

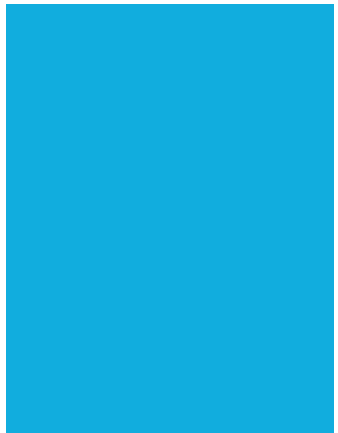


Sit Stay Read

2018-19 IMPACT REPORT



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF SITSTAYREAD





FROM THE FOUNDERS

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF SITSTAYREAD

In 2003, we started SitStayRead with a simple idea - unite kids and dogs to provide a unique approach to motivate students to become life-long readers. Smartphones were not in every hand, and technology wasn't essential to a student's life, at home or at school.

Now in 2019, screens, analytics, and apps are constantly seeking the "most efficient" way to solve problems and are taking over our world; however, adults and children alike still yearn for meaningful connection and shared empathy.

SitStayRead still provides that and more with an authentic, hands-on experience in every program, inspiring creativity that only happens because of caring volunteers and Certified Reading Assistance Dogs. This connection increases the students' interest level, curiosity, and engagement in reading and writing. SitStayRead shows students that they matter, and they receive the instruction, love, and attention they deserve to help them become active readers and creative writers.

This simple idea, along with your passion, support, and collaboration, has turned SitStayRead into a thriving community of volunteers, teachers, students, and donors **reaching 21,951 students in 651 classrooms since 2003.**

Thanks to you, SitStayRead continues to grow and seek new ways to motivate and inspire students. In 2019, SitStayRead was honored to support student authors and publish their third early reader book in collaboration with the Shedd Aquarium and the Perucca Family Foundation. SitStayRead also expanded to more kindergarten classes, jumpstarting the magic of SitStayRead that will follow them through third grade.

Today, there are over 100,000 K-3 students in Chicago Public Schools that qualify for SitStayRead programs but we are able to only reach 3%. Since 2003, the demand has always been higher than we can deliver. With your continued support, more teachers and students in Chicago can be part of the SitStayRead community.

It's simple to come up with an idea and get it started, but harder to keep innovating and growing the organization. Hats off to **you** for your incredible commitment to SitStayRead students and volunteers. **You've** given SitStayRead the resources to provide a quality, impactful program that keeps students engaged and helps them develop a life-long love of reading. **Your** support makes the authentic connection of SitStayRead possible for thousands of students each year, and **your** continued commitment to that reality will benefit thousands more to come.

Thank you,



MaryEllen Schneider



Sarah Murphy



MK Czerwiec

SITSTAYREAD FOUNDERS

***Pictured on Left:** The first SitStayRead student authors from the first second grade Tail Blazers program at Hendricks Community Academy in 2004. Hendricks Community Academy is still a partner, receiving Kindergarten, Little Buddies, Tail Blazers, and Poetry Pals programming.*



OUR MISSION

IS TO ADVANCE CHILDREN'S LITERACY SKILLS USING AN ENGAGING CURRICULUM, DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS, AND CERTIFIED DOGS.

IN 2018-19:

