



Message from the President and Founder

Dear Friends,

Good news! In 2012-13, we opened a second program site at PS 36 in West Harlem and began bringing our early literacy programs to more young children who are at risk of reading failure. At the same time, we continued expanding our programs at our first program site in the Theresa Towers in Central Harlem.

The Reading Team at PS 36 features a School-Day Program and an After-School Program. In our first year, we served 250 four- to seven-year-old children in these programs. We will add a grade level annually to our After-School Program through 2016, when we will serve a total of about 350 four- to eleven-year-old children a year at this site.

I am deeply grateful to those who helped to make our programs at PS 36 possible. A special thanks goes to our Board, who supported the research for the site and helped to fund its launch. The West Harlem Development Corporation seeded crucial start-up funds. PS 36 Principal Heather JnBaptist and Assistant Principal Myra Green Toulon welcomed the Reading Team to their school and supported us at every turn –from preparing classrooms to designing schedules that would accommodate the teachers' and children's busy agenda.

The Harlem community's enthusiasm for our expansion reflects a clear understanding that a child's ability to reach his full potential begins with reading. Early literacy development catalyzes academic achievement, reduces poverty, and improves lives. It requires involvement of the whole Reading Team community – parents, educators, civic leaders, and volunteers. Thanks to them and our remarkable supporters, we will be able to deliver early literacy services that make a positive difference to more and more children each year.



Entrance to our main program site.

Our 2013 Annual Report has exciting news of both our PS 36 and Theresa Towers sites. It reflects on our evolution, celebrates our partners, and describes the research-backed gains Reading Team children make in reading and writing proficiency – gains that are transforming their life trajectories and making the world a better place for us all. Parent David McNeal's letter on page 13 is a case in point.

Let's keep the progress going.

Maureen Rover
President

Twelve Years of Growth

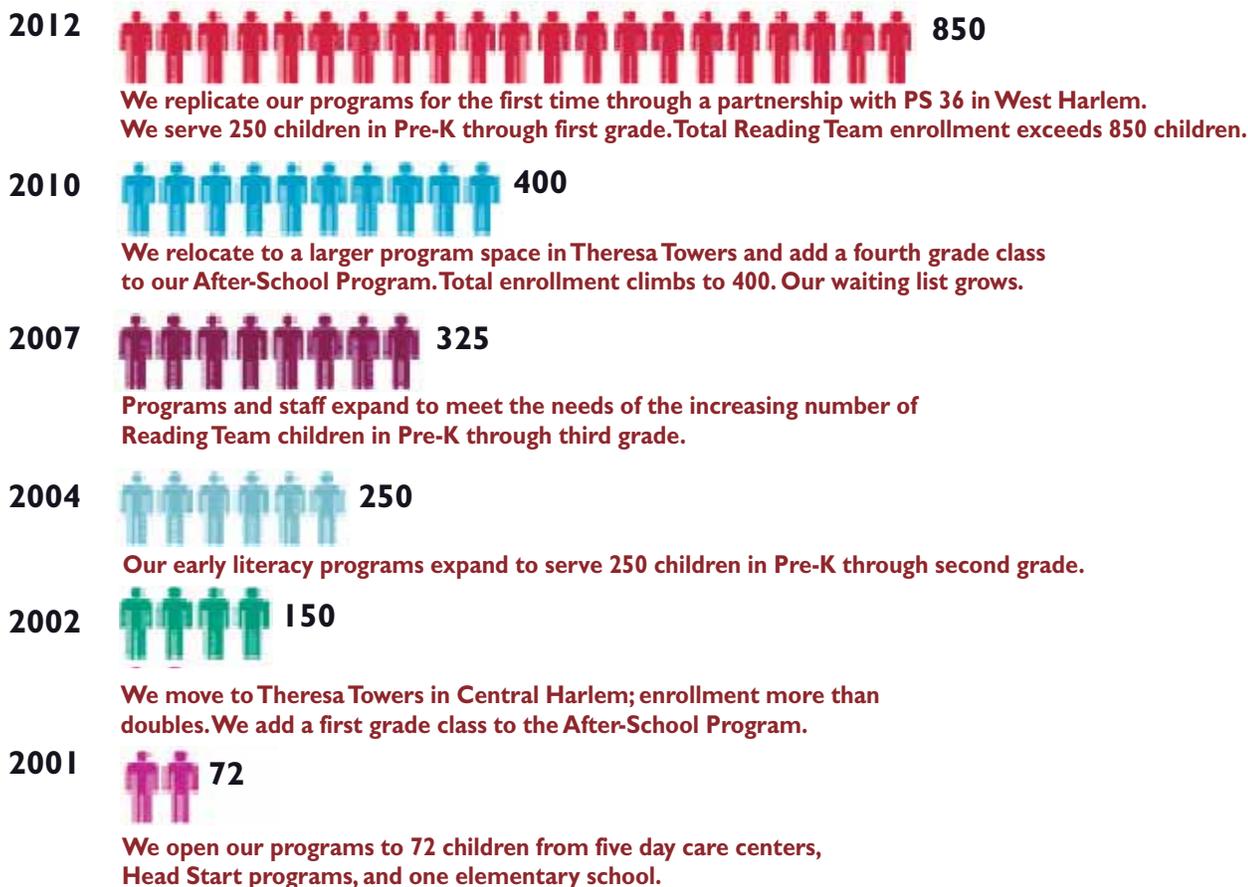


With a dozen years of success under our belt, we are expanding our proven early literacy programs to help address the alarming number of children in New York City who are at high risk of reading failure. The replication of our programs at PS 36 marks a major step in this direction.

