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Philadelphia Cares™
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READING STARS 2007-2008

COACHING CHILDREN. CREATING FUTURES.



Reading STARS is presented in partnership with



ace group



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OVERVIEW

Reading STARS is a volunteer-driven literacy coaching program that is having real and positive impact. During the 2007-2008 school year, more than 500 struggling readers – and the hundreds of dedicated coaches who worked one-on-one with them every week – made progress in mastering one of life’s most critical skills.

Grade level scores increased an average of 1.1 grade levels in average of 19 hours. In a city where less than half (45%) of public schools students test at proficient or advanced for their grade, those results are dramatic. That’s just one measurement of success, however. In addition to learning that a silent “e” makes a vowel sound long, students and coaches learned other equally important lessons. As important as learning letter blends and basic phonics rules was the cultivation of the respect essential to communicate across generational and situational divides.

Congratulations to all who participated.

RESULTS 2007-2008

Students showed significant increases in their reading skills. Each student is administered 3 widely accepted tests upon starting the program and again when the program ends, regardless of whether all 27 books have been completed.

The Dolch Word Test measures the ability of students to correctly identify common words. The Decoding Test measures how well a student is able to properly pronounce-"decode"-made up words. The Wide Range Achievement or WRAT Test is a short test to measure a student's grade level reading ability.

Dolch Word % Correct Test 1	Dolch Word % Correct Test 2	Decoding % Correct Test 1	Decoding % Correct Test 2	WRAT Reading Grade Test 1	WRAT Reading Grade Test 2	Grade in School
78.2%	91.1%	36.3%	59.2%	2.4	3.5	3.4
Increase	12.9 pts	Increase	22.9 pts	Increase	1.1	



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“Each week I observed the children leave the building smiling with anticipation, but return with even greater emotions and fulfillment. From student testimony, I was able to feel the commitment and connectedness our students felt towards the dedicated employees of PECO who have given so much. As a result of our program, I have seen my students not only grow academically but also personally. I feel that the personal instruction provided by the Reading Stars Program has not only improved their reading levels but more importantly has instilled a sense of accomplishment and self-confidence within the students.”

Stephen Brandt

“The students found the experience very rewarding and beneficial in their learning. They often referred back to the skills learned from the Reading Stars Program as they participated in reading in school. The students were excited weekly as they attended the Program. The coaches were dedicated, excited and related well with all students. Sometimes, the coaches would come early and talk to their student about their day. This set a tone for a caring and kind atmosphere that was accepted by the students. The greatest incentive my students received from this program was the ability to receive additional supports in reading.”

Wanda Brown

Teacher

WHAT THE CHILDREN HAVE TO SAY

“You’re the best mentor I’ve ever had. You taught me a lot, like commas, letters that sound like other letters and more.”

“You are one of the nicest people I ever met! If I wouldn’t have met you my life would not be what it is now. I liked the lesson with the schwa sound because it was challenging and hard. You helped me to get through it.”

“I learned new things about vowels, prefixes and suffixes. I also learned where commas are supposed to go in sentences. The bus ride was fun. Thank you for taking the time to tutor me.”

“The first time I did the first lesson with my mentor, that was the greatest thing that happened to me. You helped me a lot when I was stuck on a word or a sentence. You helped me sound out words in the sentences and words in the dictionary. I feel smarter now that I went to GE.”

VOLUNTEERS SPEAK

"I love children, and I like to volunteer my time. It makes me feel good about myself, like I'm doing something worthwhile. From doing this I've gained self-confidence and techniques to help my own children learn how to read."

"I really say improvement in my student from the beginning to the end of the program this year. I know he enjoyed coming to the program and likewise, I enjoyed working with him! I know that I made a difference with him and he made a difference with me!

"I found the experience to be very rewarding. I think that I'm actually a pretty good and patient teacher. I enjoyed the time that I spent with my student and loved his enthusiasm for learning. It is nice to know that I can help someone improve their reading skills."

"I want to let you know how much I enjoyed my first session – the kids were so charming and ready to learn! It was truly inspirational."

