

FY2024 Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant Report

Organization Name:	Read to Succeed	
Project Name:	Positive Experiences Around Reading (PEAR)	
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 1 (July 1, 2023 - September 30, 2023)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 2 (October 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 3 (January 1, 2024 - March 31, 2024)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 4 (April 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024)

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Please provide a brief summary (no more than 1500 characters). You may attach supplemental documents if needed.

Quarter 1	<p>R2S kicked off Q1 with incredible engagement across multiple family and community events and literacy enrichment activities.</p> <p>In July, we kicked off a new partnership with Asheville PEAK Academy, beginning with supplying 100+ culturally-responsive book bundles for students in the Read to Achieve summer camp. Two Black community members also joined students during the camp to lead read-alouds of Black children’s books, exploring vocabulary and comprehension questions together. In September, R2S and PEAK launched a library chaperone program where K-5 PEAK students visit the West Asheville Library accompanied by their teachers, R2S staff, and volunteers.</p> <p>R2S hosted and participated in more than 8 community/family events in Q1, distributing more than 700 books and engaging 400 families with literacy resources and activities. Events included read-alouds with Books Alive! at Chosen PODS summer camp, United 4 Youth Block Party, Edington Back to School Bash, Hillcrest Head Start Open House, Johnston Elementary Summer Institute, Youthful HAND end-of-summer celebration, and Claxton Ice Cream Social Family Night.</p>
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<p>Quarter 2</p>	<p>R2S distributed another 1,100+ children’s books in Q2, prioritizing Black main characters, authors, and illustrators. Books are shared with families in a variety of ways, including at on-site family reading and community events, through more than 625 Winter Break Book Bundles, and via school and community partners, incl. Claxton, Jones, Johnston, and Hall Fletcher Elementary schools; early childhood students at CWA, YWCA, and Community Action Opportunities’ Lonnie D. Burton, Hillcrest, Johnston, and Pisgah View Head Start Learning Centers; Asheville PEAK Academy, Youthful HAND in Hillcrest, Children First/Communities in Schools, Lucy S. Herring, and Chosen PODS After-School.</p> <p>R2S hosted & participated in 13 community/family events in Q2, reaching 800+ families and community members with literacy resources and activities. Featured guest reader and celebrated children’s book author Derrick Barnes engaged students with a visit to Asheville in December - more on that below! Three additional R2S guest readers from the Asheville community joined early childhood students 15 times in Q2, sharing books and literacy-centered extension activities.</p> <p>R2S staff continued to build out the revamped Resource Library located in the R2S office with now more than 2,000 literacy-based activities, worksheets, books, games, and more. R2S tutors and after-school reading instructors started meeting with students in late October and early November and access to the resource library is integral to their lesson planning.</p>
<p>Quarter 3</p>	<p>R2S distributed another 1,400+ books in Q3, prioritizing Black main characters, authors, and illustrators. Books were shared with families in a variety of ways, incl. at on-site family reading and community events engaging 400+ families and community members and through more than 520 Spring Break Book Bundles and family reading newsletters. Partners receiving resources and books incl. Claxton, Jones, Johnston, Lucy S. Herring, and Hall Fletcher Elementary schools; early childhood students at CWA, YWCA, and Community Action Opportunities’ Lonnie D. Burton, Hillcrest, Johnston, and Pisgah View Head Start Learning Centers; Asheville PEAK Academy, Youthful HAND in Hillcrest, Children First/Communities in Schools, Lucy S. Herring, and Chosen PODS After-School.</p> <p>R2S hosted & participated in 14 community/family events and workshops in Q3, reaching 340+ families and community members with literacy resources and activities. Featured guest reader and new children’s book author Dantavius Washington engaged students while visiting Asheville for Black Children’s Book Week (BCBW) in February - more on that below! R2S Storytime Specialist, Ms. Ann of Books Alive!, restarted read-alouds with early childhood students two times in March, sharing books and literacy-centered extension activities.</p> <p>R2S staff finished building out the revamped Resource Library located in the R2S office, which now has more than 3,000 literacy-based activities, worksheets, books, games, and more. R2S tutors and after-school reading instructors started back with students in January, and access to the resource library is integral to their lesson planning.</p>