Maureen Rover founded the Reading Team in 2001 to reduce the shocking incidence of reading failure among children in the City's public schools because she knew that reading is the gateway to success in school and in life beyond it.

Since opening our doors in 2001, we have grown steadily – along with research-based evidence that confirms our programs' benefits. Our uncompromising focus on ensuring that young children have a positive and successful introduction to reading instruction and to themselves as learners has helped more than 4,000 youngsters achieve academic success.

More young children in Harlem have entered kindergarten ready to learn. Larger numbers of struggling elementary students have become confident and enthusiastic readers and well-behaved pupils. Reading Team children are rising rather than sinking in the system.



The Reading Team Launches Its Programs at



Small Reading Groups help children master literacy fundamentals, hone interpersonal skills, and experience themselves as competent learners.



With over 12 years of success behind us, we opened a second program site in 2012-13 in Harlem. In its inaugural year, the Reading Team at PS 36, located at 123 Morningside Drive, delivered 1,000 hours of early literacy programming to 250 PS 36 pre-kindergartners through first graders.

This second program location has made it possible for us to deliver highly-effective early literacy help to many more children in Harlem who are at high risk of reading failure.

“Since our opening in 2001, demand for our services has exploded, which is why we began planning this expansion a few years ago,” said Board Vice President Dr. Bertrand Brown. “The anemic economy challenged us. Supporters rigorously scrutinized results and tightened their spending. Thankfully, when it comes to results, the Reading Team excels. No other program that we know of has achieved literacy gains similar to ours.”

As for spending, the invitation by PS 36 to host the Reading Team program on its campus cinched the deal. Our supporters were happy because housing our programs in a public school site represents a significant cost advantage and allows more of our resources to be applied directly to the delivery of instructional services.

Our PS 36 programming employs the early literacy instructional model that has proven so effective at our flagship site. At PS 36, we implement it in our School-Day Program for children in pre-kindergarten through first grade and in our After-School Program for children in kindergarten and above.

In 2012-13, the After-School Program at PS 36 served 40 kindergartners and first graders. It will grow by 20-25 children each year as enrollment expands upwards one grade per year. By the fall of 2016, we will serve 100-125 children in grades K-5 in this program at PS 36.

THE MARGARET DOUGLAS SCHOOL - P.S. 36



The *Waterford Early Reading Program*, an in-kind contribution of the Waterford Institute, enables Reading Team children to overcome many barriers to successful literacy development.

As in our flagship location, our PS 36 program features Parent Conversations that offer families constructive ideas for supporting their children's academic success. We also provide a Book Distribution Program, so that all Reading

Team children can select books and educational materials to keep and enjoy at home.

All participating children took the Test of Early Reading Ability-3rd Edition (TERA-3) upon program entry in the fall and again at the end of the school year. The children's gains were outstanding and consistent with historical Reading Team results.

From the creation of the Reading Team at PS 36 emerged a new collaboration with the Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH). The Literacy Through Dance program enlivens the children's appreciation of classic works of children's literature through dance. It was created and piloted by the Reading Team and DTH in 2013.

The Reading Team at PS 36 represents an important partnership with the school – a relationship that will grow in the years ahead. The children, their parents, teachers, and administrators are thrilled with what we accomplished in our inaugural year. Other area schools have expressed interest in hosting our programs in their facilities.

School-Day Program at PS 36

Children in pre-kindergarten through first grade attend twice a week to take part in:

- 30 minutes of Small Reading Group activities
- 30 minutes of the computer-based *Waterford Early Reading Program*
- 30 minutes of Enrichment Activities

After-School Program at PS 36

Children in kindergarten through fifth grade (by 2016) attend five days a week to receive:

- 60 minutes of homework help, a hot meal, and relaxation time
- 40 minutes of Small Reading Group activities
- 40 minutes of the *Waterford Early Reading Program*
- 40 minutes of Enrichment Activities

Our Three Core Programs Include:



Twice a week, 450 preschoolers come to our main site and engage in 90 minutes of conversation, letter and word games, computer activities, storybook reading, and singing and dancing.



Literacy is the basis of learning and essential for participation in our complex world. For students, it provides access to the whole curriculum. Yet untold numbers of children in New York City lack the ability to read and write, posing challenges for succeeding in school and beyond – reading an employment ad, following medical directions, or understanding a voting ballot.

The Reading Team's early intervention programs immerse children who are at high risk of reading failure in a rich and engaging learning environment before a lack of success in

school dampens their natural enthusiasm for learning. Emphasis on the key building blocks of literacy success at an early age prepares preschoolers for kindergarten and struggling children above age five to develop skills, habits, behaviors, and support systems that strengthen their ability to learn.

