



Evaluation Report

Summer 2022

Submitted To:

NewAlliance Foundation

Submitted By:

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I. INTRODUCTION

The NewAlliance Foundation has completed its 10th year of funding for the “READY for the Grade” (RfG) summer reading program at multiple libraries. Summer 2022 included in-person instruction at all but the Manchester site (though not yet at pre-pandemic levels), expansion to two new locations bringing the total number of sites to seven (7), continued use of some hybrid strategies, and key staffing changes at all sites but Manchester. There were some implementation challenges as sites navigated initiation or continuation of programs, and there were many important accomplishments. The goal of RfG is to provide students with consistent and comprehensive reading support and instruction during the summer to help participating students enter school in September ready to learn, solid in their retained reading skills, and with the same literacy advantages as peers who have been able to maintain their reading skills throughout the summer.¹ For summer 2022, participating libraries additionally sought to continue to help students who had lost ground during an additional school year characterized by disrupted access to direct instruction. Once again there were some site-specific constraints for RfG summer 2022. Participating libraries developed customized responses to meet overall RfG goals.

Since its initiation summer 2013, RfG has served 1,430 children (including some who participated in multiple years), and their families. An additional 114 children and their families fully participated during summer 2022. Despite some implementation challenges described above, READY for the Grade continued to provide a solid model that can effectively be replicated in new communities, can be sustained even after key staff changes, and can be (and was) modified as needed to fit local conditions, including for example use of virtual strategies to engage parents or to serve students who are not able to participate in person. As in all prior years, comprehensive evaluation was continued, including reinstatement of site visits (and some site customization as needed). This report includes details of site-specific and summary strategies, results and longitudinal findings.

- **Hamden** returned to the Brundage branch library multi-purpose room. They had a new coordinator but returning teachers, and as at the other sites, very strong staff offering programming for the children. They continued to use the *Frog and Toad* framework very effectively and made important connections with local schools and neighborhoods to enhance family connections. Their 6-week program included small group and individual instruction for 15 students, with virtual family sessions each week and a final in-person family celebration. Children regularly received books and spent time in the library.
- **Killingly** had only one returning educator but the new staff were very experienced teachers able to fully implement the program without delay. They effectively conducted small group and individual instruction for 7 weeks at the main library site (19 students), and also conducted group and individual support as part of the Village at Killingly summer program (4 students). (There were some recruitment challenges at VAK due to new staff there, but a robust program involving current and former RfG students was up and running by the first RfG week.) No family events were held, but teachers again developed craft-based projects for families to work on together. Students at both sites received books regularly.

¹ Core elements of RfG include regular, structured individual and group instruction, family engagement opportunities, involvement of rising 1st – 3rd graders who have economic challenges and are reading below grade level).

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- The **Manchester** site again decided to make RfG available through distribution of weekly literacy kits, however without the strong Family Liaison connection they enjoyed in 2020, only 3 families (5 students) participated. No in-person instruction or family events were held.
- **New Haven** was able to re-constitute its in-person program at the **Wilson Branch** for the first time since 2019, despite the very sad loss of New Haven Free Public Library Director John Jessen at the end of May. Like the Killingly site, new instructors were involved (3), with Geoconda Berrios returning to lead the group and help maintain family connections from prior years. The new staff members were also very strong educators who connected well with the children and families who were happy to be accessing the RfG supports and the Wilson community space again. The team conducted both group and individual instruction, used AV/tech for reinforcements and added live music options to their sight word learning. Family engagement was provided through distribution of projects and take-home meals, and books were regularly distributed. A total of 13 children participated.
- **New Haven** was also able to initiate a new RfG program at the **Stetson Branch** now located in the new Dixwell Q-House Community Center. This program too was affected by the loss of Director John Jessen at the end of May, but was able to integrate programming at the beautiful new library facility. Two new instructors were identified, both of whom are public school teachers (like their many RfG colleagues), with substantial experience. The new staff members were able to connect well with the library staff, children and families and were able to recruit 13 participants, 8 of whom were appropriate for and able to fully engage in the brand-new program. The Stetson team conducted individual instruction for all participants and some small group work as well, and connected with families to provide support and updates as children were picked-up post session. Like their Wilson-Branch counterparts, RfG New Haven – Stetson Branch used the *Reading A - Z* program and made multiple books and take-home practice activities available for children. This program was also supported by the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts.
- The **Rockville** RfG program was operated at Skinner Road Elementary School again for 2022. A total of 33 children participated in group and individualized instruction. A second seasoned educator, Carri Clark was added to the teaching staff to work directly with long-time RfG specialist Maureen Kearney. Themes were used including many non-fiction books, and robust reading activities and daily edible craft projects were once again undertaken. No family events were held but a special culminating activity (see appendix for description) was held for the children.
- **Willimantic**, the newest site, with support from the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts, effectively implemented their new program. This included identifying a lead teacher and 4 other instructors (including one with OT experience), delivering group, small group and individual instruction two evenings per week throughout the summer (8 weeks), promoting regular library use and fully using available space in the library, serving meals, partnering with Mystic Aquarium to provide weekly enrichment, and hosting a culminating family gathering. A total of 17 children participated.

Summary of Key Findings

- The programs were conducted for a total of 114 participants from urban, suburban, and rural settings. This included 15 children from Hamden, 23 children from Killingly, 8 children from New Haven – Stetson Branch, 13 children from New Haven – Wilson Branch, 33 children from Rockville, and 17 children from Willimantic. This represents an increase in participation compared to 2021, but fewer participants than in pre-pandemic years.
- Six of the seven programs, including the two brand-new programs, incorporated effective curricular and pedagogical practices to support reading skill development. All seven programs made books and other materials available to families over the summer.

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- Site representatives from all six programs with direct instruction reported continued family engagement. This included engaging with children in reading at home (all sites) and in completing family activities sent home (Hamden, Killingly, New Haven-Wilson). Only the Hamden and New Haven – Wilson Branch sites conducted regular parent engagement sessions (virtually in the case of Hamden, and through take-home meals and activities for New Haven-Wilson), and only those sites and Willimantic conducted culminating family events.
- All seven programs had substantial support from the library and all six sites with direct instruction had effective program management. Other partnerships (e.g., with other enrichment providers) varied and continued to be understandably more limited.
- Staffing varied according to plans, but although there was substantial turnover after Summer 2021, all sites had experienced personnel including many with multiple years of RfG experience. The two new sites (New Haven-Stetson and Willimantic) were able to attract staff with the necessary qualifications as were the two sites (Killingly and New Haven - Wilson) that had to almost fully reconstitute their staff. Rockville added an additional senior teacher and Hamden identified a new project coordinator with both library and classroom/reading experience.
- The desired population was served (with the addition of some 4th graders), and all sites, including the two new sites, met site-level goals in terms of numbers and recruitment criteria. Recruitment strategies varied by site and were somewhat delayed in some cases due to staffing challenges and other local constraints. Total enrollment has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels and earlier outreach/recruitment is needed.
- Most participants, including several who returned from 2021, had very consistent attendance, and parents who provided feedback clarified that available RfG services were meeting important goals for them and their children. The use of incentives helped promote good attendance and each of the sites devised incentive strategies that fit their needs.
- Multiple assessment strategies were used, but all sites except Manchester tested children before and after program participation, and all reported that most participants enhanced/revitalized their reading skills. Parents/guardians confirmed children’s skill development, acknowledging that access to RfG had been very helpful.



Frog & Toad activities, Hamden



Group instruction activities, New Haven – Wilson Branch

II. FINDINGS

As described in the Summary of Key Findings, despite challenges, RfG programs were implemented and they produced positive results. This section of the report presents detailed findings for summer 2022, and where applicable limited longitudinal results as well.

Evaluation Summer 2022

The evaluation design was restored to pre-pandemic strategies since there was direct instruction everywhere but Manchester. As it had for each of the past nine years, program design and delivery, enrollment, attendance, and achievement were reviewed, and as for summer 2020 and summer 2021, parent input was also obtained. As for the past summers, most data for summer 2022 were collected electronically, but site visits were conducted to all sites as well for direct observation. Each site provided details on their summer practices through on-site and/or follow-up interviews and each submitted photographs and other documentation for independent review. All sites were fully responsive to evaluation requests which facilitated cross-site summaries.

A. Program Design, Operations and Outcomes Overview

The overall program design for summer 2022 was consistent with past cycles but reflected the shifts imposed by continuing responses to the Covid-19 pandemic. As shown in Table 1, RfG was undertaken in seven communities during summer 2022, including Hamden, Killingly, New Haven-Stetson and New Haven-Wilson, Rockville and Willimantic; Manchester delivered a modified, limited program.² The RfG sites represent urban, suburban and rural communities and both new and continued collaborations with public schools and other governmental and nonprofit partner organizations. **[For the remainder of this report ALL sites = all but Manchester.]**

As shown in Table 1, the six program models with direct instruction all adhered to the core elements of the RfG program to the degree possible, but of course there were slight differences between the communities and as compared to any of the three previous summers or before (see also Evaluation Reports 2019, 2020 and 2021). Despite continued demand for smaller program sizes, a substantial amount of programming was offered across sites with variations as needed. Summer 2022 also saw continued commitment to pre-pandemic target population recruitment (i.e., mostly incoming 1st – 3rd graders) and differing levels of family involvement. Opportunities for regular session-based family involvement with RfG program staff were only

² Summer 2022 was the beginning of a new cohort; the 2013 – 2015 cohort included Killingly, New Haven and Rockville; the 2016 – 2018 cohort added Manchester, West Haven and Wallingford (which discontinued participation after summer 2018); the 2019, 2020 and 2021 summers each varied – Manchester suspended all programming for 2021, and West Haven discontinued participation after 2021. The 2022 cohort was expected to include Hamden (in its second year) Killingly, New Haven (with two sites Wilson Branch and the newly designed Stetson Branch), Rockville, Manchester, and Willimantic (also new in 2022). Any cross-site summaries/trends should be compared carefully as the number of programs has changed and conditions since 2020 are unique.

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made available at the Hamden site (and mostly virtually), but all other sites encouraged parents, guardians, siblings and other family members to continue helping students between sessions by playing educational games and engaging in reading practice. All sites but Rockville and the new New Haven - Stetson Branch site, engaged parents with take-home activities and/or culminating sessions. As always, staffing varied by site, and in comparison to past summers, including 2021, (see site-specific reports), but all sites, even those that were new or where most staff were new to the program, used personnel experienced with reading skill development and all but New Haven-Stetson and Willimantic, which were new, used personnel familiar with RfG. Multiple instructor-selected curricular materials were used and shared, different incentive strategies were undertaken effectively, and all sites, including Manchester, provided books for children to read and keep. As stated previously:

- **Hamden** returned to the Brundage branch library multi-purpose room. They had a new coordinator but returning teachers, and as at the other sites, very strong staff offering programming for the children. They continued to use the *Frog and Toad* framework very effectively and made important connections with local schools and neighborhoods to enhance family connections. Their 6-week program included small group and individual instruction for 15 students, with virtual family sessions each week and a final in-person family celebration. Children regularly received books and spent time in the library.
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Mural constructed by Killingly participants during Ocean week, Summer 2022.

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members were also very strong educators who connected well with the children and families who were happy to be accessing the RfG supports and the Wilson community space again. The team conducted both group and individual instruction, used AV/tech for reinforcements and added live music options to their sight word learning. Family engagement was provided through distribution of projects and take-home meals, and books were regularly distributed. A total of 13 children participated.

- **New Haven** was also able to initiate a new RfG program at the **Stetson Branch** now located in the new Dixwell Q-House Community Center. This program too was affected by the loss of Director John Jessen at the end of May, but was able to integrate programming at the beautiful new library facility. Two new instructors were identified, both of whom are public school teachers (like their many RfG colleagues), with substantial experience. The new staff members were able to connect well with the library staff, children and families and were able to recruit 13 participants, 8 of whom were appropriate for and able to fully engage in the brand-new program. The Stetson team conducted individual instruction for all participants and some small group work as well, and connected with families to provide support and updates as children were picked-up post session. Like their Wilson-Branch counterparts, RfG-Stetson Branch used the *Reading A - Z* program and made multiple books and take-home practice activities available for children. This program was also supported by Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts.
- The **Rockville** RfG program was operated at Skinner Road Elementary School again for 2022. A total of 33 children participated in group and individualized instruction. A second seasoned educator, Carri Clark was added to the teaching staff to work directly with long-time RfG specialist Maureen Kearney. Themes were used including many non-fiction books, and robust reading activities and daily edible craft projects were once again undertaken. No family events were held but a special culminating activity was held for the children.



Everyone knows the answers -group reading and discussion, Rockville, 2022.



Vocabulary learning game, Willimantic, 2022.

- **Willimantic**, the newest site, with support from the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts, effectively implemented their new program. This included identifying a lead teacher and 4 other instructors (including one with OT experience), delivering group, small group and individual instruction two evenings/week throughout the summer (8 weeks), promoting regular library use and fully using available space in the library, serving meals, partnering with Mystic Aquarium to provide weekly enrichment, and even hosting a culminating family gathering. A total of 17 children participated.

As clarified by the Program Directors throughout summer, the site-specific strategies described above, resulted in good fits for local conditions.

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Table 1: REAdy for the Grade Implementation Summary, Summer 2022

Site	Direct Instruction	Kits/Book Distribution	Family Events	# Weeks	Incentives	# Students	# On-Site Staff	Parent Feedback	Achievement
Hamden	✓	✓	✓	6	✓	15	4 + 2 teen aides	Very positive	All Maintained/Improved
Killingly	✓	✓	Take-home	7	✓	23	3 + 1 aide + 1 teen + helpers	Very positive	All but two Maintained/Improved
Manchester		✓	✓	6		5	0	Positive	NA
New Haven Stetson	✓	✓		6	✓	8	2	Very positive	All Maintained/Improved
New Haven Wilson	✓	✓	✓	6	✓	13	4 + 1 helper	Very positive	All Maintained/Improved
Rockville	✓	✓		6	✓	33	2 + 1 teen aide + 2 helpers	Very positive	All Maintained/Improved
Willimantic	✓	✓	✓	8	✓	17	4 + 1 aide + 1 teen	Very positive	All Maintained/Improved
TOTAL						114			

* Aides are adult staff, helpers are pre-teenage youth, mostly former participants.

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Table 1 also shows important summary data about program and participant outcomes across all sites. Parents/guardians provided positive feedback about how the programs operated and what they and their children got out of it, and program staff reported achievement by participants.