"I loved participating in Reading STARS. The kids were great and I feel it was a valuable use of my time."



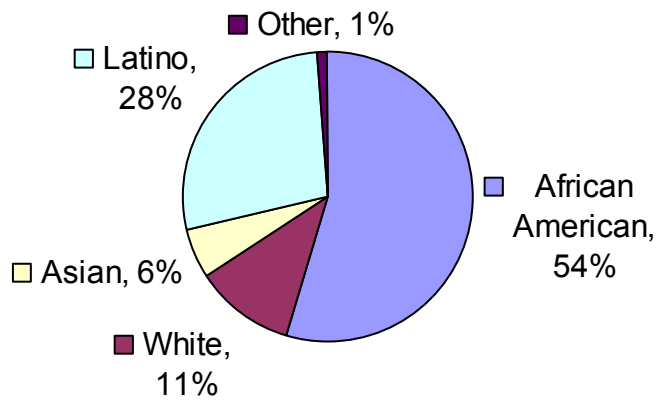
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At-a-glance

Current number of participating students	534
Number of participating schools	18
Number of sessions per week	26

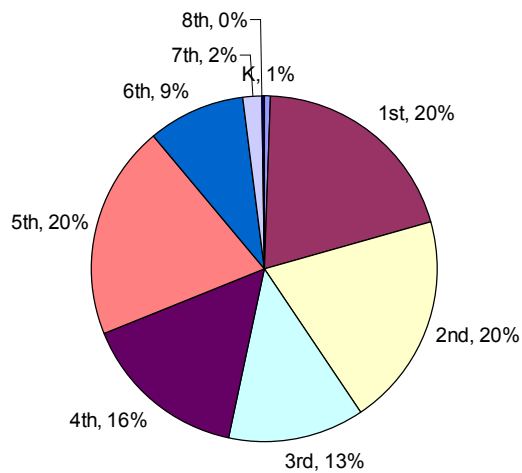
Demographic breakdown



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Grade Breakdown



Observations:

- Older children start the program further behind than do younger children.
- WRAT (grade level) tests do not tell the whole story: decoding tests often reveal specific areas needing remediation.
- One school, Cook-Wissahickon, is looking for Reading STARS to help 2nd graders advance far beyond grade level, giving those students a great advantage moving forward.
- Feltonville School assigns 8th graders, who complete Reading STARS, to coach younger children. This is changing attitudes and creating a sense of responsibility.
- Principals put great value on the one-on-one mentoring that occurs during coaching.
- Three schools had more than 50 students participating; Pepper Middle School, Duckrey School, and Sheppard School. Two of those schools send children to three different sites.



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Volunteer Site School

ACE	McCall
Advanta	Henry Houston
Aon	Sheridan
Avenue A Razorfish	Ludlow
Beneficial Savings Bank	Sharswood
Booz Allen	Bache Martin
BPG Properties	Duckrey
Campbells	Sharp
Centocor - Horsham	Cook Wissahickon
Centocor - Radnor	Pepper Middle School
Cornerstone Christian Academy	in-house
Executive Women International	Duckrey
Feltonville	in-house
FOX 29	Duckrey
Friendly Mortgage	Bache Martin
GE	Decatur
GE TFS	Cook Wissahickon
Grosvenors	John Welsh
Independence Blue Cross	Sheppard
Independence Charter School	in-house
Morgan Lewis & Bockius	Duckrey
PECO	John Jenks
Philadelphia Housing Authority	John Welsh
Prudential Fox & Roach	FX McGraw
SAP	Pepper Middle School
USL	Pepper Middle School
Verizon	Ludlow

Sponsors

ACE Group	Campbell Soup
ARAMARK Charitable Fund	Greenfield Foundation
Comcast Foundation	Ludwick Foundation
GlaxoSmithKline	Morgan, Lewis & Bockius
Independence Blue Cross	Prudential Fox & Roach
PNC	BoozAllenHamilton
Lenfest Foundation	Boeing
Wachovia	Bank of America
Advanta	CIGNA