186
Schools Served in School Year 19-20

3,500+
Teachers Trained in School Year 19-20

60,000+
Children Reached in School Year 19-20

$82 cts
of every dollar we spent went toward direct delivery in schools in School Year 19-20
DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Like many other organizations and schools across the country, School Year 19-20 began in a seemingly normal fashion. Over the summer, we had great success with our first Summer Institute for Literacy Leadership (SILL) in partnership with Crafting Minds and The Grimes Reading Institute. The results of the initiative were published in a white paper and generated interest from other school districts in replicating the summer program in their region. We launched professional development trainings for our Northshore Leadership Series in partnership with several organizations and districts in that region and were looking forward to further engagement with those schools in the spring.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the country ground to a halt. Schools had to pivot on a dime to virtual classes. But thanks to our nimbleness as an organization as well our expertise and technology, it had little impact on our ability to continue delivering necessary training to our school partners.

In fact, the demand for our services increased, driving us to accelerate our online delivery model. Within a short period of time, we were holding weekly district-wide professional development over Zoom and providing classroom support and virtual training on assessment programs. In our Connecticut K-3 Literacy Initiative, we supported two hybrid model summer school programs where we assisted the administration with coordination and provided training and coaching for the summer school teachers and interventionists. We even launched a new Science of Reading series and provided coaching and training for teachers on how to deliver effective instruction to students virtually.

Due to our investment in creating new technology to transition key components of our work to an online format, we were well-positioned to make this switch quickly and efficiently. Spring 2020 was a learning experience for every school in the county as well as organizations like ours. While we look forward to being able to return to schools, we’re eager to launch more online tools we have in development so we can reach those schools where they are, whether that’s in person or online, and have a positive impact on their students.

That’s a core part of our plans for the upcoming school year. We’ve added new components to our web application, HILL Online. We’re ready to pilot Roadmap, our new online needs assessment application, as well as introduce more of our schools to Continuum, the online data meeting process which we piloted in school year 19-20. And we now have Expertise, an eLearning platform that allows people to access our professional development remotely. While there is still much uncertainty about the upcoming school year, we’re ready to continue supporting all of our schools with robust virtual delivery for as long as necessary.

As a nonprofit, our organization’s ability to continue operations is due in part to the generous donations of community members and foundations. We don’t take the challenge of teaching kids to read lightly; according the latest NAEP results, 65% of 4th graders fail to read at grade level each year and we know that we can help them even if they aren’t in a physical classroom. Your support can have a tangible, meaningful impact on the lives of children in HILL schools. Donations can be made via our website www.hillforliteracy.org or by contacting the HILL office at 1-888-860-0190.

Best Wishes,

Darci Burns, Ph.D.
Executive Director

MISSION
To guide educators at all levels through the process of creating schools that excel in developing students’ language & literacy skills.

VISION
To help all US schools teach language & literacy effectively, with a million children moving from struggling to reading on level each year.

VIRTUAL PIVOT HIGHLIGHTS

We interviewed some of the participants in our CK3LI project who benefited from the HILL's virtual support between the time schools closed in March and June 30, 2020 and the positive response was overwhelming!

Every week I took away a new pearl, and something that I needed to change or implement into my routines with my kids. Just in the last six weeks alone, there’s a student I’ve worked with who’s an English Language learner, and he has absolutely blossomed.

Melanie Fieffe
Reading Interventionist
Norwalk Public Schools

TESTIMONIAL VIDEO:
bit.ly/HILLVirtual
IMPACT OF THE HILL SOLUTION

The HILL solution was adapted to a condensed, intensive setting in a recent initiative, the Summer Institute for Literacy Leadership (SILL), that trained 20 teachers across 4 districts over a 4-week period. With coaching from our institute staff, they taught 33 students (83% English Language Learners, on an IEP, or both) in grades 1-5 which resulted in impressive gains across all measures of phonemic awareness, decoding, and oral reading fluency in a short span of time.

SILL integrated coursework and practicum experiences designed to support the development of structured literacy practices that are critical for addressing weaknesses in reading. Presented in partnership with Crafting Minds and The Grimes Reading Institute, SILL was sponsored by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and hosted by the Somerville Public School District during Summer 2019.

The institute focused on three critical areas:
1. Building teacher background knowledge in the science of reading
2. Coaching educators as they plan and deliver Tier 2 Structured Literacy routines
3. Supporting teachers' ability to create learning environments that foster intrinsic motivation

Normally this work would be delivered throughout the school year, but for SILL we were able to do this in a controlled setting and condensed timeframe with remarkable results as illustrated in the graph, video, and white paper below.

```
"One of the most transformative PDs I've ever been involved in."

Dara Gibbons, M.Ed.
Learning Specialist
```
KEY PARTNERS
Black and Puerto Rican Caucus of the Connecticut General Assembly
Center on Teaching and Learning, University of Oregon
Center for Behavioral Education & Research, University of Connecticut
Commonwealth Learning Online Institute
Connecticut Commission on Women, Children, and Seniors
Connecticut State Department of Education
Crafting Minds
Educational Performance Systems, Inc
The Grimes Reading Institute
Keys to Literacy
Literacy How
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Professional Training Institute
Public Consulting Group
Rhode Island Department of Education
RMC Research Corporation
Schoolworks
The Reading Institute
ThinkSRS