- All sites obtained very positive feedback from parents/guardians (see site-specific reports for details) who reported that the work students did, helped them gain confidence in reading abilities, develop interest in reading for learning and enjoyment, and helped develop or maintain key skills including comprehension, phonics, and identifying sight words. Even though most sites also had other options for children in the summer (e.g., free summer school), parents pointed out that RfG focused on reading skills students would need to be successful in the new school year. Parents appreciated that continued focus and also the opportunity for small multi-week programs.
- Different tests were used to determine achievement, but program directors at all six sites administered initial and final assessments and all indicated that all or almost all of the students who participated maintained or improved (mostly improved) their reading skills.

Direct observations were conducted at all sites. Additionally, interviews were conducted with site Coordinators who were asked to describe how they worked with children, including how they made decisions about what to include in the literacy kits distributed to the participating children in Manchester. A summary of specific teaching and learning strategies that were observed or described during observations or interviews are shown below in Table 2. It can be seen in the table that many effective practices were used at each of the sites and coordinators/directors reported they used these strategies and others regularly. Specific examples are described in the site-specific reports that are available in Section E. Additionally, sites continued to use some virtual strategies and returned to extensive use of physical space for direct instruction in every community. Books and other instructional materials were made available to participating families at all sites including Manchester.

Table 2: Use of Effective Practices, Summer 2022

	Hamden	Killingly	NH-Stetson	NH-Wilson	Rockville	Willimantic
Building phonetic skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Children reading silently	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Children reading to instructor/group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Choral/Guided reading*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Children discussing reading**	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Identifying vocabulary (sight words, new words, unusual words)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Making connections to previous lessons/personal experiences	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing, movement or craft activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Done with small groups (2 – 3 students) only.

**This included making predictions, stating preferences, checking comprehension.

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B. Enrollment

Registration data were submitted for 114 enrolled students. This included 26 (23%) of whom were rising 1st graders, 39 (35%) of whom were rising 2nd graders and 35 (34%) who were rising 3rd graders. (Participants also included a few students (n=3, 2%) who were rising kindergarten students, and a few who were 4th graders.) The grade level compositions of the sites were different, with each responding to specific needs/requests of the populations that engaged them, but all sites mostly engaged the core RfG target group of rising 1st – 3rd graders.

Table 3a: Number of Registered Participants by site by Fall 2022 Grade Level

Site	PK/K	1st	2 nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL 2022	TOTAL 2021	TOTAL 2020	TOTAL 2019
Hamden	0	6	6	3	0	15	9		
Killingly	0	4	9	10	0	23	31	25	31
Manchester	0	1	3	1	0	5		25	8
NH – Stetson	0	2	1	1	1	8			
NH – Wilson	0	5	3	3	2	13	24	30	41
Rockville	0	4	16	12	1	33	14	5	46
West Haven						--	11	3	33
Willimantic	3	4	1	5	4	17			
TOTAL	3 (2%)	26 (23%)	39 (35%)	35 (34%)	8 (7%)	114	89	88	159

Note: West Haven is included here as their population contributed to comparative totals for 2019-2021.

The demographic characteristics of the 114 summer 2022 students are shown in Table 3b (following). This total number of students was substantially lower than the number of students in pre-pandemic years, but greater than the numbers for the two pandemic summers (2020 and 2021). The sites providing services changed summer 2022. As in the past, there were also some key differences in the composition of the cohort across sites. Specifically:

- A total of 50% of all students in 2022 were female and 50% were male. Summer 2022 involved slightly fewer girls than in past summers (except 2016).
- The racial/ethnic composition of the student group for whom there are data was fairly diverse: 7% of students were identified as Asian, 17% were identified as Black/African American, 31% of students were identified as Hispanic/Latinx, 35% were identified as White, and 9% were identified as bi- or multi-racial. Racial/ethnic diversity was more pronounced at some sites than others (see individual site summaries).
- The proportion of students who were identified as Hispanic/Latinx was much higher than for 2021, but very similar to all past years. In 2019 and 2020, 25% of students were identified as White, in 2021 and 2022 about 36% of students were identified as White. Changes in group composition are likely due to differences in site profiles, **but this should continue to be monitored** (all comparisons should be made very carefully – recruitment and enrollment continued to be somewhat limited by pandemic constraints and summer school availability).
- The primary language used at home for a total of 85% of the summer 2022 students was English, but 9% spoke Spanish as their primary language and 7% spoke another language (such as Urdu,

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Gujarati, Pashto, Tamil, Telugu) at home. The variety of languages, and the fact that several students have parents who require translation to interact with the program continues to signal a need for attention to language-related staff skills and materials for future summers. Additionally, there is likely a need to address how to effectively recruit those families who do not speak English as the primary language at home as they may be in need of RfG programming, but not accessing the program.

Table 3b: Demographic Characteristics of Total Enrollment

	2022 N=114	2021 N=89	2020 N=88	2019 N=159	2018 N=261	2017 N=225	2016 N=177
Grade in Fall							
PK/Kindergarten*	2%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%
First Grade	23%	36%	35%	26%	29%	38%	30%
Second Grade	35%	31%	25%	37%	40%	39%	41%
Third Grade	34%	28%	32%	31%	27%	20%	26%
Fourth Grade*	7%		6%				
Gender							
Female	50%	58%	53%	56%	55%	55%	44%
Male	50%	42%	47%	44%	45%	45%	56%
Race/Ethnicity**	N=108	N=77	N=87				
Asian	7%	6%	7%	5%	7%	6%	5%
Black/African American	17%	21%	25%	17%	20%	23%	24%
Hispanic/Latinx	31%	19%	32%	42%	33%	32%	36%
Native American	0	3%	0	1%	1%	1%	2%
White	35%	36%	25%	25%	28%	34%	33%
Biracial	9%	10%	9%	11%	11%	4%	NA
Other	0	4%					
Primary Language at Home			N=62				
English	84%	76%	68%	66%	73%	72%	73%
Spanish	9%	14%	21%	22%	19%	21%	21%
Other	7%	10%	11%	12%	8%	7%	6%

* Siblings in PK and 4th grade were allowed to officially participate for summer 2020 and beyond

** Note all reported racial/ethnic data were recoded into single race/ethnicity categories to facilitate over-years comparisons, students in the “other” category 2022, identified themselves as *Arabic*.

Assessment of participants’ initial instructional reading levels were conducted as summer programming began at all the sites and participants at all but the New Haven - Wilson Branch and Willimantic sites also reported available entering reading levels. Outreach for summer 2022 continued to include connections with families that had participated in prior years, or among families that were known to have students reading below grade level (roughly ¾ of participants were specifically identified as being below or well below grade level and key staff from all sites indicated most of those participating definitely needed the help). Additionally, some parents, concerned about their children falling behind due to lack of consistent instruction during the 2021-22 school year,

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enrolled their children. Directors/Coordinators and family members reported that all or almost all (about 85%) of the participants they worked with were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

C. Attendance and Achievement

In addition to running engaging programs, the sites also promoted regular attendance. Each program tracked and reported attendance somewhat differently (see site specific results for details), but all indicated that many/most participants attended consistently and took advantage of available programming (despite in most cases, the availability of other summer learning options including family vacations that had been skipped the prior two summers). All the sites also pushed participants to achieve, to maintain and in many cases to enhance key reading skills. Sites used different assessment strategies that focused on different skill development for summer 2022, but as shown in Table 4, it was clear that overall, participants did demonstrate desired results (see also site-specific results for additional details). **For the 89 cases where both a pre- and post-test was administered: 62% of the post tests showed improvement and an additional 36% showed no change (i.e., no loss of reading skills). All but two RfG participants (98%) for summer 2022 achieved the desired stability and expected readiness for the next school year.**

Table 4: Summer Reading Goal Results

Program	# Tests	Decreased Reading Score	Maintained Reading Score	Increased Reading Score
Hamden	12	0	3	9
Killingly	19	2	3	14
New Haven-Stetson	6	0	3	3
New Haven-Wilson	11	0	3	8
Rockville	30	0	16	14
Willimantic	11	0	4	7
TOTAL★	87	2%	36%	62%

★Children took different tests. This is a basic assessment of change across sites.

D. Parent/Guardian Feedback

A total of 47 parents/guardians answered a brief survey³ about the RfG summer program 2022 (this included 9 from Hamden, 13 from Killingly, 3 from New Haven-Stetson, 7 from New Haven-Wilson, 4 from Rockville, and 11 from Willimantic). As shown in Table 5, all or almost all parent respondents verified that their children benefited from participating in RfG summer 2022. Additionally, all respondents rated the program leaders *excellent* and all but 2 who said “*maybe*” reported they

³ The parent survey was administered by RfG staff at the sites, in hard copy form and then transferred to Survey Monkey for analysis for this report.

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planned to sign up again next summer. Their comments regarding the staff and the importance of the program were especially enlightening (see site specific results in Section E). It is especially important to note that the two new sites, as had Hamden when it was new, had feedback results that were similar to those obtained from the longer-running sites. Similarly, feedback was equally positive for the sites that had to fully reconstitute their staffs (Killingly, New Haven – Wilson Branch). Even Manchester obtained positive feedback from parents (see Manchester site report.) though they were not able to use the standard parent survey as their program included only literacy kits.

Table 5: Parent/Guardian Feedback READY for the Grade, 2022

	2022 N=47
% who rated the program <i>good</i> (10%) or <i>excellent</i> (90%) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	100%
% who rated the staff <i>good</i> (9%) or <i>excellent</i> (91%) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	100%
% who reported the READY for the Grade Program was <i>important</i> (10%) or <i>very important</i> (90%)	100%
% who answered yes to the following	
As a result of participating my child/children read more over the summer	100%
As a result of participating, my child/children feel more confident reading	97%
As a result of participating my family was inspired to read more over the summer	97%
We will sign up again next summer if eligible	93%



Culminating family event, Willimantic, Summer 2022.



Culminating family event, Hamden, Summer 2022.

E. Site Specific Results

All six sites with in-person programming accomplished key outcomes for summer 2022 and provided important RfG benefits for participating families. The way they delivered services and what they accomplished specifically varied somewhat by site. Details for each site follow.

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HAMDEN

Hamden implemented their 6-week in-person program at the Brundage Community Branch Library. A total of 15 children participated in group and individual instruction and their family members were invited to weekly virtual family nights. Books (86 in total) and other incentives were distributed. The program was designed and overseen by Marcy Goldman, Head of Children’s Services of the Hamden Public Library, with Project Coordinator Raymond Brumleve and staffed by three local teachers all of whom had participated Summer 2021 (full curriculum plan available on request). Per ongoing Covid-related requirements, the program remained relatively small but offered multiple days so that small groups, independent work with an instructor and multiple sessions could all be accomplished. The program met enrollment and attendance goals⁴ and was well received by both the children and their family members. Participants in Hamden, just like those from other RfG sites received the support they needed to maintain or build up their reading skills, they accessed instructionally appropriate books and spent quality time in the library, earned incentives, and were excited to come to the program to participate. Details follow.

Program Implementation

Individual and Small Group Instruction. The Hamden Library ran their READY for the Grade program Monday through Thursday from 9:30 until 12:00 for a total of 6 weeks, and most students came once or twice per week. Teachers used worksheets, large and individual white boards, and literacy-based games and activities throughout each session to provide both small group and individualized instruction. Each week the group would read a chapter from *Frog and Toad* focusing on reading, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency and there was a different activity that went along with the story (see appendix for an example of a weekly lesson inspired by *Frog and Toad*). Since children could come more than once per week, instructors could work with both groups and individuals at the same time both introducing and reinforcing concepts throughout the summer. Children also got opportunities to visit the library together with staff on a regular basis and they had take-home activities to extend their classroom learning. Observed instruction was excellent.

Parent Engagement. In addition to the small group sessions, there was a family orientation night (11 families participated), 5 family night events that were held via Zoom (3 – 4 families in attendance each week; materials were sent home with children, topics included trivia, planting superheroes). Hamden also held a final in-person family event to celebrate the end of the program. At the final event, a total of 32 people (11 families) came to thank teachers and enjoy pizza. They also played a summer bingo game and each family was rewarded for program completion.

Incentives. On their first day, all participating children received water bottles and backpacks with the READY for the Grade logo. Additionally, participants were able to take-home a free book each day they attended (86 books were distributed) and \$15 gift cards were awarded to raffle winners at each of the family nights. At the end of the program, families that participated for the entire summer received \$25 Target gift cards.

⁴ Once again, Hamden RfG had to compete with summer school and Covid group-size restrictions. The program almost doubled in size as compared to Summer 2021, but site officials continued to maintain that the smaller, very well-staffed group, which allowed for concurrent group and independent instruction was optimal for local needs.

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Enrollment

As shown in table 6a, a total of 15 students were enrolled for the Hamden REAdy for the Grade Summer program 2022. It can be seen in the table that the descriptive characteristics of those who participated were similar to participants from other sites, but definitely different from the initial year. These data will continue to be useful to monitor recruitment trends each summer.

- The program served rising 1st (40%) 2nd (40%) and 3rd graders (20%). A total of 4 were females (27%) and 11 (73%) were males.
- The student group was diverse in terms of race/ethnicity and representative of the local community, but again different from the inaugural year; 1 of the participants was identified as Asian (including Indian/Asian), 2 of the participants were identified as Black/African American, 5 were identified as Hispanic/Latinx, 3 were identified as White/Caucasian, 2 were identified as biracial and 2 were missing information about racial/ethnic identity.
- Most students (10) spoke English as their primary language at home, and the other students spoke English and Spanish or just Spanish at home; one student spoke Gujarati and English at home.

Table 6a: Enrollment Details, Hamden REAdy for the Grade

	2022 N=15	2021 N=9
Grade in Fall		
PK/Kindergarten	0	0
First Grade	40%	22%
Second Grade	40%	22%
Third Grade	20%	56%
Gender		
Female	27%	44%
Male	73%	56%
Race/Ethnicity (n=8)		
Asian	8%	50%
Black/African American	15%	13%
Hispanic/Latinx	38%	13%
Native American	0	0
White	23%	13%
Biracial	15%	13%
Primary Language at Home		
English	71%	44%
Spanish and English	21%	0
Other (see above)	7%	56%

Other = Gujarati

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Attendance

As stated previously, Hamden conducted its program Monday through Thursday from 9:30 until 12:00 for a total of 6 weeks, and students had the option of one or two times each week. Review of attendance records for the Hamden READY for the Grade program summer 2022 showed that most participants (86%) attended at least once weekly and many (43%) attended a second day each week as well. In total, 250 hours of instruction were delivered (about 16.5 hours per student on average).

