

FY2021 Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant Report

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|---|--|---|
| Organization Name: | Read to Succeed | |
| Project Name: | Read to Succeed Asheville/Buncombe Changing Lives Through Literacy | |
| Reporting Quarter: (Check one) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Quarter 1 (July 1, 2020 - September 30, 2020) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Quarter 2 (October 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Quarter 3 (January 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021) |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Quarter 4 (April 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021) |

Narrative summary of grant related activities

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|---------------------------------|---|
| Overall project updates: | <p>26 volunteer reading tutors served 26 students in the fourth quarter. Four tutors were UNCA students trained in fluency tutoring. 9 students are in Asheville City Schools and 17 in Buncombe County Schools; 2nd grade (5 students), 3rd grade (13 students), 4th grade (8 students); Black (14 students) White (9 students), Hispanic (3 students). Volunteer reading tutors work via video conference (Zoom or Google Meet) with students for 30 minutes to one hour every week (occasionally twice a week) on phonemic awareness, decoding, reading, comprehension, vocabulary, and trick words.</p> <p>We implemented weekly grade-level "Tutor Huddles" (1-hour virtual meetings) in May for active reading tutors to receive more targeted support and continuing education related to their student's grade and reading levels. In addition, we hosted a virtual Continuing Education Meeting in May where volunteer reading tutors listened to and discussed "Hard Words," an American Public Media podcast episode investigating why children aren't being taught how to read.</p> <p>We designed, created, and implemented a *new* virtual volunteer literacy instruction training called Literacy 101. It introduces participants to the state of reading in our country, state, and community, the history of reading instruction, and the "Big 5" foundational reading skills children require to be able to read. 26 total K-3 volunteer reading tutors attended two sessions of Literacy 101 in April, and 40 people attended Literacy 101 in May, including R2S volunteers and educators/staff from community organizations Christine Avery Learning Center, Community Action Opportunities, Children First, Creative Peacemakers, and more. We also conducted an additional virtual volunteer orientation for four new reading tutors.</p> <p>We introduced an ongoing "Practice, Practice, Practice" event in June where R2S K-3 volunteer reading tutors come to the office each week and practice fundamental lesson procedures to gain more confidence in their ability to implement research-based interventions with students.</p> <p>In May, we hosted a volunteer appreciation ice cream social at Lake Julian - it was our first time coming together in person as volunteers and staff since Feb. 2020. Malaprops and 12 Bones donated door prizes, The Hop Ice Cream donated ice cream, and we had a great time!</p> <p>We surveyed teachers, families, and volunteers at the end of the 2021-2022 school year to gather feedback on the experience and efficacy of the R2S K-3 reading tutoring program. 54% of volunteers replied; 10% of parents replied; 18% of teachers replied.</p> |
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| <p>COVID-19 impacts:</p> | <p>The impacts of COVID-19 were felt especially during the fourth quarter as both ACS and BCS re-instituted in-person learning over a series of multiple weeks resulting in many students taking their school-issued devices they were using for tutoring sessions at home back into school. EOY testing also disrupted tutoring schedules as devices were returned to schools indefinitely starting in May.</p> <p>Despite these challenges, our staff worked around the clock to connect with families, reschedule tutoring sessions, and distribute literacy resources online to support ongoing learning.</p> |
| <p>Activities related to increasing equity, diversity and inclusion:</p> | <p>Our IT Director attended Phase I of REI in April. Three of our four staff attended a virtual Black-led panel discussion exploring how white folks can show up at Black-centered events, both as volunteers and attendees, in supportive and respectful ways. In addition, we continued to share books and literacy resources on our blog and social channels that are culturally supportive of the families and communities we serve and celebrate Black excellence.</p> <p>Jaimee Stanley, R2S's first full-time Black employee, joined the team in June and spearheaded conversations with community partners and schools around equity-based literacy programming for the summer and upcoming school year.</p> <p>R2S partnered with Junior League of Asheville in May to assemble and distribute literacy kits to every active R2S student; kits included two culturally relevant and fun grade-appropriate books ("I Am Every Good Thing," "The Word Collector," and more) and a whiteboard with eraser and marker that children could use on their tutoring sessions.</p> <p>We continue to actively examine our role as a white-led literacy organization in perpetuating an inequitable system designed to oppress communities of color.</p> |
| <p>Activities related to increasing operational excellence:</p> | <p>We continue to offer our volunteer trainings and orientations virtually via Zoom, which provides more accessibility to volunteers and other community partners who want to attend. In May, two educators from the Department of Special Education at the University of Education, Winneba in Ghana (with ties to UNCA) attended Literacy 101!</p> <p>Carley Stein, M.Ed. of Impact Literacy, LLC continues to offer her reputable expertise and guidance in developing our programming and trainings. She is working closely with Learning & Engagement Manager, Jaimee Stanley, to align our work and curricula with the local school systems and summer/afterschool programs.</p> <p>We updated the volunteer staff/web portal during Q4 to improve the user interface, streamline the navigation, and tailor the experience for volunteers and staff when they are logged in. From RSVP'ing for training to inputting volunteer hours, verifying background checks, accessing online tutoring resources, and more, our web portal provides a one-stop-shop for volunteers and staff to complete mission-critical tasks.</p> |

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Progress toward annual goals

| Measure | Annual Goal | Please only include new data for the specific quarter | | | | Progress toward Annual Goal |
|---|-------------|---|----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| | | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | |
| # of students served | 240 | 6 | 24 | 1 | - | 31 |
| # of reading levels on average that students gain | 4.25 | yr. end report | yr. end report | yr. end report | TBD | - |
| # of students that attain grade level reading | 42 | yr. end report | yr. end report | yr. end report | TBD | - |
| # of volunteers engaged | 220 | 77 | 0** | 28 | 7 | 112 |
| # of volunteer service hours | 9,500 | 805 | 1,374 | 1,588 | 1,046 | 4,813 |

Comments:

****Adjusted Q2 based on clarification from BCSP.** We have only received 11 out of 31 EOY reports from Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools. Once we receive the rest of the EOY reports, we will analyze and detail any reading progress from MOY to EOY based on each school system's respective standards (iReady at BCS and STAR at ACS) ASAP. Due to COVID, final numbers on this grant report reflect a significant deficit in students served and volunteers engaged than what was original predicted spring of 2020. We have progressed light years, however, in our quality of instruction and approach to programming (stronger connection with K-3 parents/guardians/caregivers, stronger community ties with partners also serving ACS and BCS students, stronger focus on phonological awareness and supporting foundational reading skills using ACS/BCS curricula).