Our three core programs serve a total of 850 four- to eleven-year-old children, their parents, and their teachers at two locations in Harlem: Theresa Towers on Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard and PS 36 on Morningside Drive.

Preschool, School-Day, and After-School

Our **Preschool Program** serves four- and five-year-old children from 10 day care centers and Head Start programs at our main program site, equipping them with important early literacy skills and concepts needed for success in elementary school.

Our **School-Day Program** at PS 36 serves four- to eight-year-old children, enabling them to develop key literacy skills and concepts, so that they can thrive in their regular classroom instructional program.

Our **After-School Program** serves children in kindergarten through fifth grade from 18 elementary schools at our main program site and children in kindergarten through second grade at PS 36. Teachers refer children to us whose obstacles to learning and language development hamper their ability to succeed in school.

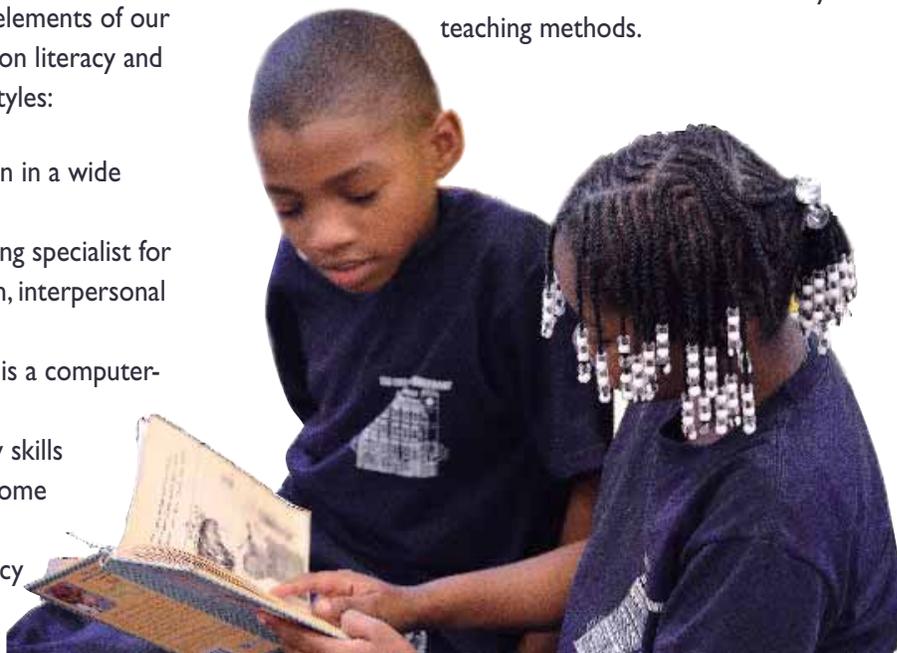
Instructional Model

Each day, Literacy Mentors in all three programs guide children in their care through four central elements of our instructional model, which is concentrated on literacy and responsive to each child's unique learning styles:

- **Small Reading Groups** engage children in a wide range of literacy-nurturing activities.
- **One-on-One Instruction** with a reading specialist for struggling students builds academic strength, interpersonal skills, trust, and self-confidence.
- **Waterford Early Reading Program** is a computer-based learning program that enables young children to develop important early literacy skills and concepts as they learn to read and become competent users of a critical learning tool.
- **Enrichment Activities** reinforce literacy lessons through story enactments, imagination journeys, poetry recitations, theater games, music, and dance.

Five other program elements round out our instructional model. Its combination of literacy building blocks and multi-dimensional approach tackles the individual, social, and environmental obstacles to literacy success and academic achievement:

- **Mindfulness Exercises** give our after-school children a way to calm themselves when unsettled, so that they can conquer behavioral blocks to success in school and in life.
- **Book Distribution Program** enables our children to choose books and educational materials to keep, so that they enjoy learning activities outside of school.
- **Parent Support Programs** include an Elementary School Advisory Program and Parent Conversations that advise parents about school choices and support strategies.
- **Preschool Teacher Training** gives participating day care and Head Start teachers the skills and resources to support their children's emergent literacy.
- **Professional Development** ensures all Reading Team instructional staff are versed in the best literacy teaching methods.



Maliq and Amanda, second graders in our After-School Program, read together.

Our Instructional Programs Transform the



Reading Team children experience the joys of an academic culture that takes them and their ideas seriously. In all grades, students are challenged to listen carefully, examine ideas and issues from a variety of perspectives, and solve problems using multiple approaches. Problem-solving skills and the expression of ideas, along with the acquisition and exploration of a strong language base, are central focuses of our programs.

At every level, we challenge the children to form hypotheses about what they read and to find textual evidence to support them. With a low student-to-mentor ratio and regular small group interactions, our Literacy Mentors are attentive to each child's aspirations, learning style, and pace of development. As role models of commitment and achievement, they inspire students to go beyond their perceived limits and to internalize the connections between good work habits and success.