Table 6b: Student Attendance, Hamden RfG, Summer 2022

Student Attendance	
Below expectations	14%
At expectations (once per week)	43%
Above expectations (more than once)	43%

Achievement

Achievement results were recorded for 12 of the 15 participants including pre- and post Dolch Sight Word assessments (see Table 6c). Each of the tested participants maintained (3 of 12) or improved their scores (9 of 12), and improvements in specific skills were documented for all participants. Like their peers in the other RfG sites, **these participants did not lose ground over the summer**. The program Coordinator and instructors noted that while some students had substantial skill development needs, all were working on key skills and most had made important progress. During the observation it was clear again, as in Summer 2021, that the very small group with available 1:1 assistance made both theme-based group work and differentiated instruction possible. Children were called upon to demonstrate their reading fluency, comprehension and vocabulary skills throughout the lesson.

Table 6c: Assessment Results, Hamden RfG, Summer 2022

Grade	Starting Level	Ending Level	Assessment
1	95/95	95/95	Maintained
1	4/40, letter recognition	Letter recognition, 2-letter words	Maintained
1	3/40	7/40	Increased
2	32/52	50/52	Increased
2	42/46	46/46	Increased
2	24/41	39/41	Increased
2	15/36	30/52	Increased
2	22/51	35/51	Increased
2	28/40	35/40	Increased
3	20/40	22/40	Maintained
3	28/41	40/41	Increased
3	35/52	42/52	Increased

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Parent/Guardian Feedback

A total of 9 parents/guardians answered a brief survey⁵ about the READY for the Grade summer program in Hamden, 2022. As shown in Table 6d, and the following comments, all or almost all parent respondents verified that their children benefited from participating in RfG summer 2022. Additionally, all respondents rated the program leaders *excellent* and all but one reported they planned to sign up again next summer (1 other parent respondent indicated they might sign up again). Their comments regarding the staff and the importance of the program were especially enlightening (see next page).

Table 6d: Parent/Guardian Feedback, Hamden, READY for the Grade

	2022 N=9	2021 N=5
# who rated the program <i>good</i> or <i>excellent</i> (9) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	9	5
# who rated the staff <i>good</i> or <i>excellent</i> (9) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	9	5
# who reported the READY for the Grade Program was <i>important</i> or <i>very important</i> (9)	9	5
# who answered yes to the following		
As a result of participating my child/children read more over the summer	9	5
As a result of participating, my child/children feel more confident reading	8	5
As a result of participating my family was inspired to read more over the summer	9	5

What did you like about the program?	What do you feel your child gained?
<p><i>I liked the personal connections outside of the program. The family night zooms added so much to the whole experience.</i></p> <p><i>I liked how my child improved and how they got him more interested in reading.</i></p> <p><i>The program is so good. They teach so well.</i></p> <p><i>Variety of activities that kept the children motivated</i></p> <p><i>Wonderful activities, approachable teachers and convenient time.</i></p> <p><i>I loved that he still was able to work on his reading over the summer just wish he got more time there. He really enjoyed it also!</i></p> <p><i>The individual attention the staff gives my child each session. At the end/beginning of each session, they take time to answer my questions.</i></p>	<p><i>My child gained confidence about reading.</i></p> <p><i>He gained enthusiasm for reading because he can now understand what he is reading.</i></p> <p><i>Makes learning fun</i></p> <p><i>They like the free books and the crafts</i></p> <p><i>To learn and pronounce the words better</i></p> <p><i>Higher level vocabulary, art, reading the books.</i></p> <p><i>Able to read better. Knows more and learned more sight words</i></p> <p><i>More practice on his reading and writing</i></p> <p><i>Encouragement to read at their pace.</i></p>

⁵ The parent survey was administered by RfG staff in hard copy form and then transferred to Survey Monkey for analysis.

Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

The Hamden READY for the Grade program returned to the renovated downstairs area of the Brundage Community Branch Library for summer 2022. Once again, the RfG team used the space very effectively and established strategies for both in-person (student) and virtual programming (parents/family members/students). The Hamden site also built on their outreach and recruitment strategies for staff and participants and effectively identified a new project coordinator. Hamden RfG continued use of an incentives plan similar to that used in 2021, and they again fully implemented the *Frog and Toad*-themed curriculum. They did not conduct any field trips or other enrichment activities, but they did have a robust parent engagement strategy and the children and families were regularly engaged in the library and encouraged to get library cards and select books. The program remains somewhat under-enrolled, (competing programs and lingering Covid challenges are limiting) but implementation and student outcome results were consistent over years and continued to mirror those achieved by the longer-established programs. Additional parent comments (see box at right) show that these efforts were appreciated. The only suggestions for future changes were that programming be extended.

Like the other sites, Hamden engaged experienced staff who worked very effectively with students, conducted theme-based literacy activities and provided both home-based activities and meaningful opportunities for parent/family member involvement. Once again there was a continuous focus on reading skill development along with access to appropriate books, as well as group exposure to a shared reading experience. The results, in alignment with those recorded for other sites, illustrated by consistent attendance, positive teacher and standardized reading assessment data and especially positive feedback from parents, provided clear evidence of success. **Hamden continued to fully demonstrate the strength and flexibility of the READY for the Grade model and remains well-situated to continue building for future summers.**

Parent Comments about Staff and the Importance of the Program

Everyone was friendly, warm and accommodating

Good communication and always let me know feedback on how my child was doing.

Very professional

All the teachers were wonderful

Very caring and respectful. My son loves his teachers and loves to brag about it at home.

My son needs guided support in developing his reading skills. This program offered that and a boost in his confidence

Helped my child get on his reading level. He said that everything he learned about reading he felt like he learned from this program.

My daughter enjoyed and it helped with her reading.

My son really enjoyed coming to the program. He was excited about learning and engaging in the different activities.

Parent Summary Comments and Suggestions for the Future

I know my child would have loved to attend more days a week and has already asked about next summer.

More days

More hours

Longer hours or more days.

Nothing. The program is well developed

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KILLINGLY

Killingly had only one returning educator but the new staff were very experienced teachers able to fully- implement the program without delay. They effectively conducted small group and individual instruction at the main library site (19 students), and also conducted group and individual support as part of the Village at Killingly (VAK) summer program (4 students). (There were some recruitment challenges at VAK due to new staff there, but a robust program involving current and former RfG students was up and running by the first RfG week.) A total of 23 students participated and received books and other incentives and had access to the library. The program was designed and overseen by Allison Whiston, Children’s Librarian of the Killingly Public Library, and staffed by two teachers who were new to the program and one additional instructor who had worked with READy for the Grade for the past five summers, and a community liaison at the VAK site. Throughout the summer the educators planned learning activities and themes, conducted engaging literacy-based activities at both sites, provided guidance to parents/family members regarding reading, and made sure children and their families used the library and had access to many take-home books. A few program alumni from prior years also helped out at each of the sites (2 at VAK and 1 at the library). Though somewhat smaller than in prior years (in part due to late recruitment at VAK), the program met overall enrollment and attendance goals⁶ and was once again well received by both the children and their family members. Just as they had in past summers, participants received the support they needed to maintain or build up their reading skills, they increased their confidence regarding reading, they accessed instructionally appropriate books, earned incentives, and were excited to come to the program to participate. Details follow.

Program Implementation

Individual and Small Group Instruction. Each student worked as part of a small group in the library and in the community room at the Village at Killingly (some students also received individual one-on-one instruction if needed). During the sessions each week, the children practiced their reading skills using levelled readers, completed written activities that promoted comprehension, and participated in other literacy-based activities (such as games and sight word reviews) and art activities that were all part of the weekly theme. They also selected books to take-home for their personal libraries and extra reading practice. As they had in 2021, students were also sent home with mini-books to color and read, and take-home craft activities. They were also encouraged to select library books. The three teachers each had their own groups at each site, but they planned together (4 students also participated in individual instruction). Observed instruction was excellent.

Parent Engagement. RfG Killingly instructors provided guidance for parents/guardians as requested, to help them support their children’s reading skill development. Mostly this involved just touching base and checking in with parents during pick up and drop off to get updates and provide assistance. They also sent home craft projects.

Incentives. Children earned \$10 each week for their participation which could later be used for prizes or school supplies. All children also received a backpack at the beginning of the summer and free books weekly.

⁶ Summer school was again broadly available in Killingly Summer 2022, and some families chose that instead or combined that with RfG.

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Take-home craft activities, and other prizes related to the theme and other weekly activities were also used as incentives/rewards to help keep children focused during their sessions.

Enrollment

As shown in table 7a, the Killingly READY for the Grade program had fewer participants than prior years, in part due to summer school options and some delays in recruitment for Village at Killingly participants for summer 2022. It can be seen in the table that the descriptive characteristics of those who participated were both similar to and different from those who participated in prior years.

- The program served rising 1st (17%) 2nd (39%) and 3rd graders (43%), including 12 who were returning from summer 2021; a total of 52% were females, 48% were males.
- The student group was similar in terms of racial/ethnic diversity to groups from prior summers; 9% of the participants were identified as African American, 4% were identified as Hispanic/Latinx, 70% were identified as White/Caucasian and 17%, were identified as biracial.
- All but one student spoke English as the primary language at home.

Table 7a: Enrollment Details, Killingly READY for the Grade

	2022 N=23	2021 N=31	2020 N=25	2019 N=31
Grade in Fall				
PK/Kindergarten*	0	0	0	0
First Grade	17%	42%	20%	32%
Second Grade	39%	35%	32%	35%
Third Grade	43%	23%	40%	32%
Fourth Grade*			8%	
Gender				
Female	52%	52%	56%	55%
Male	48%	48%	44%	45%
Race/Ethnicity				
Asian	0	0	0	0
Black/African American	9%	3%	0	3%
Hispanic/Latinx	4%	10%	13%	26%
Native American	0	6%	0	3%
White	70%	61%	75%	61%
Biracial	17%	19%	13%	6%
Primary Language at Home				
English	96%	92%	92%	27%
Spanish and English	4%	4%	4%	39%
Other (see above)	0	4%	4%	33%

* Grade level enrollment requirements were relaxed somewhat for 2020.

Attendance

Killingly conducted its 7-week program at Village at Killingly on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12:30-2:30 (lunch also provided at 12:00) and they conducted RfG programming at the library on Monday and

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Wednesdays in two 1.5-hour sessions from 4:00 – 7:00. For the library group program, children/families picked whether they would attend the earlier or later session, and a few participants also participated in individual instruction earlier in the day. Review of attendance records for the Killingly READY for the Grade program summer 2022 showed that most participants attended regularly.

- In total Killingly provided 301.5 hours of programming to the 23 students. This represents an increase in total time available and participated in as compared to summer 2021.
- On average each student participated for about 13 total hours (range was 6 – 18 hours).
- All but two of the participants (91%), accessed one session per week and most came twice per week, five students came to two sessions for at least six weeks (18 hours total each).

As had been the case in summer 2021, all participants were encouraged to do daily practice work and to read regularly between sessions using the books and mini-books provided.

Achievement

A total of 19 students participated in a reading assessment during initial and final RfG sessions. Of these, all but two participants maintained (16%) or increased their scores (74%). Like each of the other RfG sites, **these participants did not lose ground over the summer – most improved skills.** As shown in Table 7b, students continued to hold their own regarding reading levels. The program coordinator and teachers confirmed that the slightly extended time, small groups and available individualized instruction had helped enhance reading confidence. Once again, participants at both the library and the VAK sites continued to be excited to come to the program. During the observation it was clear that the small groups, skilled instructors and effective use of levelled readers made it easier to work on specific skills and helped participants stay focused. Though staff were new to the program, they worked together to bring different lessons for the students that reinforced key skills such as self-correction, recognizing different vowel sounds and sight words and demonstrating comprehension through writing and discussion.

Table 7b: Achievement Data, Killingly READY for the Grade, 2022

Grade	Pre	Post	RESULT	Grade	Pre	Post	RESULT	Grade	Pre	Post	RESULT
1	0	6	Increased	2	4	14	Increased	3	1	5	Increased
1	0	6	Increased	2	8	13	Increased	3	13	14	Maintained
1	9	16	Increased	2	46	59	Increased	3	49	69	Increased
1	30	32	Maintained	2	55	72	Increased	3	55	84	Increased
				2	60	84	Increased	3	67	73	Increased
								3	68	95	Increased
				2	26	21	Decreased	3	70	73	Maintained
								3	108	125	Increased
								3	71	60	Decreased

Teachers elected to return to use of the Pioneer Valley Assessment for Summer 2021 and 2022.

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Parent/Guardian Feedback

A total of 13 parents/guardians answered a brief survey about the READY for the Grade (Remarkable Readers) summer program in Killingly, 2022. As shown in Table 7c, and the following comments, all or almost all parent respondents verified that their children benefited from participating in RfG summer 2022. Additionally, all respondents rated the program leaders *excellent* and all reported they planned to sign up again next summer.

Table 7c: Parent/Guardian Feedback, Killingly, READY for the Grade, 2022

	2022 N=13	2021 N=12	2020 N=12
% who rated the program <i>good</i> (25%) or <i>excellent</i> (75%) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	100%	100%	100%
% who rated the staff <i>good</i> (25%) or <i>excellent</i> (75%) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	100%	100%	100%
% who reported the Remarkable Readers Program was <i>important</i> (15%) or very <i>important</i> (85%)	100%	100%	100%
% who answered yes to the following			
As a result of participating my child/children read more over the summer	100%	92%	100%
As a result of participating, my child/children feel more confident reading	100%	92%	100%
As a result of participating my family was inspired to read more over the summer	92%	92%	92%
We will sign up again next summer	100%	100%	92%

What did you like about the program?	What do you feel your child gained?
<i>Extra support to develop reading skills.</i>	<i>Has an expanded vocabulary.</i>
<i>Helped my child become a better reader, more confident.</i>	<i>She didn't lose any knowledge over the summer.</i>
<i>Was great with helping to read better</i>	<i>Confidence in himself. (Two other parents noted this too.)</i>
<i>We read with/to our kids every night, having another person read with him is helpful.</i>	<i>She loves to read, definitely more confidence.</i>
<i>The crafts and things that came home</i>	<i>Helped develop their reading skills</i>
<i>Very helping my kids</i>	<i>My child gained a greater love of reading and he is continuing to become a more successful reader.</i>
<i>That it wasn't just reading. The teachers also made my children more comfortable reading out loud.</i>	
<i>I loved the way they keep the kids engaged and wanting to come back each time. I love the crafts and books they give to help further their progress.</i>	
<i>It encouraged my daughter to read</i>	
<i>Teachers gave great reading tips. Books - all the books!</i>	
<i>The books they got every time</i>	

Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

The Killingly READY for the Grade program shifted the program again for summer 2022, returning to the pre-pandemic design and extending the available hours. They continued to use the library facility effectively and to make programming available at the Village at Killingly. They incorporated some of the changes from the prior summers, most notably the continued option of individual instruction and take-home craft activities. Killingly RfG did not continue to offer structured assistance to parents/guardians, but they regularly promoted and encouraged home-based reading practice. For summer 2022, they did not utilize any virtual programming. As stated previously, though all but one staff member was new, they worked very effectively with students at both sites and each other. Literacy-based activities and some complementary art enrichment activities including those students could work on at home were all made possible, and there was a continuous focus on access to appropriate books. The results, illustrated by consistent attendance, positive teacher and standardized reading assessment data and especially positive and consistent feedback from parents provided clear evidence of success. **Killingly was able to return to pre-pandemic strategies, successfully integrate new staff and add participation time for students during Summer 2022. The program design was very well received as confirmed by parents. Continued efforts to engage earlier with VAK and to increase enrollment slightly and continue parent/family support will enhance efforts for 2023. Parents would greatly benefit from the substantial expertise at the Killingly site and the RfG educators are interested in working with families more as feasible.**



Group reading activities at the Killingly library, Summer 2022.