94

classroom programs

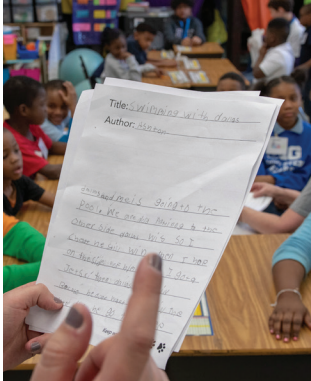


243

volunteers

Certified Reading Assistance Dogs

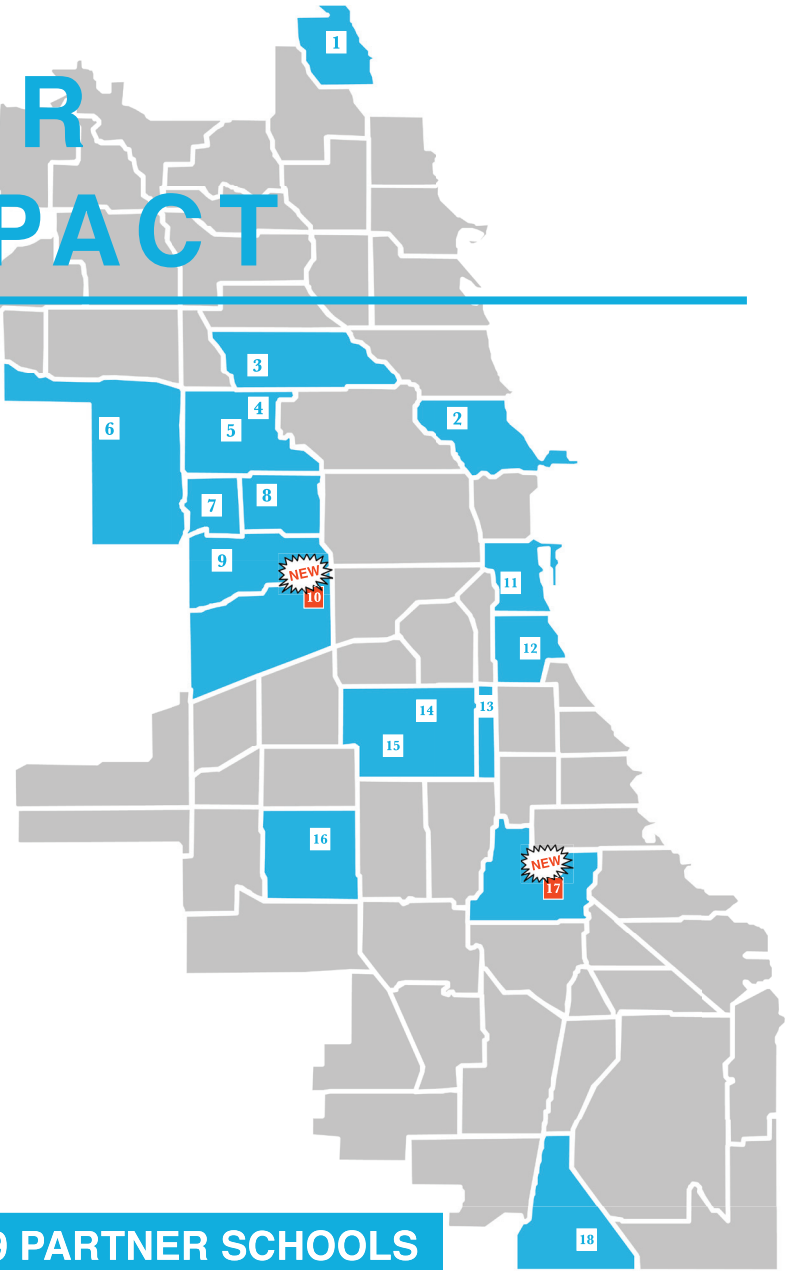
73



2,656

students served

OUR IMPACT



2018-19 PARTNER SCHOOLS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Gale Community Academy, <i>Rogers Park</i> | 10 Paz Elementary School, <i>Little Village</i> |
| 2 Manierre Elementary School, <i>Old Town</i> | 11 National Teacher's Academy, <i>Chinatown</i> |
| 3 Funston Elementary School, <i>Logan Square</i> | 12 Fuller Elementary School, <i>Bronzeville</i> |
| 4 Lowell Elementary School, <i>Humboldt Park</i> | 13 Hendricks Community Academy, <i>Fuller Park</i> |
| 5 Cameron Elementary School, <i>Humboldt Park</i> | 14 Hamline Elementary School, <i>Back of the Yards</i> |
| 6 Brunson Elementary School, <i>Austin</i> | 15 Fulton Elementary School, <i>Back of the Yards</i> |
| 7 Melody Elementary School, <i>W. Garfield Park</i> | 16 Marquette Elementary School, <i>Chicago Lawn</i> |
| 8 Faraday Elementary School, <i>E. Garfield Park</i> | 17 Tanner Elementary School, <i>Greater Grand Crossing</i> |
| 9 Hughes Elementary School, <i>N. Lawndale</i> | 18 Carver Elementary School, <i>Altgeld Gardens</i> |

