

• Our strategic plan calls for increasing literacy rates, especially among underperforming students, as well as improving college & career readiness

• In April 2021, Buncombe County issued an RFP for a partner to establish and operate a pilot program to improve literacy outcomes and reduce racial disparities in student achievement

• The RFP called for use of a proven model for out-of-school time educational support services, sound instructional practices and literacy intervention supported by a tested curriculum, and a whole-child focus including social/emotional well-being
About AVL Rise

• Peer-to-peer literacy program based on the award-winning Reach, Inc., program in Washington, D.C.

• Struggling high school readers are paired with struggling second & third grade readers, each participating in literacy lessons.

• Currently serves 2 high schools (Asheville & TC Roberson) and 2 elementary schools (Hall Fletcher & William W Estes).
How it Works

• High schoolers are trained in a Science of Reading Curriculum and tutor elementary schoolers in foundational literacy lessons, resulting in gains for both

• High schoolers (tutors) receive the highest programming dose, meeting 4x / week, and elementary school students (tutees) receiving a lower dose, meeting 2x / week

• Program also includes paid work experience, resume-building, and enrichment trips to colleges, universities & local businesses
# Students Served

- For 2022-2023, 28 students were served (15 tutors & 12 tutees)
- For 2023-2024, the program goal is 100 students (50 of each), has enrolled 40 so far

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race &amp; ethnicity</th>
<th>Tutors</th>
<th>Tutees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81% are Black&lt;br&gt;14% are Latino&lt;br&gt;5% are white</td>
<td>70% are Black&lt;br&gt;15% are Latino&lt;br&gt;15% are white</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Tutors</th>
<th>Tutees</th>
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<tr>
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<td>24% are in ninth grade&lt;br&gt;38% are in tenth grade&lt;br&gt;19% are in eleventh grade&lt;br&gt;19% are in twelfth grade</td>
<td>5% are in first grade&lt;br&gt;30% are in second grade&lt;br&gt;40% are in third grade&lt;br&gt;20% are in fourth grade&lt;br&gt;5% are in fifth grade</td>
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Results for Tutors

- 2 years of assessment data indicates improved literacy outcomes, leadership skills & student confidence

- In 2022-2023, 100% of tutors demonstrated...
  - Improved reading fluency & reading comprehension, gauged by staffers based on a scale of 1 to 5, comparing incoming abilities to end-of-year progress
  - Leadership growth, based on staff comparisons of incoming leadership skills to end-of-year leadership skills on a scale of 1 to 5, and also based on student-reported end-of-year data
  - Increased confidence growth and feelings about reading, based on student-reported end-of-year data

- All high school seniors so far (2) have graduated on time and enrolled in college

- In 2023-2024, in addition to staff observations and student self-reporting, AVL Rise has implemented AimsWeb, a research-based system for monitoring literacy gains
Results for Tutees

• Results are pending as result of accessing school-based literacy data and will be available in year 3 of the 3-year pilot

• Beginning in 2023-2024, elementary school student literacy baselines and improvements will be measured and reported using Lexia, a Science of Reading literacy solution
Looking Ahead to FY2025

- Additional results data from the pilot will be shared as it is received in quarterly reports.
- This community commitment expires in FY2024, and staff is requesting direction on options for FY2025.
- A competitive bid process is necessary in order to continue this investment, in compliance with procurement policy.
Homeowner Grant

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<th>FY22</th>
<th>FY23</th>
<th>FY24 YTD</th>
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<tr>
<td>County Cost</td>
<td>$378,878</td>
<td>$216,948</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenditures</td>
<td>$479,878</td>
<td>$271,948</td>
<td>$219,851</td>
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Budgeted $300,000 of County funds in FY23 with additional support from the City of Asheville ($100,000) and the Town of Woodfin ($15,000). Same budget for FY24.
Septic Repair

FY23
• Total Spent = $68,371
• Nine completed projects
• Average project cost = $7,597
  • Highest = $15,301
  • Lowest = $1,250

FY24
• Currently accepting applications

Budgeted $75,000 in FY23 and FY24
Discussion