Parent Comments about Staff and the Importance of the Program

Very caring and patient.

The staff was great and very helpful

The program and everyone involved are awesome!!

The staff is great. They work well with the children and encourage my son to read.

All the staff/teachers who take part in this program are so great. They are great at getting my child engaged and excited to come back each day.

Parent Summary Comments and suggestions for the Future

The six parents who answered the question about suggestions for the future said: *Nothing* in response to this question about what to change. Some final comments follow.

Thank you for running this program.

We love our library and people in it!!



Lots of Choices – Books to Select, Killingly, Summer 2022.

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MANCHESTER

The **Manchester** site again decided to make RfG available through distribution of weekly literacy kits, however without the strong Family Liaison connection they enjoyed in 2020, only 3 families (5 children) participated. No in-person instruction or family events were held. Available details about the 5 participating children are shown in Table 8 below.

Norma Nevers, the RfG program coordinator from Manchester Public Library reported that it was especially challenging to recruit the families who were involved for Summer 2022. All had participated in the past and the new resource coordinator was not able to identify any additional families to participate. The literacy packages, like those they used in Summer 2020 included books, games and literacy activities. Ms. Nevers confirmed that the focus with all the materials was sight words, plus levelled readers and fun books popular with children in grades K – 3 and representative. For example, she provided the book *Desmond Cole Ghost Patrol* to the 3rd grade boy. It is a chapter book with a boy character who is a person of color. Other children got Marvel super heroes books in a recent package and she has available *Pete the Cat* and *Clark the Shark*, plus dot markers and dot and learn journals, and literacy games that definitely are designed to be played with families and can include multiple age level participants. The packages were delivered on Thursdays during meal time but parents were also not participating at the meals. An incentive plan was devised for the summer but parents/guardians needed to engage to receive incentives.

Table 8: Enrollment Details, Manchester Ready for the Grade

	2022 N=5	2020 N=25	2019 N=9
Grade in Fall			
PK/Kindergarten*	0	1	0
First Grade	1	12	2
Second Grade	3	3	3
Third Grade	1	9	2
Fourth Grade*	0	0	0
Gender			
Female	0	11	5
Male	4	14	3
Race/Ethnicity			
Asian	0	0	0
Black/African American	1	9	5
Hispanic/Latinx	3	10	1
Native American	0	0	0
White	0	0	0
Biracial	1	5	1
Other	0	0	0

* Grade level enrollment requirements were relaxed somewhat for 2020.

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Parent/Guardian Feedback

A total of 10 Family Check-In Surveys were completed and returned about the READY for the Grade (Ready Readers) summer program in Manchester, 2022. Among those who shared feedback, responses were very consistent: all families rated the materials in the kits from the various weeks as *excellent and very helpful* and they verified that their children were reading the books included and that, with one exception, the books were at the right reading level. Parents also reported that children were playing the games and completing the literacy activities and crafts.

Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

Ms. Nevers met with the resource coordinator at Squire Village multiple times over the summer. At the first meeting she presented information about RfG and what could be achieved and she clarified how valuable the resource coordinator position is. At the 2nd meeting, the coordinator was very interested in working with RfG, but wanted a program for pre-school children. Plans for National Night Out were also discussed and the Library did participate in that event.

Ms. Nevers reported that RfG Manchester would change for next summer. As long as school and Covid challenges are more normalized, she would like to return to in-person programming, preferably 3 days per week with a possible extension for individualized instruction. She also indicated that she would like to engage teachers, especially those that might be known to the children, though she worries that it will be hard to get teachers because of summer school. Ideal candidates would be those who are not too rigid and interested in pursuing literacy activities and games. Teenage helpers would also be deployed.



Books, crafts and games fill the Manchester RfG literacy kits.

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NEW HAVEN – STETSON BRANCH

With support from the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts, New Haven initiated a new RfG program at the NHFPL Stetson Branch now located in the new Dixwell Q-House Community Center.



Development of both New Haven RfG programs were affected by the loss of NHFPL Director John Jessen at the end of May. His passing left the community stunned and saddened and delayed some decisions related to program start-up. Despite the community-wide loss, the delays and basic challenges of integrating into a space that had recently opened and was part of a larger collaborative initiative, RfG was able to initiate programming at the beautiful new library facility. Two new instructors, Shefau Dabre and Kim Dickey were identified, both of whom, (like their many RfG colleagues) are public school teachers with substantial experience. The new staff members were able to connect well with the library staff, children and families and were able to recruit 13 participants,

8 of whom were appropriate for and able to fully engage in the brand-new program. The Stetson team, under the direction of Luis Chavez-Brumel, NHFPL Deputy Director and Branch Manager Diane Brown, initial enrollment and attendance goals⁷ and was well received by both the children and their family members. Participants at the brand-new New Haven – Stetson Branch, just like those from other RfG sites received the support they needed to maintain or build up their reading skills, they accessed instructionally appropriate books, earned incentives and spent quality time in the library. Participant response and parent feedback about the new program mirrored responses of counterparts in long-running RfG programs. Details follow.

Program Implementation

Individual and Small Group Instruction. RfG New Haven – Stetson Branch conducted individual instruction for all participants and some small group work as well. Like their Wilson-Branch counterparts, RfG-Stetson Branch used the *Reading A-Z* program and made multiple books and take-home practice activities available for children. The library made REAdy for the Grade 45 minute individual instruction available Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10:00 and 3:00, and held “late days” on Wednesdays from 12 – 6 which included small group activities. Most students came 1 – 2 times per week. The teachers had children use the *Reading A-Z* program on tablets and then included printed versions for children to take-home for additional practice reading with family members. They also incorporated related worksheets with writing and art reinforcement of the reading assignments, and practiced vocabulary, rhyming words and sight word recognition too using flashcards and other literacy skill development games. The instructors focused on stories related to the African Diaspora, corresponding with a similar emphasis at the new Stetson Branch facility, and incorporated in mindfulness techniques to help students build confidence and interest for reading. Observed instruction was excellent. The complete program was still being developed, but a strong foundation was established.

⁷ As a new program, RfG NH – Stetson Branch had planned to recruit up to 10 families for their inaugural summer.

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Parent Engagement and Incentives. RfG New Haven – Stetson Branch did not provide any individual or culminating sessions with families, but they did conduct an orientation session and then provided tips to parents during pick-up and drop off for individual sessions. The program provided snacks for children at each session and gift cards for regular attendance.

Enrollment

A total of 8 students were enrolled for the initial New Haven – Stetson Branch READY for the Grade Summer program 2022. Full registration data was only available for five of these students but It helps to establish descriptive information that can be monitored as the program moves beyond its initiation phase. The background characteristics of those who participated were similar to participants from other sites and reflective of the local community. These initial data will be useful to monitor trends for future summers.

- The program served rising Kindergarten – 3rd grade students. About two-thirds of these initial participants were females, one-third were males.
- The race/ethnicity of all of the participating students was identified as Black/African American, and all students identified the primary language spoken in their homes as English.

Attendance

Review of available attendance records for the New Haven – Stetson Branch program reflected its nascence. Initial recruitment was somewhat delayed, but as the summer progressed, students participated regularly. A total of 52 hours of programming was provided to the 8 students with each averaging about 1.5 hours/week once they initiated programming (some students started much later than others and total hours of programming ranged from 4 to 10 across the possible 6 weeks).

Achievement

As shown in Table 9, achievement results were recorded for 6 of the 8 participants using pre- and post Pioneer Valley assessments. Each of the tested participants maintained or improved their scores. Like their peers in the other, more established RfG sites, **these participants did not lose ground over the summer.** The teachers noted that students had become more excited about reading and were eager to participate and show off their new skills. During the observation it was clear that the instructor connected easily with the student she worked with, and skillfully brought in a mindfulness activity to enhance reading confidence and success.

Table 9: Assessment Results, New Haven - Stetson Branch RfG, Summer 2022

Grade	Test pre	Test post	RESULT
3	C	C	Maintained
	D	D	Maintained
	A	A	Maintained
K	AA	A	Increased
K	AA	A	Increased
1	AB	BB	Increased

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Parent/Guardian Feedback

New Haven – Stetson Branch RfG only collected 3 parent/guardian surveys about its first ever READY for the Grade summer program, but both staff and the NHFPL Deputy Director began hearing requests from parents throughout the summer recognizing the existence and importance of the program. These requests mirrored those made from parents with children in more mature programs – for more hours, possibly year-round involvement, and options for younger and older children. All three of the parents/guardians who did answer a survey verified that their children benefited from participating in RfG summer 2022. All 3 respondents rated the program as *excellent*, all reported that it was *very important* to have had the program summer 2022, all reported that as a result of participating in the program their participating child read more over the summer and all 3 reported their child felt more confident reading. The following comments exemplify parent sentiments about RfG initiation at the new NHFPL Stetson Branch.

I liked that he learned lots of words even before kindergarten.

I would make [RfG] more frequent! Every day if possible.

Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

The New Haven – Stetson Branch READY for the Grade program was welcomed to the beautiful new Stetson Branch library for its inaugural year summer 2022. The RfG team got off to a somewhat delayed start due to multiple community challenges including the death of longtime NHFPL Director John Jessen and some unavoidable transition issues related to the opening of the new space. Despite these challenges, the new Stetson Branch program identified very experienced educators to initiate the program and it was well received by participants, families and the new Dixwell Q-House Community Center overall. The new space is beautiful and very accommodating and a firm foundation for enhanced program growth was established. While the program was still building enrollment and identifying effective ways to promote regular attendance throughout the summer, implementation and student outcome results definitely began to mirror those achieved by the longer-established programs. Parent comments (collected via surveys and as reported by NHFPL leaders) confirmed that these efforts were appreciated and that there is definite interest to stabilize and grow the new program; the *“word is getting out”* and *“parents want more.”* Site staff were already discussing how to expand their outreach and considering a proposal similar to that suggested for the Wilson Branch to host a community-wide information session at the library well before summer start-up 2023.

Like the other sites, New Haven-Stetson Branch engaged experienced staff who worked very effectively with students, conducted meaningful literacy activities and began building all the elements of a successful RfG program (group and individual instruction, literacy development activities, parent engagement for rising 1st – 3rd graders who need additional assistance). There was a continuous focus on reading skill development along with access to appropriate books, as well as efforts to establish group exposure to shared reading experiences. The results, in alignment with those recorded for other sites including positive teacher and standardized reading assessment data and positive feedback from parents, provided clear evidence of early success. **New Haven - Stetson Branch demonstrated the strength and flexibility of the READY for the Grade model and like other sites that kicked off new programs, is poised to build from summer 2022 for future efforts.**

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NEW HAVEN – WILSON BRANCH

New Haven was able to re-constitute its in-person program at the **Wilson Branch** for the first time since 2019, despite the very sad loss of New Haven Free Public Library Director John Jessen at the end of May. Like the Killingly site, new instructors were involved (3), with Geoconda Berrios returning to lead the group and help maintain family connections from prior years. The program was overseen by Luis Chavez-Brumell, Deputy Director of the New Haven Free Public Library, with additional support from Branch Manager, Meghan Currey. The new RfG staff members together with Ms. Berrios were also very strong educators who connected well with the children and families who were happy to be accessing the RfG supports and the Wilson community space again. The team conducted both group and individual instruction, used AV/tech for reinforcements and added live music options to their sight word learning. Observed instruction was excellent. Family engagement was provided through distribution of projects and take-home meals, and books were regularly distributed. The program met modified enrollment and attendance goals and was well received by both the children and their family members. All 13 participants received the support they needed to maintain or enhance their reading skills, they took full advantage of available programming, accessed instructionally appropriate books, earned incentives, and had fun. Details about the program follow.

Program Implementation

Group Instruction. Every Tuesday and Wednesday the New Haven-Wilson RfG program conducted group instruction sessions from 2:00 – 4:00 at the library. These community-based sessions brought the students together to read a picture book (with all oral presentation in English and Spanish), practice sight words (including via song accompanied by guitar), and engage in movement and arts-based literacy activities as children broke into smaller groups. One older, former participant also helped out.

Individual Instruction. Each student was also assigned to and then worked 1:1 with one of the staff members in individual 1 hour instruction sessions each week on Thursdays. After an initial assessment of independent reading level, each session was tailored to the students’ reading level and specific areas of focus. All sessions were conducted at a time on Thursday that worked for the family and tutor and all used *Reading A-Z* books <https://www.readinga-z.com/>. Each instructor worked with 3 – 4 students throughout the summer.

Family Nights. A modified version of these popular events was included again summer 2022. A family orientation session was held and then weekly projects were distributed after individual sessions, for families to complete (expected completion time = 1-hour). Families were provided with materials to do the projects and take-away dinners too. At the end of the summer an in-person pot-luck taco night was held, with some instruction to help parents support their children’s literacy development and some activities too. All families brought some food and all received incentives for participation plus back packs for the new school year. The staff reported that parents were very supportive of each other and the teachers during the weekly sessions, staying to wait for their children and helping out whenever needed.

Partnerships. The New Haven-Wilson RfG program also began to re-establish enrichment connections offering two puppet shows over the summer and nutrition, health and exercise activities.

Incentives. Students who attended family night, two groups and individual instruction received \$20 gift cards for each week, awarded at the end of the program. Attending every week would total \$120.

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Enrollment

As shown in table 10a, the New Haven-Wilson READY for the Grade program served a diverse group of children summer 2022. It can also be seen in the table that the grade levels and descriptive characteristics of those who participated during summer 2022 were somewhat different than the groups that participated in prior summers. Total enrollment was much lower than for previous summers.