We integrate materials and use primary sources from social studies, history, and science to help children deepen their understanding of concepts and expand learning processes. Public speaking enables our children to develop confidence of expression through the recitation of poems and essays. Third, fourth, and fifth graders use laptop computers to conduct internet research and to write fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and research reports.

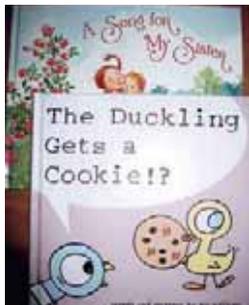
Note: Following is a summary of the literacy skills and concepts children master at each grade level. Lesson complexity progresses each year in comprehension, grammar, oral communication, reading, research, study skills, vocabulary, and writing.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN



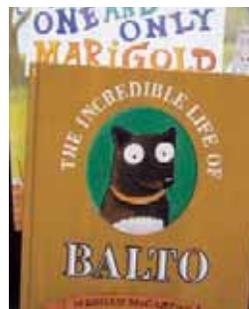
Focus: Strong foundation in key phonemic and language skills and concepts. Songs and games teach children letter names, sounds, and formation. Puppets and props support storybook and informational text readings. Dialogic reading helps the children construct meaning, build vocabulary and narrative skills, and build oral complexity. Book handling and print concepts are introduced.

KINDERGARTEN



Focus: Phonics, reading, and writing. Skills and concepts are developed through multidisciplinary activities, reading aloud from various genres; oral expression through discussion and presentation; work on letter names, letter sounds, and letter formation; and self-expression through drawing and writing. Children explore book and print concepts and are introduced to new ideas and vocabulary.

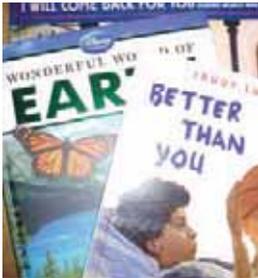
GRADE I



Focus: Independence and confidence in reading and writing for knowledge and pleasure. Lessons center on phonics, comprehension strategies, oral expression, analytical skills, handwriting, vocabulary, spelling, and editing of grammar and punctuation. Fiction and nonfiction teach story structure, sequencing of events, and character development. Children draft, edit, revise, and publish their writings.

Life Trajectories of the Children We Serve

GRADE 2



Focus: Consolidation of skills for building confidence and a sense of achievement. Children read various genres and authors as they focus on oral expression, comprehension, and analytical skills. Composition and creative writing activities teach the writing process and creative expression. Revision and editing teach spelling, punctuation, grammar, and handwriting.

GRADE 3



Focus: Abstract thinking. Children focus on analyzing and interpreting literature and informational texts. Reading aloud and silently, children learn to make inferences and predictions, draw conclusions, identify main ideas, and reflect on the author's

choices and uses of language. Lessons concentrate on the creative and formal aspects of writing, including handwriting, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

GRADE 4



Focus: Growing independence as readers and learners. Close reading and discussion of novels, short stories, and essays enhance critical and creative thinking as

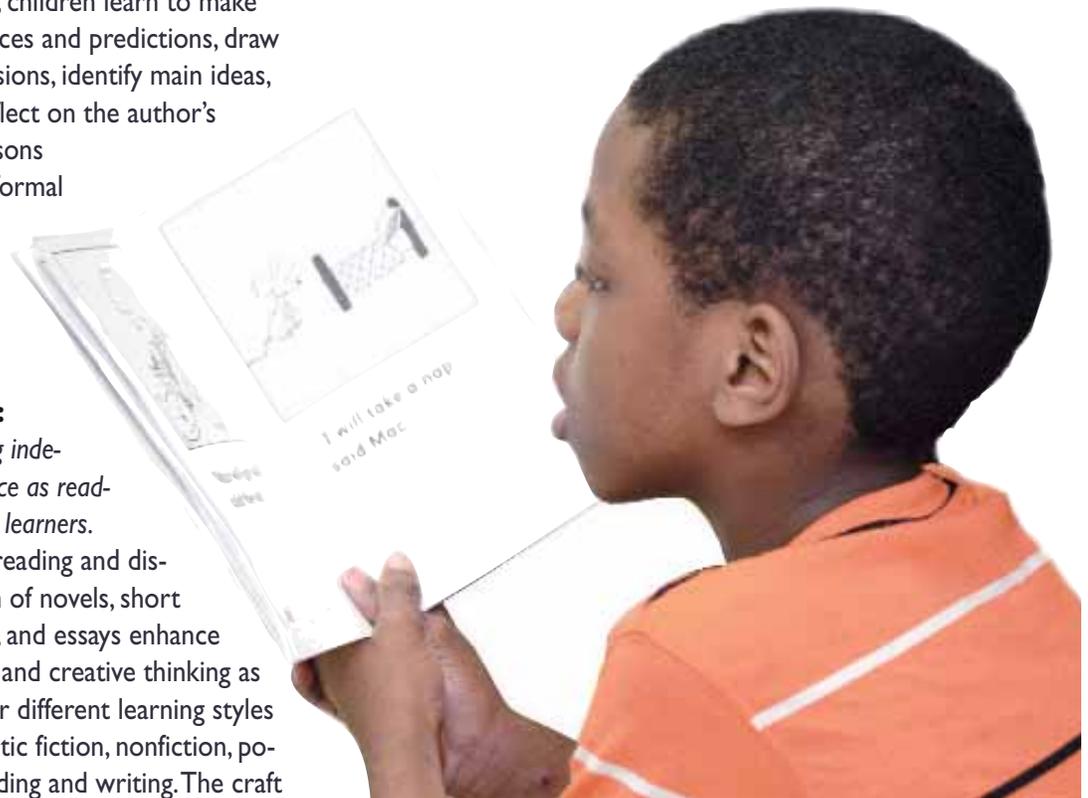
collaboration develops respect for different learning styles and opinions. Historical and realistic fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and articles are used for reading and writing. The craft of writing is explored through responses to literature, creative writing, composition of stories, and expository text.