IN THE CLASSROOM



2 NEW PARTNER SCHOOLS

This year, we added two new partner schools to the SitStayRead family - Henry O. Tanner Elementary School in the Greater Grand Crossing neighborhood and Octavio Paz Elementary School in the Little Village neighborhood. This brought our total schools served this year to **18**. We provide our programs at no-cost, targeting our partnerships at schools that serve students with less access to resources. In 2018-19, **94.4% of SitStayRead partner school students came from low-income households** and **73% of third-graders scored below the national average in reading***.

4 GRADE LEVELS

This year, we served kindergarten through third-grade students **in 94 classrooms**. Our newest Kindergarten program, piloted in 2018, reached 358 students in 14 classrooms. Our Little Buddies (1st Grade) program, focusing on social-emotional learning, was in 32 classrooms and served 740 students. The Tail Blazers (2nd Grade) program served 680 students in 24 classrooms, while our Poetry Pals (3rd Grade) program was in 21 classrooms serving 505 students.

**According to CPS data*

IN THE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

While our mission is primarily delivered through our programming in the classroom during the school day, we also offer community programming. Through participation in school-hosted Family Literacy Events, two summer programs, and other one-time program opportunities, we served an **additional 373 children** outside the school day and gave away **1,627 books** this year to students in the community.

FIELD TRIPS

Thanks to the generosity of our corporate supporters, we offered several field trips this year. Allstate Insurance Company joined us at Manierre Elementary, and our friends at KPMG welcomed five classrooms for three separate field trips, hosting SitStayRead from the top of the Aon Center.

Thanks to the Perucca Family Foundation, we were also able to take two second-grade classrooms from Funston Elementary to the Shedd Aquarium as part of the publishing of our third early reader book, “*Where Are You, Dozer?*” In the spring, the fun continued with a field trip to Navy Pier for three classrooms of students from Hendricks Community Academy.

Because of these partnerships, we are able to offer more unique experiences at no cost to schools and provide students with more opportunities to experience literacy in new ways!



KEEP READING CELEBRATIONS



13,698 BOOKS IN 10 DAYS

Our end-of-the-year Keep Reading Celebrations were our largest yet, with **22 Celebrations in 10 days** thanks to the help of our volunteers, Certified Reading Assistance Dogs, and our corporate partners.

Each of the 2,283 SitStayRead students across our 18 partner schools received a Summer Reading Fun Pack filled with pencils, erasers, a pencil sharpener, a notebook, a coloring book, a pack of crayons, a SitStayRead pencil case, a bookmark, an encouragement card, and a copy of our newest early-reader book *“Where Are You, Dozer?”*

Thanks to KPMG’s Family for Literacy program, each student also received **five brand-new books to take home** and fill their at-home libraries with, totaling **13,698 books given away in 10 days**. Sending SitStayRead students home for the summer with these vital literacy tools is an important part of our mission and we are thankful to KPMG for their generosity!

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped at Keep Reading Celebrations and who made encouragement cards throughout the year: ABOI/ID, Allstate Insurance Company, ARMA, BlueCross BlueShield of IL, BMO Harris Bank, Dogtopia Foundation, IRi, KPMG, Nielsen, PwC, and VML.

IN THE BOOKS

SHEDD-INSPIRED

Thanks to the Perucca Family Foundation, we took second-grade students from Funston Elementary to the Shedd Aquarium for a day of exploration and inspiration in the Amazon Rising exhibit. Students were sent on a guided activity, searching the exhibit for animals who are masters at camouflage.