- As shown, all of the 2022 students were rising first (38%), second (23%), third (23%) and 4th graders (15%); a total of 58% were females, 42% were males.
- The students were diverse in terms of race/ethnicity (differently than either of the prior two years); 83% of participants were identified as Hispanic/Latinx, 17% were identified as Black/African-American, none were identified as “Other.” No students were was identified as White/Caucasian or Asian.

Table 10a: Enrollment Details, New Haven READY for the Grade

	2022 N=13	2021 N=24	2020 N=30	2019 N=41
Grade in Fall				
PK/Kindergarten*	0	0	0	2%
First Grade	38%	33%	40%	22%
Second Grade	23%	29%	33%	34%
Third Grade	23%	38%	17%	41%
Fourth Grade*	15%	0	10%	0
Gender				
Female	58%	58%	60%	68%
Male	42%	42%	40%	32%
Race/Ethnicity				
Asian	0	0	10%	4%
Black/African American	17%	50%	40%	20%
Hispanic/Latinx	83%	37%	47%	73%
Native American	0	0	0	0
White	0	0	3%	2%
Biracial	0	0	0	5%
Other		13%		
Primary Language at Home**				
English	--	63%	50%	49%
Spanish and English	--	29%	40%	44%
Other	--	8%	10%	8%

* Grade level enrollment requirements were relaxed somewhat for 2020.

** The primary language question was not asked summer 2022.

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Attendance

New Haven RfG has always included multiple session types and optional individual sessions for participation each week. As shown in Table 10b, students took full advantage of this for Summer 2022.

- As many as 33 total hours per student were possible, and on average students attended 31 hours. Six of the 10 students with attendance data recorded had perfect attendance, and all but one attended half or more of the possible sessions. Attendance for all options was very consistent.
- The 10 students with full attendance data participated in a total of 309 hours of instruction/participation during summer 2022 including 37 hours through family nights; 212 through group instruction and 60 hours through individual instruction. On average, each student participated in about 4 hours of family night instruction, 21 hours of group instruction and 6 hours of individual instruction, 31 hours total.

Table 10b: Attendance Details, New Haven Ready for the Grade, Summer 2022, n=10

	Total Hours Available	Total Available per Student	Total Hours Attended	Mean Hours Attended per Student
Family Nights	40	4	37	4
Group Instruction	240	24	212	21
Individual Instruction*	50	5	60	6
TOTAL	330	33	309	31

*Students could elect to participate in one or two individual instruction sessions each week

Achievement

As in the prior summers, all students participated in a reading assessment during the first individual instruction session where their independent and instructional⁸ reading levels were determined using the *Reading A-Z* program. Staff used these assessments to customize instruction strategies and where possible engaged parents/guardians and other family members to help reinforce specific skills. The books used during individual and group instruction sessions were available to participating families and all children were encouraged to read silently and to others in-between sessions. A comparison of initial session and final session reading levels showed that 3 students (33%) were at the same independent reading level (e.g., June independent reading level = B, August independent reading level = B) and 6 students (67%) advanced at least one level (e.g., June independent reading level = E, August independent reading level = F). While several students were still reading below their appropriate grade level (hence their need for RfG), **no students lost ground over the six weeks of the program.**

⁸ An independent reading level is the one where the reader knows most of the words and can comprehend the text without too much difficulty. A book at an instructional reading level is more challenging for the reader, but not too hard.

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Table 10c: Assessment Results, New Haven – Wilson Branch RfG, Summer 2022

Grade	Test pre	Test post	RESULT
1	AA	AA	Maintained
1	A	B	Increased
1	AA	A	Increased
1	A	C	Increased
2	E	F	Increased
2	A	B	Maintained
2	F	G	Increased
3	AA	A	Increased
3	B	B	Maintained

Parent/Guardian Feedback

A total of 8 parents/guardians answered a brief survey⁹ about the READY for the Grade summer program in New Haven, 2022. As shown in Table 9d and the following comment, as they had in Summer 2021, all or almost all Summer 2022 parents verified that they and their children benefited from participating in RfG. Additionally, all respondents agreed that program leaders were helpful and that they planned to sign up again.

Table 9d: Parent/Guardian Feedback, New Haven-Wilson Branch READY for the Grade, 2022

<i>% who answered YES to the following questions</i>	2022 N=8	2021 N=14	2020 N=12
Did your child read more over this summer?	100%	93%	100%
Do you feel more confident with helping your child read?	87%	100%	100%
Does your child feel more confident as a reader?		100%	92%
Did your family read more over the summer?	100%	86%	92%
Were the program leaders helpful?	100%	100%	100%
Will you sign up again next summer?	100%	100%*	100%

*Includes 7% who said “maybe.”

My daughter gained a great deal of confidence. It’s still something we are working on but I can see it improving. She’s still shy but I see her raising her hand more often.

⁹ Note that the parent survey was administered by the New Haven RfG program. Some parents had more than one child participating. This version of the survey was modified from the version used at other sites.

Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

New Haven RfG was able to re-boot their in-person program for Summer 2022 after a challenging start, identification of multiple new staff members and community-wide uncertainty due to the loss of the NHFPL Director. The instructional staff, under the leadership of longtime RfG educator Geoconda Berrios and with input from Luis Chavez-Brumell, Deputy Director of NHFPL elected to continue using the *Reading A-Z* program and to reinstate strategies from the multiple years of in-person programming that preceded the pandemic. They returned to old favorites like *sight word rap* and instituted new live-music opportunities to promote learning. Most of the families and all but one of the instructors were new to RfG, but the program re-established the welcoming family appeal, and once again accomplished important results. They moved back into the library space, established a new team of educators, successfully recruited and engaged 13 students and their families and helped them to maintain or in most cases advance specific reading abilities. Staff reported that they had been especially successful at helping students, all of whom were either new to the school system, or the country, or especially lagging behind given persistent disruptions from Covid, develop increased confidence about reading along with their skills. The staff also reported that the children were very happy to be part of the program and that the whole group of families had built a sense of community while learning together.

Despite the additional challenges of continued pandemic restrictions, and balancing multiple summer programming options, parents, as staff pointed out, became very receptive and engaged with their children’s involvement. They established and stuck to the weekly group and instruction schedules and maximized the opportunities to participate in family learning. Although staff were clear that programming options were much different than in the days when they could pack the room with all the families for a communal meal and learning time, the modified approach worked. The final, pot-luck session was an especially joyous opportunity for families to come together and celebrate summer accomplishments.

The staff reported they met weekly and learned quickly to work together and rely on one another to keep the program on track. Luis Chavez-Brummel described their efforts and overall success at reinstating the in-person program as a *huge win for the team*. They were all especially appreciative of Geoconda Berrios who stepped up to take on the leadership role after the former, beloved program leader who had become a new mother, and her two family members who had strongly supported the online program, elected not to return to RfG for summer 2022. The new team all felt very supported by each other and problem-solved together to make sure that children and families felt welcomed and supported by the program. They regularly read books in English and Spanish and selected both fiction and non-fiction topics that interested the children and reflected community diversity. They each brought important talents to the team and they described program operations as smooth and Ms. Berrios’ leadership as amazing, despite it being the first year they worked together and the first time since 2019 that programming was in-person. **Staff plan to return for summer 2023 and are hopeful that next year the program will again be back at the library and that they will be able to begin their recruiting process earlier so that a larger group will be able to participate. The team, including Luis Chavez-Brumell, are interested in developing a late spring info session to take place at the library to promote early registration and reach more families.**

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ROCKVILLE

Rockville Public Library collaborated with Skinner Road Elementary School, Vernon, CT (the home school of instructor Maureen Kearney) again for summer 2022 to bring RfG to 32 children who participated in-person (note this was about three times as many children as last year and almost back to pre-pandemic totals). As for last year, transportation was provided and multiple books were distributed. Mrs. Kearney also provided virtual instruction to 1 child who was not able to participate in person. No family events were held, but a culminating experience for children was included for Summer 2022. The program was designed and overseen by Maureen Kearney, a reading specialist with 37 years of teaching experience who has directed the RfG program for multiple years and this year added Carri Clark, also a very experienced teacher from Skinner Road Elementary. The two educators worked with Jennifer Johnston, Library Director of the Rockville Public Library. Additionally, the program engaged a high school-aged intern and two former participants (now middle school students) to help with the children. Through both the Rockville Public Library and the RfG program, once again, families had access to books to use for at-home reading practice. The school district made sure there was space and transportation for participants and the Rockville Library helped ensure that all needed supplies were readily available and families got the incentives provided for participation. The program met enrollment and attendance goals and was well received by both the children and their family members. All participants received the support they needed to maintain or enhance their reading skills, they took full advantage of available programming, accessed instructionally appropriate books, earned incentives, and had fun. Details about the program follow.

Program Implementation

Small Group and Individualized Instruction. The program ran for 6 weeks, every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:30-11:30 (no lunches served, but snacks were provided). During the sessions each week, the children practiced their reading skills using pre-packaged levelled books, participated in themed literacy-based activities (e.g., listening to a book read by the instructor and discussing key information) and themed art enrichment activities (e.g., the theme for week the program was observed was the Rain Forest– see appendix for examples). Many non-fiction books were used, and robust reading activities and daily edible craft projects were once again undertaken. Children also had opportunities to work in small groups with Mrs. Kearney’s puppet collection (to work on settings, problems and solutions), and each day to work in very small groups or individually to practice reading skills silently and with an instructor using levelled books that they chose from pre-packaged offerings. Each week children selected books to take-home for their personal libraries and extra reading practice. The students had opportunities to receive individual instruction from both staff members, and they got help with their craft projects from the student volunteers too. In addition to the group at the Elementary School, the instructor also Zoomed with 1 student 1-2 times a week throughout the summer (each virtual lesson was 30 minutes and the instructor dropped any needed additional materials at her home).

Parent/Family Member Involvement and Incentives.

Parent/Family member events were not conducted during summer 2022, but the instructors sent home books for parents/family members to read with children, and they were encouraged to read together nightly. Plans

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to conduct virtual family events summer 2023 are still under consideration. Books and small prizes were used as daily incentives and all participating families got gift cards from Rockville Library at the end of the summer.

Enrollment

As shown in table 11a, the Rockville READY for the Grade program 2022 increased in size substantially as compared to summer 2021. It can also be seen in the table that the descriptive characteristics of those who participated have varied somewhat over the years. For 2022:

- The program served rising 1st (12%) 2nd (48%) and 3rd graders (36%), and 1 4th grader. These were all Skinner Road Elementary School students known to the instructor as in need of additional support. Once again, this included 1 virtual student. A total of 61% were females, 39% were males.
- The student group was diverse in terms of race/ethnicity and reflective of the local community; 3 (9%) of the participants were identified as Asian, 5 (15%) were identified as African American, 9 (27%) were identified as Hispanic/Latinx, 0 were identified as Native American, 13 (39%) were identified as White/Caucasian and 3 (9%), were identified as biracial.
- All but three students spoke English as their primary language at home, 1 student spoke Spanish at home, 1 student spoke Tamil, and 1 student identified Telugu as his primary language.

Table 11a: Enrollment Details, Rockville READY for the Grade

	2022 N=33	2021 N=14	2019 N=46
Grade in Fall			
PK/Kindergarten*	0	0	0
First Grade	12%	43%	26%
Second Grade	48%	36%	39%
Third Grade	36%	21%	30%
Fourth Grade*	3%		
Gender			
Female	61%	64%	50%
Male	39%	36%	50%
Race/Ethnicity			
Asian	9%	7%	2%
Black/African American	15%	14%	20%
Hispanic/Latinx	27%	14%	16%
Native American	0	0	0
White	39%	50%	36%
Biracial	9%	14%	25%
Primary Language at Home			
English	91%	79%	93%
Spanish	3%	14%	0
Other (see above)	6%	7%	7%

Note: full registration data were not collected summer 2020. *Enrollment guidelines were somewhat relaxed due to Covid. The participating 4th grade student was a sibling, his test score data were not included in achievement results.

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Attendance

As stated above, Rockville conducted its six-week program at the Skinner Road Elementary School for three days each week from 8:30 to 11:30 (a total of 51 possible hours per student, 9 hours each week except the first week when students met only twice, covering much of the “out-of-school” summer time). Review of attendance records showed that most participants attended regularly.

- In total Rockville provided 1218 hours of programming to the students who attended in-person, and 12 hours of virtual programming available to the student who connected via zoom.
- On average each of the in-person students participated for 39.3 total hours (range was 15 - 51 hours).
- All but three students attended more than half of the possible hours, attending multiple days each week for multiple weeks (22 students attended three-fourths or more of the possible hours including 4 who attended all but 1 session and 6 who had perfect attendance).

Achievement

All 30 (1st – 3rd grade) students with pre- and post-test data, including the one who attended virtually, maintained (53%) or increased their scores (47%). Like each of the other RfG sites, **these participants did not lose ground over the summer.**

Table 11b: Assessment Results, Rockville READY for the Grade, 2022

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Pre</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>RESULT</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Pre</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>RESULT</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Pre</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>RESULT</u>
1	B	B	Maintained	2	F	G	Increased	3	J	J	Maintained
1	C	C	Maintained	2	G	H	Increased	3	L	L	Maintained
1	C	C	Maintained	2	G	H	Increased	3	L	L	Maintained
1	C	C	Maintained	2	G	H	Increased	3	L	L	Maintained
				2	G	J	Increased	3	M	M	Maintained
				2	H	I	Increased	3	M	M	Maintained
				2	I	J	Increased	3	M	M	Maintained
2	D	D	Maintained	2	I	J	Increased	3	N	N	Maintained
2	H	H	Maintained	2	I	J	Increased	3	F	G	Increased
2	I	I	Maintained	2	I	K	Increased	3	I	K	Increased
2	K	K	Maintained	2	I	K	Increased	3	L	M	Increased

Note: The RfG instructor from Rockville uses F & P tests from pre-program July to post-program October.

Parent/Guardian Feedback

In addition to informal sharing, a total of 4 parents/guardians answered a brief survey¹⁰ about the READY for the Grade summer program in Willimantic, 2022. As shown in Table 11c, and the following comments, all parent respondents verified that their children benefited from participating in RfG summer 2022. Additionally, all respondents rated the program leaders *excellent* and all reported they planned to sign up

¹⁰ The parent survey was administered by RfG staff in hard copy form and then transferred by them to Survey Monkey for analysis for this report.

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again next summer. Their comments regarding the staff and the importance of the program were especially enlightening.