GRADE 5



Focus: Growth of critical reading and writing skills through a study of myriad literary forms. With an emphasis on identifying themes and researching background material, children gain a greater understanding of the world. They learn the elements of strong writing through imitative and

creative work that enriches analytic paragraph and short essay writing. Children practice creative and expository writing, close reading of complex material, outlining, and note taking.



Jysean Williams reads aloud to his fellow first graders at PS 36.

Challenge and Promise of the Common Core



Fourth-grader Amara conducts research online.



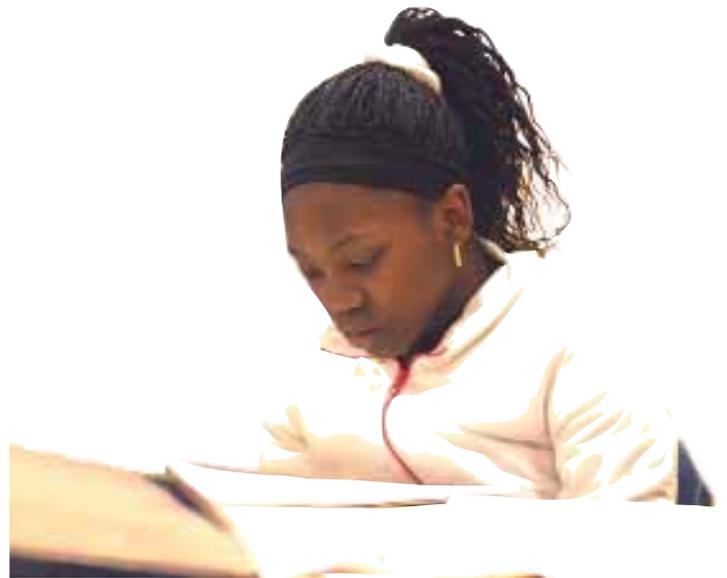
Forty-five states, including New York, have adopted the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). The standards articulate, grade by grade, skills and concepts that students should master as they go from kindergarten through high school. They emphasize critical thinking and problem solving skills that are necessary to improve the college and career readiness of American students.

For more than 12 years, the Reading Team has relied on rigorous benchmark standards in our successful learning strategies. At every level, problem solving skills and the expression of ideas, along with the acquisition and exploration of a strong language base, are central Reading Team activities. Our children have consistently outperformed the children in their own schools, their own geographic districts, and students citywide on the New York State English Language Arts Exam (NYS ELA). In 2013, New York upgraded the NYS ELA to align with the more rigorous CCLS.

Reading Team children met the challenge. Seventy-three percent of them passed the exam, while only 13.4 percent of children in Harlem and 26.4 percent of children citywide did so.

We are pleased with our children's first-year performance on the new exam. To ensure that Reading Team children continue to meet the high expectations of the CCLS, we have upgraded our instructional program by increasing our emphasis on reading and writing informational texts, text complexity, text-based responses, and the use of argument in writing.

Reading Team children are stepping up to the challenge and promise of the CCLS. We are confident they will continue to meet the challenges of their schooling and succeed in a complex world.



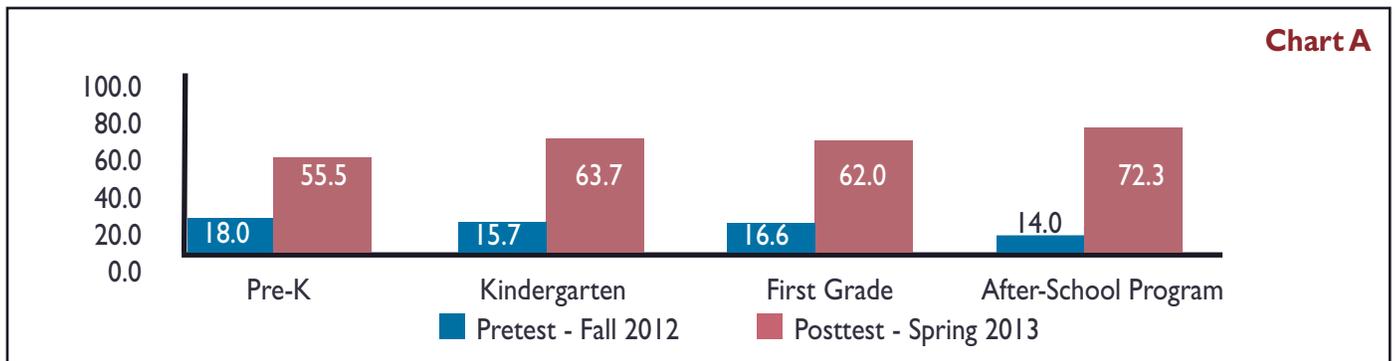
CCLS establish a staircase of reading complexity, so that students like fifth-grader Alysha will be prepared for the demands of college and a career.