Quarter 4	
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Progress toward annual goals

Measure	Annual Goal	Actual Results (Enter Data) Please only include new data for the specific quarter				Progress
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
# of culturally responsive books and family reading resources delivered	1000	700	1110	1450		3260
# of season Book Bundles distributed through community partnerships	200	150	670	488		1308
# of visits to school, after-school, and/or summer partners by Black children's book authors or guest readers	10	9	17	3		29
# of school/partner-based community or family reading events and workshops	10	8	13	14		35

Comments:

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Use of funds to date and any budget considerations

Spending Category	Starting	Total Spending (Enter Data)				Amount
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Personnel	\$ 8,000	\$ 3,090	\$ 4,910			\$ 0
Travel	\$ 800		\$ 169	\$ 573		\$ 58
Supplies/Materials	\$ 2,000	\$ 440	\$ 1,560			\$ 0
Meetings	\$ 2,000	\$ 414	\$ 564	\$ 902		\$ 120
Printing/Marketing	\$ 1,000	\$ 554	\$ 133	\$ 313		\$ (1)
Contracts/Vendors	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,526	\$ 2,000	\$ 474		\$ 0
Insurance and Bonds	\$ 1,000	\$ 368	\$ 67	\$ 522		\$ 43
Culturally Responsive Books	\$ 8,000	\$ 1,774	\$ 6,165	\$ 32		\$ 29
Total	\$ 26,800	\$ 8,165	\$ 15,569	\$ 2,816	\$ -	\$ 250

Comments:

FY2024 Q3 Strategic Partnership Grant Report

January 1 - March 31, 2024

Summary (1500 characters)

R2S distributed another 1,400+ books in Q3, prioritizing Black main characters, authors, and illustrators. Books were shared with families in a variety of ways, incl. at on-site family reading and community events engaging 400+ families and community members and through more than 520 Spring Break Book Bundles and family reading newsletters. Partners receiving resources and books incl. Claxton, Jones, Johnston, Lucy S. Herring, and Hall Fletcher Elementary schools; early childhood students at CWA, YWCA, and Community Action Opportunities' Lonnie D. Burton, Hillcrest, Johnston, and Pisgah View Head Start Learning Centers; Asheville PEAK Academy, Youthful HAND in Hillcrest, Children First/Communities in Schools, Lucy S. Herring, and Chosen PODS After-School.

R2S hosted & participated in 14 community/family events and workshops in Q3, reaching 340+ families and community members with literacy resources and activities. Featured guest reader and new children's book author Dantavius Washington engaged students while visiting Asheville for Black Children's Book Week (BCBW) in February - more on that below! R2S Storytime Specialist, Ms. Ann of Books Alive!, restarted read-alouds with early childhood students two times in March, sharing books and literacy-centered extension activities.

R2S staff finished building out the revamped Resource Library located in the R2S office, which now has more than 3,000 literacy-based activities, worksheets, books, games, and more. R2S tutors and after-school reading instructors started back with students in January, and access to the resource library is integral to their lesson planning.

In-Depth Narrative

Book Distribution & Resource Library

R2S distributed another 1,400+ books in Q3, prioritizing Black main characters, authors, and illustrators. Books are shared with families in a variety of ways, including at on-site family reading and community events, through Spring Break Book Bundles, and via community partners.

Additional resources distributed with books include Developmental Milestones for Children 0-5 (translated into Spanish with the help of a local Head Start parent), comprehension guides (general version *and* versions customized to a bundle-specific book), a directory of free reading apps, and more.

More than 520 Spring Break Bundles went out to students in March involved in R2S programming at Claxton, Jones, Johnston, and Hall Fletcher Elementary schools as well as early childhood students at CWA, YWCA, and Community Action Opportunities' Lonnie D. Burton, Hillcrest, Johnston, and Pisgah View Head Start Learning Centers. We also distributed Book Bundles to students at Asheville PEAK Academy, Youthful HAND in Hillcrest, Children First/Communities in Schools, Lucy S. Herring, and Chosen PODS After-School.

