



# Y READERS

## WHITE PAGES 2022-2023

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The mission of Y Readers is to provide the additional support that students need to be proficient in reading by the end of third grade. The program operates as an afterschool and summer model, providing tutoring during out-of-school time hours to students in grades K-3 who are reading below grade level. Certified teachers and teacher assistants provide literacy instruction based on students' needs, and students also have the opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment activities, including physical activity, art, and field trips.

## FIDELITY MARKERS

While not an exhaustive list, the following fidelity markers are central to the program and contribute to the program's success:

Grades K-3

Offer both academic & enrichment components

Certified teachers plan and lead instruction

Focus on literacy

Host in school facilities

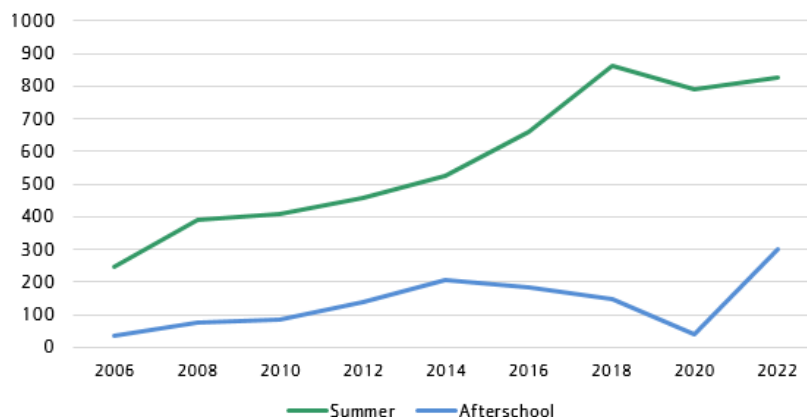
Free to families

## ORIGIN & HISTORY

In summer 1999, the YMCA of Greater Charlotte collaborated with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to launch a six-week literacy and enrichment camp. Originally named Project Starfish, the program was developed to prevent summer learning loss and served 40 students at Reid Park Academy.

The Y expanded the summer program to additional schools over the next five years and added an afterschool model at select schools during the 2004-2005 school year. The Y opened a Y Readers site in Mooresville Graded School District in 2004 and a site in Lincoln County Schools in 2012.

The Y also temporarily operated a virtual tutoring model to serve students during summer 2020 and 2021 when many families were unable to attend programming in-person. We resumed our traditional in-person model at all sites beginning in 2022.



## PARTNER DISTRICT

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

## PARTNER SCHOOLS

Albemarle Road Elementary

Berryhill School

Cornelius Elementary

Additional schools served:

Huntersville Elementary

J.V. Washam Elementary

David Cox Road Elementary

Governor's Village Academy

Greenway Park Elementary

Hickory Grove Elementary

Huntingtowne Farms Elementary

J.H. Gunn Elementary

Nations Ford Elementary

Reid Park Academy

Renaissance West Steam Academy

South Pine Academy

Starmount Academy

Statesville Road Elementary

## CONTACTS

### Program Operations

Claudia Navarro

Director of Academic Initiatives

[Claudia.navarro@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:Claudia.navarro@ymcacharlotte.org)

### Financial Giving

Lisa Schlachter

VP of Financial Development

[Lisa.schlachter@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:Lisa.schlachter@ymcacharlotte.org)

### Volunteers

Brooke Porter

Associate Director of  
Volunteerism

[volunteer@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:volunteer@ymcacharlotte.org)

# SCHOOL SELECTION

Although Y Readers is currently offered only at CMS schools, the need for literacy programming in surrounding school districts is reviewed on an annual basis. Because consistency and relationships are important to students and families, it is our intent to maintain long-term partnerships with schools. When considering new host schools, we collaborate with district leaders to identify schools with the greatest need and use the following criteria:

- Title I school (at least 35.65% of students meet Community Eligibility Provision guidelines, which is the district's measure of poverty)
- Not already partnered with another out-of-school time program that offers similar services
- Principal support and engagement
- Staff availability (teachers and teacher assistants able to work the program)

# STUDENT SELECTION

Y Readers serves students in kindergarten through third grade who are reading below grade level and would benefit from additional academic support during out-of-school time hours. In order to enroll, students must attend the host school and be recommended for the program by their principal or classroom teachers based on reading scores. We prioritize serving former participants if they continue to meet enrollment criteria.

# STAFFING MODEL

Given our focus on literacy instruction, educators are central to our staffing model. We hire teachers and teacher assistants to work with groups of 12–16 students, and a site director oversees management of the site. We prioritize hiring staff from our partner schools to lead the program based on principal recommendation. In addition to part-time staff at the program sites, we also have a team of full-time staff who support the program, including a director and literacy specialist.

# PROGRAM COMPONENTS

## LITERACY INSTRUCTION

Y Readers provides literacy instruction focused on the foundational skills that students need to read proficiently, including phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students participate in a daily minimum of 2.5 hours of literacy instruction during the summer program and 75 minutes during the afterschool program. With a maximum 1:8 ratio, our teachers and teachers assistants are able to provide small group, differentiated instruction. We utilize Sound Partners and Orton-Gillingham to teach foundational phonics skills, and we teach comprehension and vocabulary through interactive reading lessons.

## ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

In addition to literacy instruction, students also participate in a variety of enrichment activities during the summer program. Core activities include character development, physical activity, art, games, and off-site experiences. Weekly field trips during the summer provide opportunities for students to swim at Y branches and explore parts of the city outside of their own neighborhoods.

## FAMILY SUPPORT

The Y believes that parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Our staff provide families with information about each student's progress, as well as recommendations and resources to support learning at home.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

In partnership with CMS, the Y provides bus transportation, as well as meals and snacks.