Table 11c: Parent/Guardian Feedback, Willimantic, REAdy for the Grade, 2022

	2022 N=4
# who rated the program <i>good</i> or <i>excellent</i> (4) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	4
# who rated the staff <i>good</i> or <i>excellent</i> (4) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	4
# who reported the REAdy for the Grade Program was <i>important</i> (1) or <i>very important</i> (3)	4
# who answered yes to the following	
As a result of participating my child/children read more over the summer	4
As a result of participating, my child/children feel more confident reading	4
As a result of participating my family was inspired to read more over the summer	4
Will you sign up again next summer	4
What did you like about the program?	
<i>Perfect fit for our family - hours, location, staff</i>	
<i>Everything</i>	
<i>The children always had so much to talk about. They learn more than reading. Like skills, kindness, comfort</i>	
What did your child gain being part of the program?	
<i>A great experience. Summer reading with friends & teachers and learning through hands- on activities.</i>	
<i>Learning can be fun.</i>	
<i>Confidence in their ability to learn</i>	
<i>Reading and socializing</i>	

Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

As assessed by Mrs. Kearney, the program continued to “*work like a dream.*” Comments made to Mrs. Kearney and reported through her further confirmed reports through the parent survey that the program met parents/family member and student needs and everyone was excited about and grateful for the option to participate. The Rockville Public Library and Skinner Road Elementary school collaboration continued to work very well (the principal wants to expand it) and the program is solidly back in-person and easily replicable for summer 2023.

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WILLIMANTIC

Willimantic, with support from the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts, initiated their 8-week in-person program at the Willimantic Public Library. A total of 17 children participated in group and individual instruction and their family members also participated in a culminating family celebration. The program was designed and overseen by Dan Paquette Library Director and Frances McGrath, Head of the Youth Department with Project Coordinator Michelle Dupuis a local teacher. The program is staffed by four local educators, including one with OT credentials, and all five women bring substantial experience and expertise to this new program (the full READY for the Grade application is available on request). Despite starting while Covid concerns and limitations still existed, the site did not experience any serious initiation challenges, and in its first year, the program met enrollment and attendance goals.¹¹ The program was well received by both the children and their family members. Although it was the inaugural summer, participants in Willimantic, just like those from other RfG sites received the support they needed to maintain or build up their reading skills, they increased their confidence regarding reading, they accessed instructionally appropriate books and made full use of the library space, they received healthy dinners and enrichment programming, and were excited to come to the program to participate. Details follow.

Program Implementation

Individual and Small Group Instruction. The Willimantic Library ran their READY for the Grade program from 5:00 until 7:30, twice per week, for a total of 8 weeks, with a half hour break for dinner each evening. Teachers did large group instruction in a special all-purpose room at the start and end of each evening, and then broke the children into small groups for individual literacy-based activity centers that included games, phonics and sight words reviews, silent reading, one-on-one help and craft projects. Observed instruction was excellent. Each week the group was also visited by the Mystic Aquarium for special programming. Teachers worked with the whole group and then each managed one center, with the lead teacher floating and working with groups or individuals as needed. The staff also included a teenage volunteer who worked one-on one with children. The centers were stationed around the library and the program maximized space while the library also remained open. When the Mystic Aquarium educators visited, RfG children joined with other youth to participate in the weekly special programming that brought their literacy themes to life.



Small group phonics practice, Willimantic RfG program, Summer 2022

Incentives. Participants were provided with healthy meals each session and treats before leaving. Additional incentive strategies were not used but may be considered for Summer 2023.

¹¹ Willimantic RfG intended to serve between 15 and 20 students for their inaugural year and to hire at least two experienced teachers plus aides.

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Parent Engagement. Willimantic did not do weekly parent engagement sessions for their first year of programming, but they did develop a culminating family session that included pizza and a celebration of accomplishments with some literacy tips as well. It was very well attended and well received.

Enrollment

As shown in table 12a, a total of 17 students were enrolled for the initial Willimantic READY for the Grade Summer program 2022. It can be seen in the table that the descriptive characteristics of those who participated were similar to participants from other sites. These initial data will be useful to monitor trends for future summers.

- The program served rising kindergarten (18%), 1st grade (24%), 2nd grade (6%), 3rd grade (29%) and 4th grade (24%) students. Just over half (59%) were females and 41% were males.
- The student group was diverse in terms of race/ethnicity and representative of the local community; 4 of the participants were identified as Asian, 1 of the participants was identified as Black/African American, 6 were identified as Hispanic/Latinx, and 6 were identified as White/Caucasian.
- A total of 9 students spoke English as their primary language at home, and the others spoke English and another language - Pashto, Urdu, or Spanish - as the primary languages at home.

Table 12a: Enrollment Details, Willimantic READY for the Grade

	2022 N=17	
Grade in Fall		
PK/Kindergarten	3	18%
First Grade	4	24%
Second Grade	1	6%
Third Grade	5	29%
Fourth Grade	4	24%
Gender		
Female	10	59%
Male	7	41%
Race/Ethnicity (n=8)		
Asian	4	24%
Black/African American	1	6%
Hispanic/Latinx	6	33%
Native American	0	0
White	6	35%
Biracial	0	0
Primary Language at Home		
English	9	53%
Spanish and English	4	24%
Other (see above)	4	24%

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Attendance

Willimantic conducted its 8-week program at the library on Tuesday and Thursday evenings 5:00 – 7:30 (two hours twice per week) including dinner. Review of attendance records for the Willimantic READY for the Grade program summer 2022 showed that most participants attended regularly.

- In total, Willimantic provided 348 hours of programming to the 17 students, including 11 students who participated throughout the summer, and 6 who initiated participation but withdrew.
- On average, the 11 students who participated throughout the summer attended for 27 total hours (range was 18 – 32 hours). Two students attended 100% of the available sessions and all but one of the others, whose family was away for two weeks, attended almost every session.

As at other sites, all participants were encouraged to do daily practice work and to read regularly between sessions using books selected from the library or provided through the program.

Achievement

Achievement results were recorded for each of the 11 participants who were enrolled throughout the summer. Assessments of letter and sound recognition, word power, and *EasyCBM* passage reading were conducted according to students’ grade level and initial skills (several students were English Language Learners) (see Table 12b). Each of the tested participants maintained (4 of 11) or improved their scores (7 of 11), and improvements in specific skills were documented for all participants. Like their peers in the other, mature RfG sites, **these participants did not lose ground over the summer.**

Table12b: Assessment Results, Willimantic RfG, Summer 2022

Grade	Pre Assessment	Post Assessment	Result
K	15/18 consonant names 15/18 consonant sounds 7/60 1G power words	16/18 Consonant names 16/18 consonant sounds 6/60 power words	Maintained
K	10/18 consonant names 10/18 consonant sounds	13/18 consonant names 10/18 consonant sounds 1G Power Words 1/60	Maintained
1	11/18 consonant sounds 15/18 consonant names, 3/60 power words	16/18 consonant names 16/18 consonant sounds 7/60 power words	Increased
1	14/18 consonant sounds 0/18 consonant names	12/18 consonant sounds 9/18 consonant names	Increased
2	31/60 1G power words	41/60 1G Power Words	Increased
3	15/18 consonant sounds 15/18 consonant names 2/60 1G power words	16/18 consonant sounds 16/18 consonant names 10/60 1G power words	Increased
3	Easy CBM gr. 3 passage 3.1 112 WPM	Easy CBM gr. 3 passage 3.2 93 WPM	Maintained
3	Easy CBM gr. 3 passage 3.1 40 WPM	Easy CBM gr. 3 passage 3.2 74 WPM	Increased
4	1G 18/23 consonant sounds 19/23 consonant names 7/60 1G power words	21/23 Consonant sounds 21/23 consonant names 23/60 1G power words	Increased

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Grade	Pre Assessment	Post Assessment	Result
3	2G 45/60 power words 1B Zone 1-17/30 words Zone 2 2/35 words	2G 51/60 power words 1B Zone 1-23/30 Zone 2-31/35 Zone 3 11/25	Increased
5	Easy CBM Gr. 5 passage 5.1 53 WPM	Easy CBM Gr. 5 passage 5.2 56 WPM	Maintained

Parent/Guardian Feedback

A total of 11 parents/guardians answered a brief survey¹² about the first ever READY for the Grade summer program in Willimantic, 2022. As shown in Table 12c, and the following comments, all parent respondents verified that their children benefited from participating in RfG summer 2022. Additionally, all respondents rated the program leaders *excellent* and all 11 reported they planned to sign up again next summer. Their comments regarding the staff and the importance of the program were especially enlightening.

Table 12c: Parent/Guardian Feedback, Willimantic, READY for the Grade, 2022

	2022 N=11
# who rated the program <i>good</i> (1) or <i>excellent</i> (10) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	11
# who rated the staff <i>good</i> or <i>excellent</i> (11) on a scale ranging from poor to excellent	11
# who reported the READY for the Grade Program was <i>important</i> (1) or <i>very important</i> (10)	11
# who answered yes to the following	
As a result of participating my child/children read more over the summer	11
As a result of participating, my child/children feel more confident reading	11
As a result of participating my family was inspired to read more over the summer	11
Will you sign up again next summer	11
What did you like about the program?	
<i>Everything X 2</i> <i>The child to instructor ratio was great.</i> <i>The activities The teachers</i> <i>Hours of operation, staff, flexibility, and the curriculum which my son thoroughly enjoyed.</i> <i>It helped keep Jackson focused and ready for the new school year</i> <i>I liked how hard they worked with the kids. We learned so many things.</i> <i>I liked the hours of operation, staff, and the location.</i> <i>Healthy dinners provided were a wonderful bonus.</i> <i>That she had a good time reading and being with the teachers and kids.</i>	

¹² The parent survey was administered by RfG staff in hard copy form and then transferred by them to Survey Monkey for analysis for this report.

Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

The Willimantic READY for the Grade program was welcomed into the Willimantic Public Library and participating children fully used the space and felt comfortable in the library. The RfG team established strategies for large and small groups and even some individualized instruction and they optimized a partnership with nearby Mystic Aquarium to bring additional programming to the students. The program met initial enrollment goals and staff agreed that it has room to grow for future summers. Teacher and other staff recruitment was very effective; attendance was very good, though multiple children did leave due to moving, vacations, or other interests. No serious initiation challenges were faced and student outcome results mirrored those achieved by the longer-established programs. Additional parent comments (see box at right) show that these efforts were appreciated. Every parent who answered the question about suggestions for future changes (6 out of 11) said “Nothing.”

Like the other sites, Willimantic engaged experienced staff who worked very effectively with students and each other. They conducted theme-based literacy activities and encouraged students to know the library and to check out books (for those with library cards). Staff interacted with parents/guardians during pick up/drop off and developed a culminating family engagement session for the end of the summer. There was a continuous focus on reading skill development along with access to enrichment activities and shared literacy development experiences. The results, in alignment with those recorded for other sites, illustrated by consistent attendance, positive standardized reading assessment results and especially positive feedback from parents, provided clear evidence of success. **Willimantic fully demonstrated the strength and flexibility of the READY for the Grade model and is poised to continue and build from summer 2022 for future efforts.**

<p style="text-align: center;">Parent Comments</p> <p>About Staff and Importance of the Program</p> <p><i>Willimantic Public Library was a great host.</i></p> <p><i>Staff were patient, understanding, knowledgeable, and extremely helpful</i></p> <p>I am very happy the kids learned so many <i>things!</i></p> <p><i>Every teacher was great, patient, and compassionate about teaching.</i></p> <p><i>Kind, caring, fun.</i></p> <p>What I feel my child gained</p> <p><i>More confidence with reading skills.</i></p> <p><i>More interest in reading.</i></p> <p><i>More knowledge of the ocean, reading confidence.</i></p> <p><i>Confidence in herself.</i></p> <p><i>They learned so much and it is very important.</i></p> <p><i>Reading techniques, better understanding of words, and overall the confidence to learn new things.</i></p> <p><i>Able to read fluent.</i></p> <p><i>Progress in her reading</i></p> <p><i>Reading skills</i></p> <p><i>She got extra practice with her reading skills. Hopefully this kept her from sliding during the summer break.</i></p> <p>Summary Comments and Suggestions for the Future</p> <p><i>Very helpful and awesome.</i></p> <p><i>I would have like that there would be a program in Spanish</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for thinking about the kids and helping them read.</i></p>

Overall, I'm so so pleased with how our program went and I can't wait to do it again! F. McGrath.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

READY for the Grade was successfully conducted, in person, at multiple sites summer 2022. This included initiation of two new sites (New Haven – Stetson Branch and Willimantic), reconstitution of staff at two sites (Killingly and New Haven – Wilson Branch), limited implementation of a literacy kit strategy in Manchester, and continuation of in-person programming at Hamden and Rockville. All the sites continued to face some enrollment challenges due to slightly delayed outreach/start up for some and competing summer school and camp programs for most, but each of the six sites successfully developed plans and engaged multiple families for multiple weeks. Program implementation varied as appropriate by site, but all operating sites were effectively able to deliver important supports to local families. At all six sites, participants had positive achievement outcomes and parent/guardian feedback across the board was decidedly positive as well. In every case, parents/guardians reported directly or through RfG staff that RfG experiences were making an important contribution to sustaining and advancing student literacy skill development. The distribution of books and other literacy materials with suggestions and instructions regarding their use were especially well-received by all. Once again, the sites brought quality instruction to learners, and although RfG experienced staff turnover, new highly skilled staff replaced those who left so that overall staff capacity remained very good. As stated throughout the report, the individual sites, were able to customize their programs to meet local needs while still implementing most or all of the key components of the RfG model: the sites, including the two new ventures, were able to discern what was needed, make and shift partnerships and maintain RfG presence and programming designed to once again help participating students enter school in September ready to learn.

The Program served 114 students during summer 2022. In total there have been 1,430 participants (duplicated count) across the nine years RfG has been operational. Each year this has included: students with various racial/ethnic identities. Almost all of these students were receiving free or reduced-price lunch and most of those recruited were reading below grade level. Following continued instability during the 2021-22 school year and accumulated losses, all students were potentially behind for fall 2022, and outreach was more challenging, but each program (except the two newest programs) returned to a focus on rising 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade students for summer 2022. Total hours of programming varied by site and in accordance with specific strategies, but each of the programs provided opportunities to engage students for multiple hours weekly throughout multiple weeks during the summer. All sites sustained participation over the summer, and they encouraged and supported the efforts of families and students to continue reading and using their skills at home and after the programs concluded. At all six sites there was clear evidence that students maintained or enhanced reading skills. Despite some continuing challenges “READY for the Grade” continued to provide powerful opportunities to promote literacy skill development and academic preparation.