The Reading Team Produces Extraordinary Results

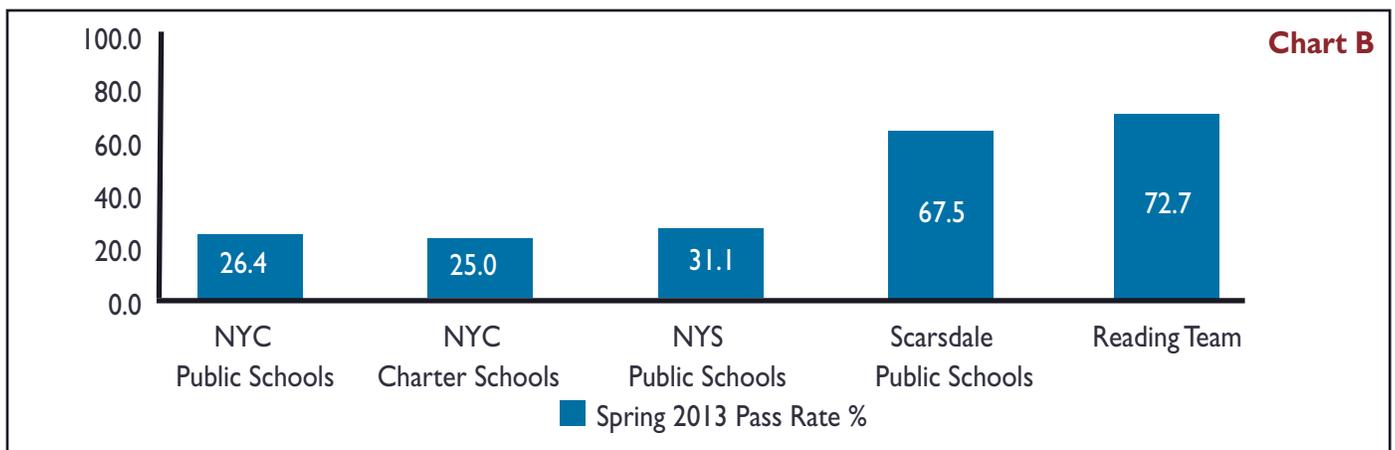


In 2012-13, the Reading Team at PS 36 served 250 children in pre-kindergarten through first grade in our School-Day Program and 40 of the lowest-performing kindergartners and first graders in our After-School Program. All children who participated in one of our programs at PS 36 were given the Test of Early Reading Ability-3rd Edition (TERA-3) upon program entry in September and at the end of the school year in June. Results in **Chart A** are outstanding and consistent with historical Reading Team achievement.

In 2013, 72.7 percent of Reading Team children passed the new and more rigorous New York State English Language Arts Exam (NYS ELA), a test that is administered annually to all third through eighth graders in New York State public schools. With the new test, we see that there is room for improvement, and we have taken steps to ensure that all our children are able to meet the challenges of their schooling. **Chart B** depicts the Reading Team children's pass rate compared to those of other children in New York City and New York State.



The Reading Team at PS 36 2012-13 - National Percentile Rankings at Pretest and Posttest



2013 New York State English Language Arts Exam - Grades 3-5 Pass Rate

Our Partners: It Takes a Community



The Reading Team has built key partnerships in the Harlem community to provide children the support they need to succeed. Children from 10 neighborhood day care centers and Head Start programs participate in our Preschool Program. Teachers at 19 elementary schools (public, charter, private, and parochial) refer children to our After-School Program.



The Reading Team at PS 36 gave rise to a joint project with the Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH): Literacy Through Dance. Created and piloted by the Reading Team and DTH in 2013, the curriculum enhances students' understanding of timeless works of children's literature through movement.

We have built important links with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project LLC and send our Literacy Mentors there to participate in this well-regarded training program. The project focuses equally on reading and writing professional development for educators. It was created to extend and deepen support to schools throughout the nation and in other nations.



Each year, our Literacy Mentors attend Reading Reform Foundation (RRF) of New York's graduate-level course for teachers. The course provides

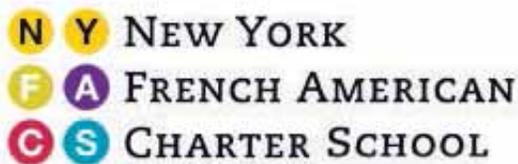
instruction in a multisensory Orton-Gillingham-based approach to teaching reading, handwriting, spelling, and comprehension.



