

FY2022 Buncombe County Tipping Point Grant Report

Organization Name:	Read to Succeed
Project Name:	Culturally-Responsive Community Libraries

Activities Accomplished	Annual Goal	Amount
Number of book nooks/free libraries assembled	5	5*
Number of culturally-responsive books purchased for each library	400	700
Qualitative feedback from community partners (students, families, staff, etc.) in the form of testimonials or short survey responses	N/A	In narrative

Expenses (please list all grant related expenses)	Amount Spent
Culturally-responsive books for students PreK through elementary school	\$ 4,000.00
Supplies for free community libraries and classroom book nooks (shelving, carpets, bean bags,	\$ 1,000.00

TOTAL: \$ 5,000

Overall project updates:	<p>With Buncombe County approval, Read to Succeed pivoted the original goal and work of the Tipping Point grant from recruiting and training UNCA student tutors to purchasing and distributing culturally-relevant children’s books featuring Black main characters and primarily written by Black authors.</p> <p>We worked with multiple community partners to identify prime locations for new free community libraries. At the Pisgah View Community Center, we worked with R2S Board Member and longtime community organizer Thomas Priester to build a mobile bookshelf and deliver 30+ PreK - Elementary children’s books for students in the summer and afterschool program to enjoy.</p> <p>At the Arthur R. Edington Center, we built three “book nooks” in the Kindergarten/1st, 2nd, and 3rd/4th-grade classroom. Book nooks included shelving, culturally-responsive children’s books, bean bags for students to read on, and area rugs.</p> <p>In partnership with The Hop Ice Cream, R2S built and stocked a little free library at The Hop West location. We included free family reading guides too. The Hop helped advertise the little free library and advocate for family reading at home.</p> <p>In May, R2S purchased and shared 250 Black children’s books with attendees of GrindFEST, a local festival that celebrates Black Business and entrepreneurship. In addition to handing out books and connecting with visiting families about their home libraries, we also gave out family reading guides, bookmarks, and fiction/nonfiction comprehension resources.</p> <p>In May, R2S also purchased and distributed 75+ signed copies of nonfiction biographies (geared towards elementary students) written by Asheville native, Ms. Jp Miller. 24 signed copies were shared with six 3rd and 4th-grade classrooms at Johnston Elementary School during an author visit/student assembly hosted by R2S. The rest</p>
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	<p>were shared with students attending afterschool at the Edington Center, Rock Hill Missionary Baptist Project Lighten Up, and the Shiloh Community Center.</p> <p>R2S maintains a go-to curated list of culturally-relevant and responsive children's books, which we have been able to share with organizations who train with us and community education partners.</p>
<p>Indicators of service quality: <i>(How well did we do it?)</i></p>	<p>Using Tipping Point grant funds plus additional books that were donated to R2S by individuals and/or local businesses (i.e., Barnes & Noble), we were able to give away over 700 culturally-responsive children's books.</p> <p>Per service quality, testimonial feedback from partners and families who received books was resoundingly positive. At GRINDFest, for example, we had several Black families approach the table which was covered in books featuring characters across the African diaspora, and exclaim that they had never seen anything like that growing up. They were thrilled for their children to have the opportunity to explore so many books with characters that looked like them.</p> <p>Afterschool and summer staff at the Arthur R. Edington Center have also shared their excitement and appreciation for the high-quality culturally-responsive reading materials that are now available to students who spend a significant amount of time there outside of school.</p> <p>We restocked the free community library at The Hop West three times, finding it practically empty each time, and staff there continuously mentioned that books fly off the shelves as families come in to get ice cream and take a book home to enjoy.</p>
<p>Result/Outcome: <i>(Is anyone better off)</i></p>	<p>We believe that our community as a whole is better off, as access to children's books featuring characters, cultures, and communities that Black students can respond and connect to has increased. As well, the libraries at Pisgah View Community Center and the Arthur R. Edington Center, both community strongholds that primarily engage and serve Black families, now have standing culturally-responsive reading materials that can be accessed and read by students throughout the school year and across the summer.</p>