Challenges and Next Steps

Summer 2022 included both a return to in-person programming and expansion, but outreach and enrollment were still somewhat challenging for most sites. One site (Manchester) was not able to fully deliver the program. Summer 2022 also included many accomplishments including site initiation and reconstitution of staffs and very consistent participant outcomes and parent feedback.

- Once again, changes, challenges and future options varied substantially by site.
 - Hamden, fully implemented their program for the second summer, continued to effectively use their space in the library, and was able to identify and replace a key staff position. Outreach and recruitment of families/students remained challenging though and the program was somewhat under-enrolled. All other elements of the program (instruction, family engagement, participant attendance and skill development outcomes) were very effective and the full program remains ready for ongoing replication with specific attention to enhanced and targeted outreach to those families/students most in need of the services.
 - The Killingly site largely returned to its original model. They continued some individualized instruction, but were also able to bring back group instruction and extend their hours somewhat as well. Outreach and recruitment delays at the Village at Killingly resulted in low participation there, but RfG managed to provide full summer experiences at both locations, attendance was reasonably good and all but two students had positive achievement results. Killingly was also able to replace the two staff members who left (one returned) and will definitely be able to deliver the program successfully for future summers as well. As for all other sites, Killingly will also need to continue to pay specific attention to ensuring that families/students most in need of the services participate, and they should revisit options for parent/family engagement.
 - New Haven - Stetson Branch was able to initiate its program despite some community-level challenges, though it will likely need earlier outreach for future summers. The program should easily be able to expand in terms of numbers of participants in future years, and more robust program implementation including more group programming and additional parent/family engagement. Initially available instructional programming for students was effective and a very experienced education team was identified (though more members may be needed if there is program expansion). As for all other sites, New Haven - Stetson Branch will need to continue to remain vigilant to ensuring that families/students most in need of the services participate.
 - New Haven - Wilson Branch largely returned to its original, in-person model, while fully reconstituting their staff – only one former staff member returned and she effectively took on the leadership role. The site continued individualized and group instruction and conducted modified family night activities. Though the program had a noticeably smaller enrollment than in years past, attendance was good and all students had positive achievement results. New Haven – Wilson Branch should definitely be able to ramp back up and deliver the program successfully for future summers. As for all other sites, they will also need to continue to pay specific attention to ensuring that families/students most in need of the services participate.

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- The Manchester site was not able to conduct any in-person programming summer 2022, but did work to provide some literacy kit distribution. Outreach and enrollment were very limited however. Plans for 2023 are TBD.
 - The Rockville site continued to deliver in-person instruction at the location they moved to summer 2021 (Skinner Road Elementary School in Vernon Ct.). Through the ongoing partnership between the school and the library, full instructional programming for students was continued, a new educator was added to the team, group size limitations were lifted and the program was fully enrolled (though there is room for growth in the future). The model and site location can be used for future summers, and efforts to extend the program to more students (at the request of the principal), possibly even more students from different locations as well as to incorporate additional parent/family member programming may be pursued for summer 2023. As for all other sites, Rockville will need to continue to remain vigilant to ensuring that families/students most in need of the services participate.
 - The Willimantic site was able to initiate its program without any major challenges. The program may be able to expand in terms of numbers of participants in future years, and incentives and additional parent/family engagement may be pursued, but full instructional programming for students was available and a very effective education team was identified. The model, including the partnership with the Mystic Aquarium can definitely be replicated for future summers. As for all other sites, Willimantic will need to continue to remain vigilant to ensuring that families/students most in need of the services participate (and this may include expansion through satellite locations for the future).
- Grade level reading will remain very challenging for future participants especially given the known losses many students have experienced. For the foreseeable future, many or maybe even all potential RfG students may be substantially behind and in need of support and this will likely be disproportionately true for students who do not speak English as their primary language at home.
 - Recruitment and outreach were challenges faced by most sites, including Manchester where the challenge resulted in a very limited program. Small shifts in the demographic profiles of participants and RfG staff reports all indicated that there are likely students and families in each of the communities who do not know about RfG or were not able to participate in available programming. Earlier and community-wide outreach may be necessary for most sites.
 - Summer 2022 was the fourth year for Evaluation Services oversight of evaluation tasks. In-person site visits were reinstated across the board, but some individual site data collection strategies still had to be employed to summarize initiative outcomes (especially regarding testing and parent surveys). All sites facilitated evaluation throughout the summer and made it possible to share detailed findings this year with more cross-site consistency than for summer 2020 of 2021. It is the plan for summer 2023 to continue all cross-site evaluation strategies (on-site observations, collection of standardized enrollment, attendance and achievement data, staff interviews and parent surveys). The evaluation reporting timetable will continue to operate on the regular Board schedule (November reporting).

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Summer 2022 - Images and Observations

Hamden

The downstairs all-purpose room at the Brundage Community Branch Library in Hamden continued to be a perfect meeting space for RfG. It easily accommodates groups and tables for individual instruction.



Group activities after a Frog and Toad chapter. Hamden RfG, 2022. Brundage Community Branch Library

Story Time and Activities: The Lost Button, Frog and Toad

Hamden’s Jody Goggins-Kelly lead a terrific lesson today based on one chapter – *The Lost Button*, in *Frog and Toad*. With white boards, some actual buttons and the book, the children were completely engaged.

She started the lesson by asking students if they had ever lost anything. After she was sure that everyone knew about losing things, she got the group ready for the story and lesson. She prepared them by discussing some “tricky” words they would encounter. All the words were on cards attached to the white board with a picture. She would say the word and ask someone to define it – and then ask a student to find it on the board, show her the picture of the word, another student spelled it and another made a sentence with the word, and then as a group they figured out how many syllables in the word. This had the students up and down as they were called on and all eagerly asking for a turn. Next, she asked the kids to pick one of the tricky words to be the word they would all listen specially for. Then as she read the story each time the word came up – the students all snapped or clapped to indicate they had heard it. This made everyone listen extra carefully.

While Ms. Goggins-Kelly was reading the story she stopped frequently to ask the children lots of comprehension questions (e.g., How many buttons are on his shirt), and she asked them to compare and predict as well. After she was done with the chapter she reviewed some key decisions and descriptions and then she gave the children the task of putting the story all back together again using index cards with sequencing descriptions. Each child had a few cards all mixed up and they worked together to re-build the story (see image next page).

After the sequencing activity all students got individual white boards and a bag of buttons of all different sizes and colors. They were then asked to sort the buttons and compare the buttons and write and later read sentences about their buttons (e.g., “I have 14 round buttons.”) They could choose their descriptor: color, size, shape, number of holes. As they finished, the instructor did one last little written quiz for comprehension.

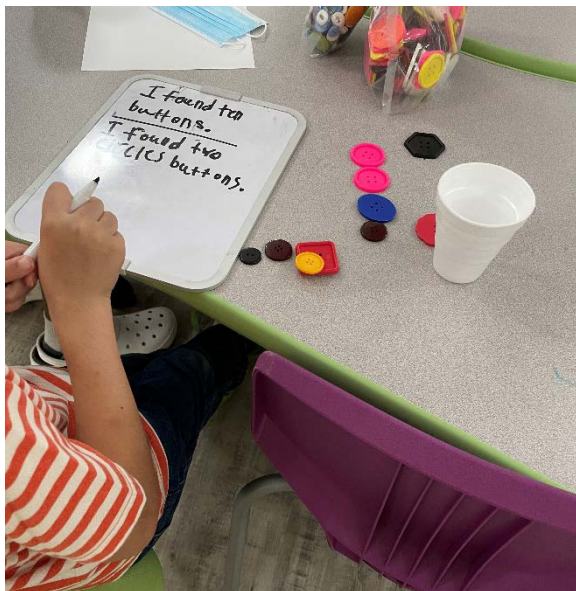
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Identifying tricky words before reading a chapter.



Re-sequencing The Lost Button.



Sorting Buttons Activity.



After Frog and Toad activities, everyone took a trip to the library, to look at books on their own or listen to another story.

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Final Family gathering at the library, Hamden 2021

Family Night Virtual Activities

Week 1 Trivia Event

Week 2 Clay Molding Activity (parent led)

Week 3 All About Superheroes (Miss Jody’s brother led this)

Week 4 Key Chain Frog craft (RfG staff led)

Week 5 Planting Activity (RfG staff led)

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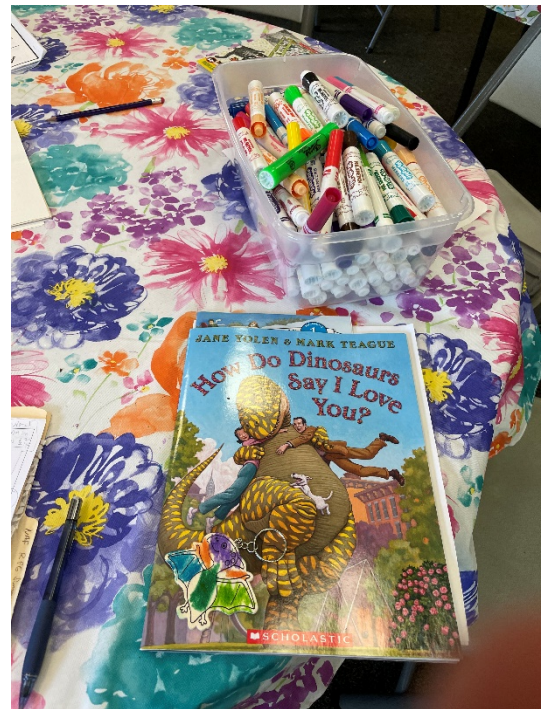
Evaluation Services, 2022

Killingly



Children from the Village at Killingly listen to a story as part of their daily activities.

They also get to choose books to read on their own and each child works on literacy development projects like “All About” books that they make with an instructor at the brightly colored tables in the community room. RfG alumni help them learn.



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Killingly



Lesson Observation – Killingly

Evaluation Visit during Animal Week – Remarkable Readers, RfG 2022

- 1) Read Aloud. Instructor read ABC Animal Riddles to all the children (and everyone had been encouraged to bring their favorite stuffed animal to enjoy the story too).
- 2) Children broke into 3 groups – Cathy’s group was working on Coyotes; Holly’s group was working on Ostriches and June’s group was working on Frogs.
- 3) Each group read a non-fiction, levelled reader on their animal. First the teacher checked to see what students already knew about their topic, then she read the whole book and everyone discussed the content as they read, then the children took turns reading out loud. The teachers asked children lots of questions to check for comprehension and vocabulary understanding.
- 4) After reading, children in each group completed “All About” Books on their topic. These worksheets were also leveled (e.g., the youngest children filled out a simple worksheet with 4 facts and drew a picture, older children completed similar worksheets with more detailed questions about habitat and body features.). Everyone used their books as references to fill in the worksheets. This provided writing practice and something to take home. When children finished their writing activities, they got to play individualized sight word games, about which they were very excited.
- 5) At the end of the session, kids selected books and did a little independent reading.

***Note, usually there is a 30 minute Read aloud to start and then 3 20-minute rotations. The day of the observation, the instructors had planned to try a more in-depth reading and writing activity, so there were only two rotations. The third rotation is usually a hands-on craft. The schedule at VAK is very similar.*

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New Haven – Stetson - Branch

Lesson Observation: Individual Instruction
(*This lesson was focused on the L sound*)

The instructor initiated the session with some breathing activities: first some deep breaths with 1 hand on heart and 1 on belly. Then the participant and next the instructor took turns taking deep breaths while expanding and contracting the *breathing ball*. Once the student was very focused, instruction began.

1. Reading the Story: *At the Library*

The instructor and student accessed *At the Library* through *Reading A – Z*, on a tablet (and there was a take-home copy too).

They started by looking at the title page, the author and illustrator, and the instructor reminded the student to listen for the L sound. First, she read a few pages, then the student did. She stopped frequently to check on comprehension and offer tips.

2. Identifying the Main Idea

After discussing what main ideas are, the student completed a worksheet to help further clarify the concept, and then because this participant was very artistic he also decided to draw pictures for each detail, as homework.

3. Recognizing the L sound – worksheet

The instructor and the student reviewed this worksheet together – a series of pictures (of words) and for each the child had to say what the picture was (e.g., Lamp), and whether it started with the L sound. He did a great job.

4. Homework

The student got a copy of the book and his Main idea worksheet to take home and read to a family member and one more worksheet to practice writing sentences with periods.

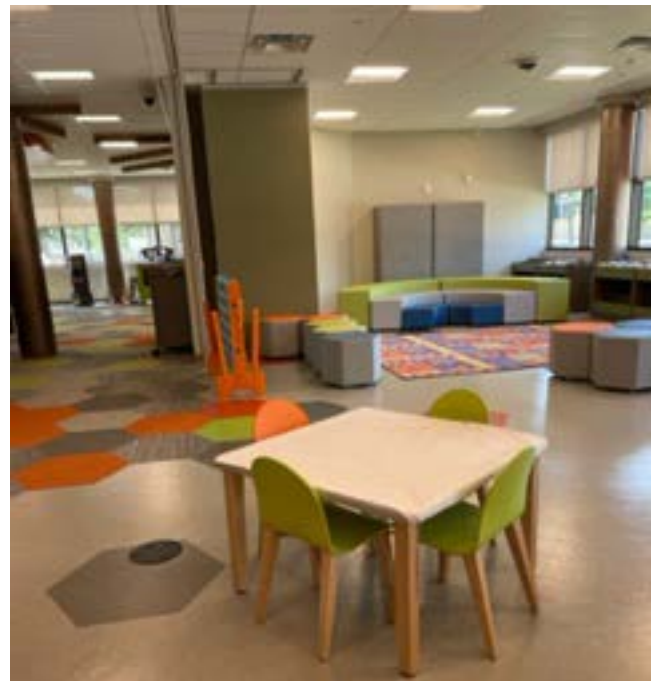


Therapeutic breathing ball, like the one used, by Shefau Dabre, New Haven – Stetson Branch, RfG

“I loved the way you looked at the pictures – good readers do that.”

“Good job looking back in the book to help find details. It’s like doing research.”

Examples of instructional tips



Youth activity space at the new, New Haven – Stetson Branch, library.

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New Haven – Wilson - Branch



IMG_4803.mp4



RfG participants at Wilson Branch were very busy. They started their session with a musically accompanied group rhyming/spelling practice activity (see the video via the link left). After singing together with Miss M, Miss Geoconda helped children present their family night projects from last week to everyone. Next the instructors read: *Biblioburro* to the children in English and Spanish, and then everyone discussed the story. After the story, the children went to their small groups where they worked on letter and sound recognition (younger) and writing (older – How does the Library help you?), and each group illustrated their work. After small group time, they returned to the rug to share their work and hang it on the wall (see the picture of the burro above). Kids then did Sight Word Rap – displayed on the projector (instructors made sure everyone was singing/spelling along). Next they had snack and then followed that with another book: *I Like Myself*, which, they also discussed and shared things they liked about themselves. The day ended with sight word reading, a final song to practice rhyming words and a sounding-out activity.