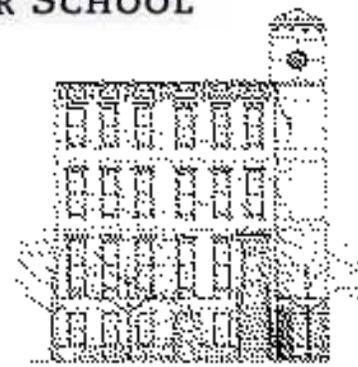
The Reading Team also works with the Harlem Educational Activities Fund (HEAF) as a feeder to the HEAF college-preparatory program. We guide the children in our program to attend HEAF after they graduate from the Reading Team in fifth grade.



In May, we joined forces with Yolk NYC and held a literary fund-raising event. Yolk provides exposure for promising artists while raising awareness and resources for charitable and educational organizations and projects, specifically those dedicated to furthering arts education and creative opportunities for underprivileged youth.

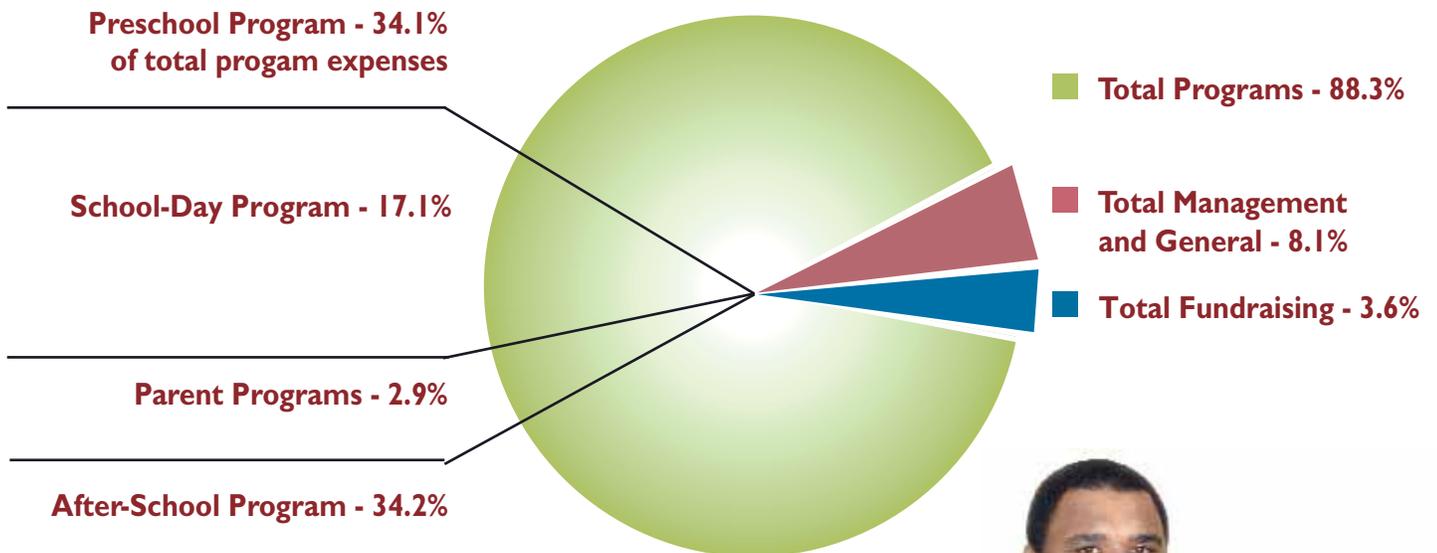


East Harlem Block Nursery



The Children's Storefront

Reading Team Expenses for 2012-13



Letter from a Reading Team Parent

Dear Reading Team,

Rarely have I witnessed educators who pour such skill and love into the development of children. I am extremely grateful to the Reading Team for its exceptional job, reinforcing the value of education in the life of my daughter Ashlie.

I've always understood how critical my position is to my child's success—not just as her father but as an extension of the formal educational process. I'm her first teacher, her first role model. Thanks truly go to the Reading Team for making my role easier.

When Ashlie struggled with concepts, the Reading Team guided her young mind through the confusion. She was able to draw inspiration from the helping hands and values instilled by your wonderful Literacy Mentors and staff.

Discipline, focus, and values were established at home, displayed in school, and reinforced and elevated at the Reading Team. Because of this, she has become a curious sixth grader who expresses ideas confidently and is excelling at all levels.

Thank you all. May the success of the Reading Team reach far across this country, and may it be a beacon of hope for many generations to come. I love you all. Ashlie loves you all. We miss each and every one of you.

David McNeal, father of Ashlie



Ashlie attended the Reading Team's After-School Program. She is now a seventh grader at Children's Village Academy and is enrolled in the Harlem Educational Activities Fund. She sings in her church's youth choir, serves as a girl scout, and takes vocal classes.

The Reading Team Board of Directors

Maureen Rover, Chairman and President
Founder, The Reading Team, Inc.