## SUMMER LEARNING

A lack of academic and enrichment opportunities during summer means that many children experience learning loss in reading and math. Summer learning loss is particularly detrimental for students who are already behind in academic skills. The compounded effect of "summer slide" over multiple summers makes it harder for children to ever catch up and exacerbates disparities between subgroups of students.

## THIRD GRADE READING

The end of third grade marks the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. Third grade is a benchmark year in a child's education and is the best predictor of a child's success in school. 96% of students who are reading proficiently in third grade graduate high school on time. In contrast, students who are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school.

Based on recently released state test scores from spring 2022, 56.7% of all third-graders in CMS were not proficient in reading and the number was even higher (72.3%) at Title I schools.

## SAMPLE SUMMER SCHEDULE

8:00–8:30  
Breakfast  
8:30–9:00  
Morning Meeting/SEL Activity  
9:00–10:30  
Small Group Lessons  
10:40–11:10  
Writing  
11:10–11:30  
Sight Word Activities  
11:30–12:00  
Lunch  
12:00–3:30  
Enrichment Activities  
3:30–4:00  
Snack & Dismissal

# VOLUNTEERS

The YMCA recruits and trains community members to serve as reading buddies during the summer. Volunteers commit to read with students for one hour each week and receive training on how to read with students using Active Reading strategies: Ask Questions, Build Vocabulary, Connect to Their World. All volunteers must pass screening steps required by the YMCA and CMS, including background checks and Child Abuse Prevention training. Volunteer opportunities can be found online at [ymcacharlotte.org/volunteer](http://ymcacharlotte.org/volunteer).

# EVALUATION

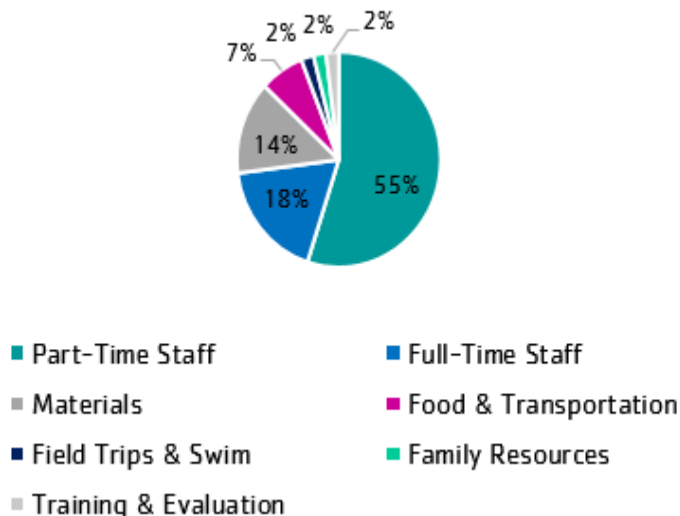
All Y Readers participants are pre- and post-tested to measure reading growth. During the summer, we measure whether students improve or maintain their reading skills, and during the school year, we measure whether students meet or exceed expected growth in reading skills. We currently utilize Learning Oventions A2i After School, a computer-based adaptive assessment that measures skills in decoding (grade-equivalent score) and vocabulary (age-equivalent score). We are evaluating additional assessment tools for summer 2023, as well as determining how to utilize CMS data to measure program impact more broadly.

In addition to reading scores, the Y also tracks home reading to measure family engagement, and feedback is collected from staff, parents, and principals at the end of each program cycle to inform program improvement and innovation.

# PROGRAM COSTS & FUNDING

The Y Readers budget is developed annually based on projected service numbers for the calendar year. The projected cost to operate Y Readers in 2023 is \$2,387,000 inclusive of \$1,668,000 for summer and \$719,000 for afterschool. With some variance based on the number of students served at each location, the Y invests approximately \$128,300 per school for summer (13 schools) and \$79,800 per school for afterschool (9 schools). The approximate cost per student is **\$1,588 for summer** (1,050 students) and **\$1,997 for afterschool** (360 students). As shown in the chart below, part-time staff account for over half of program expenses due to our continued commitment to employ certified teachers and teacher assistants.

Y Readers Expenses



## 2023 Staff Numbers

### Afterschool

10 Site Directors  
36 Teachers  
52 Teacher Assistants

### Summer

13 Site Directors  
11 Assistant Site Directors  
94 Teachers  
98 Teacher Assistants  
6 Translators

The YMCA is able to offer Y Readers programming at no cost to families thanks to the generosity of individuals who contribute to the YMCA Annual Campaign. The program also receives funding from local and national corporations and foundations. To learn more about funding sources and explore opportunities to support Y Readers, please visit [www.ymcacharlotte.org/give](http://www.ymcacharlotte.org/give).

## IMPACT REPORT

Our annual impact report with program outcomes can be found online at [ymcacharlotte.org/readers](http://ymcacharlotte.org/readers).

## PARTNERSHIPS

### Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

CMS provides facilities and instructional resources in-kind. The district also provides child nutrition and transportation as contracted services. The Y recently established a data sharing agreement with CMS that will allow us to track student progress during the school year.

### Promising Pages

The Y works with Promising Pages to get new and gently used books into kids' homes. Each Y Readers participant receives a minimum of 5 books each program cycle to build their home libraries.

### Read Charlotte

The Y Readers program utilizes Learning Oventions A2i After School in partnership with Read Charlotte. Read Charlotte also serves as a key thought partner as we innovate the program and evaluation methods to increase impact.

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION

In 2012, YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) adopted Y Readers as the National Signature Program for Summer Learning Loss Prevention. The program has since expanded to sites across the country.

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, listed Y Readers as a national "Bright Spot" for summer learning in 2012.

In 2014, Y Readers was recognized as one of three Excellence in Summer Learning Award winners by the National Summer Learning Association.