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Rockville

Lesson Observation: Rockville

The students started their day with a pleasure read. They picked books from those available and then read silently or to each other for a few minutes while everyone was getting settled in. After the pleasure read, students did a round of show and tell and then everyone headed for the reading nook.

Big Group Reading Activity: *If I ran the Rain Forest*

The group started out with some rhyming instruction from Mrs. Kearney who checks to make sure everyone remembers what rhyming words are. Then Mrs. Clark read a chapter out loud and allowed for the children to call out when they get to the rhyming parts. They read the chapter yesterday and they’ve been working on this theme for a while, so many children were able to “jump in” to supply the rhymes. The story works through the four floors of the rain forest.

After they’ve read the last chapter of the book, Mrs. Kearney drew everybody’s attention to the summary sheets on the wall (see image next page), and they reviewed all four floors of the rainforest, and what they said they already knew when they started the unit(A), then they reviewed and filled in more info about (B) What they learned about the rainforest, and Mrs. Kearney asked if there was anything else to add to their “I Wonder” questions. During this process she called on different children to participate in the review (see the picture below of all the hands up). Everyone is eager to participate and they offer each other some shout outs as they go too about good questions or remembering important facts. (One child said *You did a good job drawing Mrs. Kearney*, and each time someone answered a question correctly or added something new, Mrs. Kearney said “Give ____ a hand.”). At the end of the review, Mrs. Kearney said “We are going to do a little more learning and then our food craft, an edible butterfly, since butterflies live in the rain forest. Then she reminded them that they have answered one of their “I wonder” questions when they read the last chapter of the book – everybody cheered.

Food Craft Project

Materials for the project were distributed then all the children completed their edible crafts following oral directions. After pictures, all the children got to eat their projects (a few opted to take them home).

Puppet Shows and Independent Reading (see next page)

Final Session: back to the Reading Nook to hear a chapter in one of the Magic Treehouse books.

The students all got stuffed animals to listen with for this session. Before the reading started there were many questions for the group: Where do the characters live?, How do they travel?, Why do you think I picked this book (it takes place in the Rainforest). Mrs. Kearney then tells them to listen for some fun facts, and reminds them to close their eyes and make pictures in their minds.

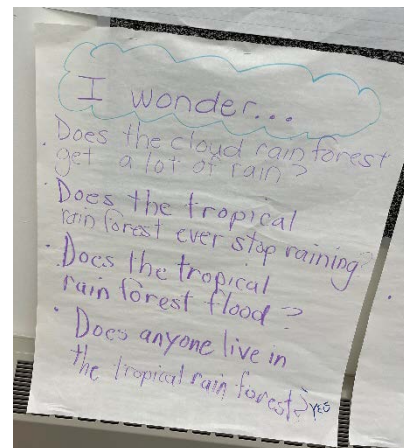
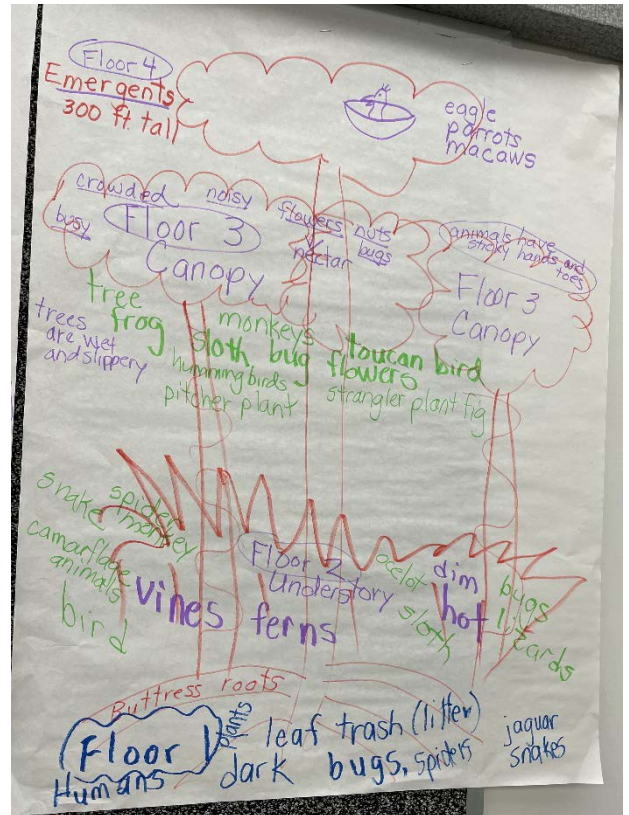
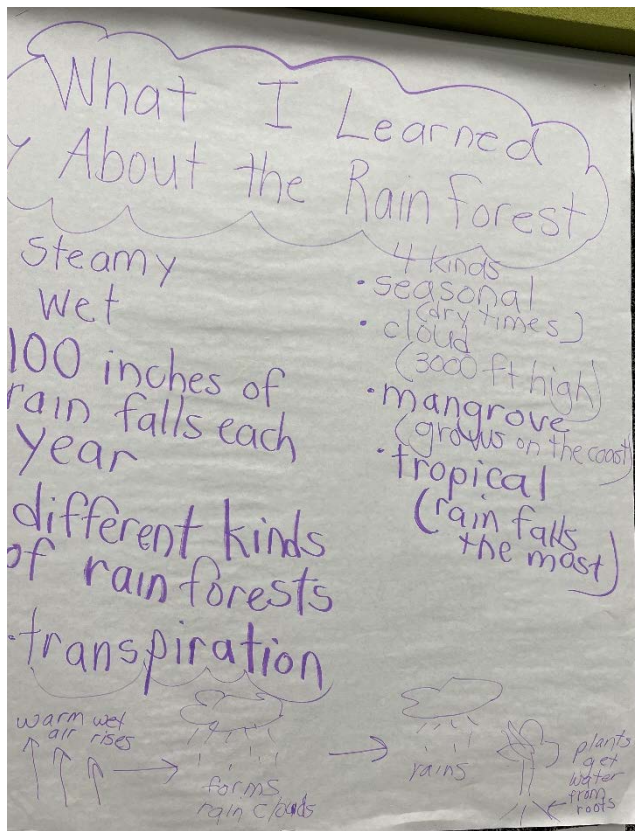
Final Craft Activity: Making cool chameleons

This is a continuation of a craft started yesterday. Mrs. Kearney asks: Why did we do this craft?” Students answer in unison, “Because chameleons live in the rainforest.”

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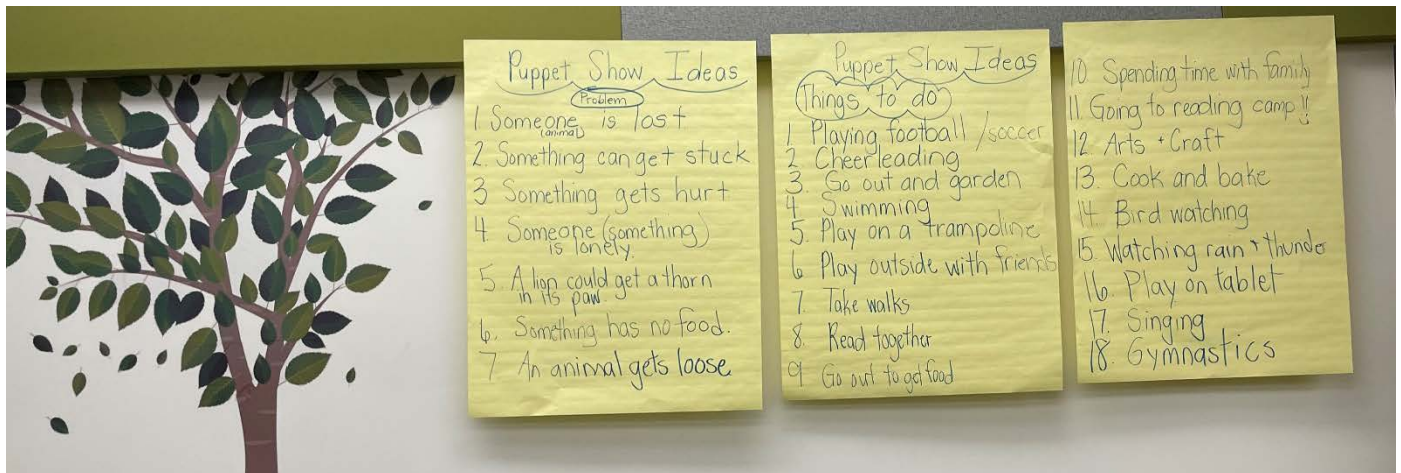
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Rockville



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The puppets are back! Everyone learns about settings, problems and solutions.



After group time, participants are split into two smaller groups. Half the children go into the reading room next door and read silently and to an instructor from books they have selected from their pre-packaged collections.

The other half stays and puts on short puppet shows in even smaller groups 3 – 4 are actors, 3 – 4 are audience. See chart above.



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Willimantic

Session Observation: Willimantic

Every session at the Willimantic RfG program starts with a healthy dinner and some socializing. Then students head upstairs to the all-purpose room in the children’s area.

1. Whole Group Reading. It’s Bird Week at Willimantic RfG, and so the group is reading *Penquins on Vacation*. Before they started the story, they also reviewed the weather and reviewed information they had discussed at recent sessions (sea gulls and pelicans) and discussed some facts about penguins. Then they proceeded with some Power Word practice and all the children had a chance to stand up and show how seagulls fly. Next the instructor read the story with great enthusiasm and regularly asked the children to predict what was going to happen, define words in the story and explain to each other what the penguins were doing. At the end of the story the children shared their opinions about it – everyone liked it.

The final activity in the all purpose room was to review the visit from the Mystic Aquarium from the previous week and to prepare for the shift to centers.

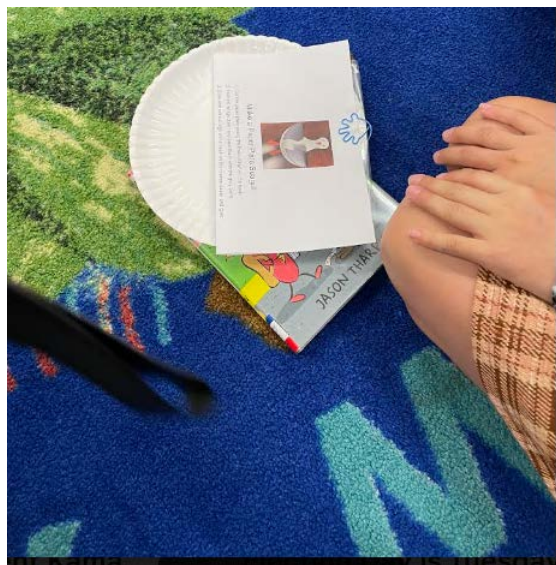
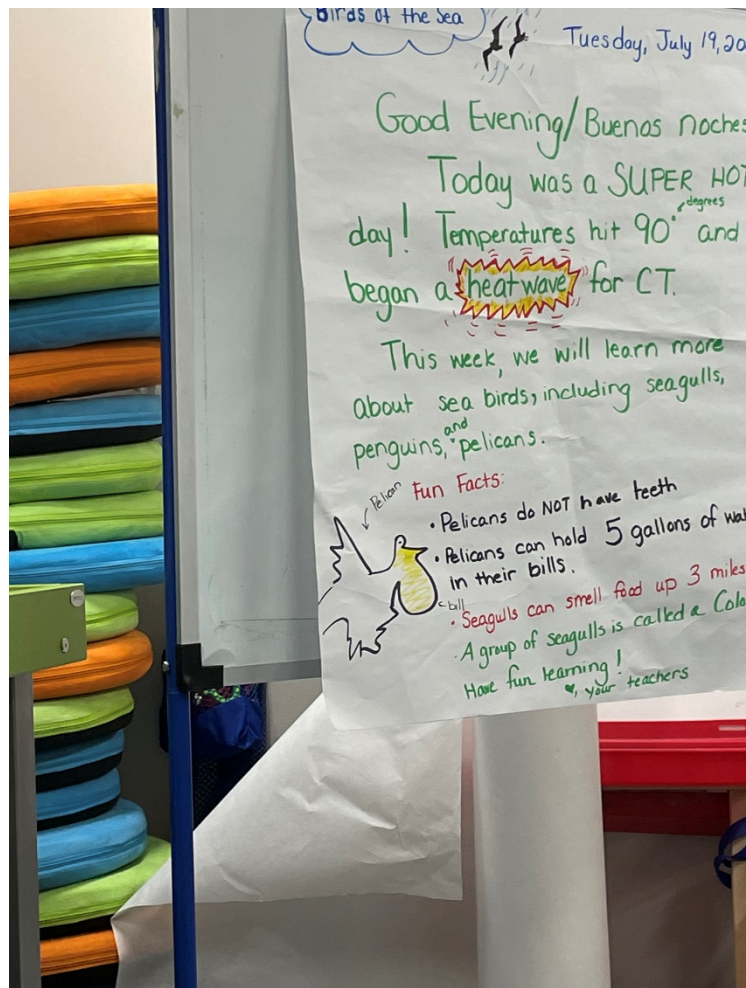
2. Break to Centers: 4 rotations, 20 minutes each.
 - A. Art – making a penguin (talking about and naming each piece of the design, following directions)
 - B. Read to Me: Children meet by the rockers and couch where a big carton of books is placed. They choose books and read out loud to each other, or read silently on their own. Their instructor helps them select the right book for their reading level and to record what they read in a running log. Books are in English and Spanish.
 - C. Literacy Games: This group is divided into younger and older children who are at separate tables. The older children are playing games with words and letters and also using white boards, the younger child gets one-on-one instruction.
 - D. Small Group Reading: Here two children are reading the same book – a non-fiction book about Sea Turtles. First the teacher reads and then each child reads each page with some helpful reading tips provided by the instructor. Children conclude this activity with some writing that goes into their folders and then they get to play a sight word identification game.
3. Closing Circle

After the centers end, the children return to the big rug in the all purpose room. Everyone gets a popsicle and then there is a chance for the children to go around the room and pick one word to describe themselves and say why, they follow that with a little group comparing activities (e.g., *What’s better hamburgers or hot dogs*) and then parents begin to arrive.

“READY for the Grade” Summary Results Report

Evaluation Services, 2022

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Willimantic hosted a well-attended family culmination party where families and kids celebrated accomplishment and learning together.