Spring Break Book Bundles featured two selected children's books with custom reading guides: *B Is for Breathe* by Dr. Melissa Boyd (for PreK families) and *Like Lava In My Veins* by Derrick Barnes (for elementary families). Both of these books focused on social-emotional development and support. Bundles also included the R2S April family reading newsletter with age-appropriate literacy activities, a small toy, and pencil or crayons. A middle school youth group from Greenville, SC helped pack a third of the book bundles on their mission trip to Asheville in March.

R2S also distributed multiple evidence-based literacy resources to partners through training events and workshops for Christine W. Avery Learning Center, My Daddy Taught Me That, Claxton Elementary's Lunch & Learn, and Isaac Dickson's Literacy Night.

R2S staff finished the build-out of the revamped Resource Library located in the R2S office with now more than 3,000 literacy-based activities, worksheets, books, games, and more. We are utilizing inventory management software to catalog each item with a photo, description, and literacy skill - for example, materials focusing on vowel team practice are all categorized and cataloged together, making them easy to find and check out for lessons with students. R2S tutors and after-school reading instructors access the resource library for lesson planning, PBIS, and small group preparation.

Guest Readers

R2S formally welcomed Ms. Ann of Books Alive! to the team as a part-time Storytime Specialist.

R2S restarted the weekly guest reader program in March of Q3 in partnership with CAO. Ms. Ann and R2S' new Elementary Literacy Director visited with 3 - 5 year old students at two CAO centers in March to lead songs, interactive read-alouds, and extension activities. Center locations for March visits include two of CAO's most racially diverse - Hillcrest and Pisgah View Apartments.

R2S read-alouds typically involve a guest reader reading 1 or 2 books aloud and engaging students in rich discussion of the themes, illustrations, and vocabulary in the book. Then the guest reader works with staff to lead students through a related extension activity or craft to "extend" their experience with the text. For example, on one visit to the PVA Head Start Center, Ms. Ann of Books Alive! read "Green Eggs and Ham" with students. She then led them through

a craft where students got to be their own illustrators! Each student was given a page to draw their own picture and tell their own Dr. Suess-inspired story (while practicing listening, speaking, and fine motor skills!).

Featured guest reader and new children's book author Dantavius Washington shared his book *What Should I Be When I Grow Up* with students and families in Pisgah View Apartments for Black Children's Book Week - more on that below!

Community & Family Reading Events

R2S hosted and participated in 14 community/family events and literacy workshops in Q3, reaching 400+ families and community members with literacy resources and activities plus more information about getting involved with tutoring.

The Sunstone Project donated more than 750 new diverse and inclusive children's and YA books in January and March, which we used in combination with books we purchased to distribute to families at events. R2S intentionally sourced 30+ books by Jason Reynolds through Noir Collective, a local Black-owned boutique and bookstore on The Block, a historically-Black neighborhood in downtown Asheville, while sourcing additional Jason Reynolds books from Black-owned Brave + Kind Bookshop.

Events included:

1. **UNCA Community Organization Fair** - in January, R2S participated in the Community Organization Fair at UNCA. Co-ED Ashley, Community Engagement Coordinator, Toshia, and AmeriCorps member Deniese, shared more information about the work of Read 2 Succeed and how college students (and teachers-to-be) can get involved in supporting local students.
2. **Buncombe Partnership for Children (BPFC) PreK Drop-In** - R2S spent time at the West Asheville Library event with BPFC to speak about resources around kindergarten readiness and opportunities for families to engage with literacy. We also distributed picture and board books in English and Spanish to children to add to their home libraries!
3. **Asheville City Schools (ACS) Magnet Night** - R2S team members shared new books and literacy resources, and spoke with families (primarily parents and caregivers with rising kindergartners) attending Asheville City Schools about early reading, best practices for selecting books, tips for reading at home, free reading apps, and more.
4. **Claxton Elementary Lunch & Learn** - in February, R2S Co-ED Ashley Allen and Elementary Literacy Director Lindsey Sterrett shared a presentation with 30 families on best practices for reading at home with your student(s). Caretakers left with comprehension guides and new culturally diverse books.
5. **Jason Reynolds at Asheville City Schools Foundation (ACSF)** - R2S purchased and distributed more than 100 Black children's and YA books at the ACSF event where