Stephen Meringoff, Vice Chairman
Principal, Meringoff Properties

Meghan Magyar, Secretary
Homemaker

Marc Weisman, Treasurer
President, Cheltenham Enterprises, Inc.

Bertrand Brown, Vice President
Superintendent Emeritus, New York City Public Schools
Community School District 5

Evelyn J. Halpert
Former Head of School, The Brearley School

Mia Hamomoto
Assistant Teacher, St. Bernard's School

Marianne Johnson
Managing Director, First Republic Bank

Eileen Judell
Learning Specialist, Retired, The Chapin School

Helen B. Pennoyer
Social Worker

Margery Riker
Producer, CBS News

Elizabeth Ryan
Community Volunteer

Lynn Troyka
Author

The Reading Team Council of Advisors

Christine Beshar
Senior Counsel, Cravath Swaine & Moore, LLP

Anne E. Burns
Director, Lower School, The Hackley School

Ashley Garrett
Voice Actor

Betsy Gotbaum
Former New York City Public Advocate

Blaise Halluite
Entrepreneur

Ruth W. Messinger
Former Manhattan Borough President

Voza Rivers
Chairman, Harlem Arts Alliance

Valorie Williams
Educator



PS 36 children enact a scene from a favorite story during Enrichment Activities.

Your Support Makes Literacy Happen

The Reading Team is dedicated to enabling young children who are at high risk of reading failure to become strong and enthusiastic readers, writers, listeners, and speakers and to develop the skills, habits, and behaviors that will support their success in school and in life.

For more than a dozen years the Reading Team has provided focused innovative literacy programs that have helped over 4,000 disadvantaged children in Harlem achieve substantial and lasting academic success.

Give to the Reading Team today and support the children who are the next generation of civic and business leaders, chemists, educators, engineers, health care workers, manufacturers, scientists, writers, moms and dads, neighbors, friends, and more.

Donate online at www.readingteam.org or send a check to the Reading Team, 2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard, Suite 100, New York, NY 10027. For more information about supporting us, contact David Marion at david@readingteam.org or 212-280-2042. Thank you for your support!

The Reading Team Is Grateful for the Support of:

Achelis and Bodman Foundations, Adeona Foundation, Adventium, Alliance Bernstein Foundation Fund, Apple Hill Fund, Lily Auchincloss Foundation, BJ's Charitable Foundation, Bank of America, Barker Welfare Foundation, Barnett Fund, Bay and Paul Foundations, Bendit Family Foundation, Robert Bowne Foundation, Build-A-Bear Workshop Foundation, Bulova Stetson Foundation, William C. Bullitt Foundation, Louis Calder Foundation, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, Kathy Chazen Family Charitable Trust, Colgate-Palmolive Company, Cranshaw Corporation, Credit Suisse, Cruise Industry Charitable Foundation, Frances and Edwin Cummings Memorial Fund, John P. and Constance A. Curran Charitable Foundation, Dana Foundation, Eleanor Naylor Dana Charitable Trust, Inner City Education Fund, NYC Council Manhattan Delegation NYC Council Member Inez Dickens, Jean and Louis Dreyfus Foundation, Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Dworman Family Foundation, Englewood Golf and Tennis Association, First Book, Frankfurt Furnit Klein & Selz, Get Together for Children Foundation, Glickenhau Foundation, Goldman Gives, Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, Russell Grinnell Memorial Fund, Graphic Systems Group, Stella and Charles Guttman Foundation, Hyde and Watson Foundation, Juice Pharma Worldwid, Lincoln Fund, Lisa Libraries, Shayna Loeffler Design, Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, Markle Foundation, Virginia Cretella Mars Foundation, S.T. Marx + Associates, Mattel Children's Foundation, May Family Foundation, Sue and Gene Mercy Foundation, Meringoff Family Foundation, Metzger-Price Fund, Miller Ellin & Co., LLP, NAMS Foundation, Daniel Neidich and Brooke Garber Foundation, New York Community Trust, Oxford University Press, Pearson Education, Pinkerton Foundation, Prep for Prep, Reading Is Fundamental, Rheinstrom Hill Community Foundation, Rhodebeck Charitable Trust, Richman Family Foundation, Rover Family Philanthropic Fund, Helena Rubinstein Foundation, Saint James' Church, SHG Planning, Edith Glick Shoolman Foundation for Children, Spingold Foundation, Stairway Fund, TD Bank, Target, Two West Foundation, US Airways Foundation, Verizon, Laura B. Vogler Foundation, Waterford Institute, Arthur K. Watson Charitable Trust, West Harlem Development Corporation, West Side Children's Fund, WLXT, Wolverine Foundation, Tiger Woods Foundation, NYS Assemblyman Keith Wright, York NYC



Photo credit: Kai Leong fromkkcamera@gmail.com

Design credit: Shayna Loeffler Shayna.Loeffler@Verizon.net

THE Reading Team

LITERACY FOR LIFE



The Reading Team, Inc.

2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard
Suite 100
New York, NY 10027

212-280-2042
readingteam.org
info@readingteam.org



2013 Annual Report