Inspired by this activity, students wrote their own stories. SitStayRead Book Buddies, and Certified Reading Assistance Dog Cosi, were on-site to help students with their writing.

“WHERE ARE YOU, DOZER?”

Using inspiration from the stories, SitStayRead board member and children’s author, J. B. Blankenship, illustrator Cassandre Bolan, and SitStayRead staff, created our third early-reader book, *“Where Are You, Dozer?”* The book tells of Dozer, a dog who is invited to play a game of hide and seek at the aquarium and ultimately finds the perfect hiding place.

We commemorated the publishing of this book with a celebration for the student authors. The students signed copies of the book and each took a copy home to show their families the story inspired by their writing! This book was then given to all 2,283 students during the Keep Reading Celebrations in June and will enter our curriculum this fall. Want your own copy? You can purchase *“Where Are You, Dozer?”* on Amazon!



ON THE TOWN



RECORD-BREAKING SUPPORT

This year brought many new supporters to SitStayRead, starting with the **Midwest FurFest!** This annual event celebrating the furry fandom saw 10,700 attendees from 30 countries over their four-day convention. From donations, charity auction sales, charity events, and the FurFest itself, SitStayRead received **over \$92,000 in donations**, a record for SitStayRead for one event! Thank you to our Furry friends!

Also supporting SitStayRead through special events and fundraisers this year were friends from the ARMA, Funny Ha-Ha, Intercontinental Chicago Magnificent Mile, Medical Library Association, Mutt Jackson, Real Dog Moms of Chicago, Roosevelt Collection, U.S. Cellular, and Women & Children First bookstore.

BARK 'N BALL 2019

On Friday, April 26, 2019, we held our fifth annual Bark 'n Ball fundraiser, hosting a sold-out crowd at Galleria Marchetti. We had our largest and most successful event ever, with **345 attendees** (including 30 dogs!) **raising \$181,096!** On top of these milestones, all of the event expenses were covered thanks to our sponsors, especially our Premier Sponsors, Allstate Insurance Company and Kirkland & Ellis, LLP.

This memorable night was packed with an evening of entertainment including second-grade teacher Ashley Geyer, who moved everyone with her heartfelt speech about SitStayRead's impact in her classroom. It was a Bark 'n Ball to remember! Thank you to all those who attended or donated, and to Vanessa Brantley Newton for designing the Bark 'n Ball Poster this year!

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2018-19 FINANCIALS

INCOME

Corporate

Donations: \$23,944

In-Kind: \$69,431

Grants

Unrestricted: \$274,500

Family Foundations: \$48,200

Restricted: \$22,500

Individuals

Donations: \$107,534

In-Kind: \$13,452

Events

Donations: \$215,125

In-Kind: \$12,314

Other

Total: \$1,284

\$788,284

TOTAL INCOME

\$648,896

TOTAL EXPENSES

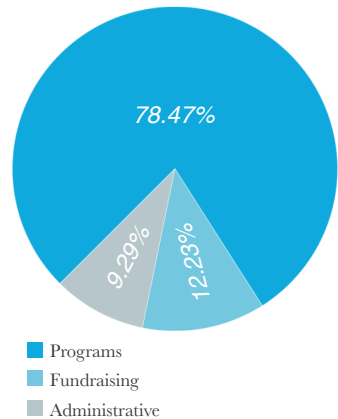
\$139,388

NET OPERATING INCOME

\$404,098

NET ASSETS

PERCENT OF EXPENSES



SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to photographers Jon Sall of Sall Pro Photography, Erika Dufour, and Andrea Mandel for the photos included in this report. Thank you also to Victoria Luisi for designing this report.

OUR SUPPORTERS

\$20,000+

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Bears Care + FDC Foundation + Midwest FurFest**

\$10,000-\$19,999

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Thank you to those noted for their continued generosity!

* denotes a monthly donor, + denotes a 5 year donor, ♦ denotes a 10 year donor

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