critically-acclaimed author Jason Reynolds spoke to hundreds of attendees. In addition to sharing books with families for free, R2S also engaged in discussions with partners and families around banned books, Black-centered literature, and ways to support literacy locally.

6. **Asheville Celebrates Black Children's Book Week (BCBW)** - new children's book author Dantavius Washington joined R2S from Birmingham, AL to share his book *What Should I Be When I Grow Up* with families at Pisgah View Apartments during BCBW. In addition to read-alouds and conversation with the author, families also enjoyed reading-based games like a Black Book Ring Toss, bookmark decorating, music, prizes, Black History Bingo, face painting, popcorn, and free dinner from Blessed Soul Food. Volunteers from R2S, UNCA Athletics, and Marvelous Math Club pitched in. This inaugural event will become a staple for R2S during future BCBW each year!
7. **Black Family Wellness Expo** - R2S headed to the Linwood Crump Center in Shiloh to support the annual Black Family Wellness Expo put on by LINKS. We shared free new diverse children's books with attending families along with a family reading guides and our free reading apps directory document. We also had a bookmark coloring station and a soccer matching letter game with prizes.
8. **Johnston Multicultural Night** - more than 70 families came together for Johnston Elementary's annual Multicultural Night where R2S distributed free culturally-responsive books and spoke and engaged with families and children. Volunteer Coordinator Mary Lawson joined longtime R2S Johnston tutors Linda and Sue for this event!
9. **Isaac Dickson Literacy Night** - Lindsey and Ashley gave a thirty-minute presentation to parents and caregivers on reading at home with students of all ages. The presentation provided practical strategies for creating a routine, rewarding effort, honoring growth, and keeping reading fun and motivating! Following the presentation Lindsey and Ashley answered questions and gave out books and comprehension guides.
10. **CWA Training** - 22 early childhood educators at CWA joined R2S for an interactive training Amerihealth Caritas location all about teaching phonological awareness in PreK. Allen conducted a presentation for curriculum support with Tonisha Chislom, CWA's curriculum specialist. Allen presented on the importance of phonological awareness in reading development, along with practical ways instructors can build this skill into their day.
11. **MDTMT Training** - Co-ED Ashley Allen and R2S Community Engagement Coordinator Toshia Sitton brought a 4-hour training to 3 Hunt Place with 10 staff from My Daddy Taught Me That (MDTMT). Participants learned more background on the science of reading and the Big 5 of literacy instruction as well as the curricula used around literacy in ACS and BCS. Presenters introduced best practices for supporting elementary students with reading, homework help, and decoding in reading, along with practical tools for structuring after school and keeping reading fun.
12. **R2S New Tutor Training** - 40 community members joined R2S for "new tutor training" in January - attendees included new volunteer reading tutors, contracted R2S reading instructors, R2S board members, representatives from Open Doors Asheville, and young adults from the Hood Huggers program. Training occurred 1.5 - 2 hours/session, once a week for three weeks on Zoom.

- 13. Johnston 1st Grade literacy night** - R2S volunteers who support students through tutoring were invited to join Johnston Elementary first graders while they shared writing and animations they created in connection to their Wit and Wisdom modules. Volunteers supported students whose adults and guardians could not be there so that first graders had someone to read their story to.
- 14. Readers Theatre at Claxton Elementary** - a trained R2S tutor worked with five third-grade students during Q3 at Claxton Elementary to put on multiple productions of a Reader's Theatre program for first-grade classes at their school. Reader's Theatre is a unique and powerful way for students to build vocabulary, strengthen reading fluency, and grow their comprehension skills - plus it's super fun!