

K-3 Out-of-School-Time Reading Support in Philadelphia | Strategic Roadmap

Read by 4th

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PREPARED BY:



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. PROJECT PURPOSE

Read by 4th is a citywide campaign, managed by the Free Library of Philadelphia, focused on the vision that all children in Philadelphia will read on grade level by the time they enter 4th grade. Through its large coalition of partners, Read by 4th serves as a convener and driver of early literacy promotion across the city.

In January 2021, Read by 4th initiated a process, funded by the William Penn Foundation, to build a strategic roadmap for increasing student access to high-quality, targeted reading tutoring in out-of-school-time (OST) spaces, specifically for K-3 students who require one-on-one assistance or small group instruction from a trained reading tutor.

PROJECT PURPOSE

To develop a strategic roadmap to increase access to quality free or affordable reading tutoring and small group instruction in out-of-school-time settings for Philadelphia students in grades K-3.

Out-of-school time (OST) refers to the time before or after school during the school year or time during the summer months. Our strategy focuses on OST during the school year.

Informed by both local and national models and best practices, the roadmap articulates a plan for building partnerships, capacity, and funding to create a service-delivery model that maximizes impact for Philadelphia's highest need readers.

B. PLANNING PROCESS

Led by Bloom Planning, a Philadelphia-based planning firm, and guided by monthly meetings with a cross-sector working group, the strategic design process was informed and shaped by hundreds of hours of research, interviews, and feedback sessions through collaboration across and beyond Read by 4th's expansive network of partners. See page 13 for a full list of participants.

The four-phase planning process ultimately yielded the strategic approach and implementation roadmap articulated in this report.

Strategy Design Process:

- 45 interviews conducted
- 51 programs reviewed
- 6 working group meetings convened
- 2 surveys administered (Philadelphia families and after-school providers)

Phase I: Feasibility Research	Phase II: Visioning & Design	Phase III: Planning & Feedback	Phase IV: Accountability & Finalization
January-February 2021	February-March 2021	April-May 2021	June-July 2021
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To include family perspectives, the process also included outreach to Read by 4th's Parent Council and the involvement of Parent Council liaisons at each working group meeting. Read by 4th shared relevant project updates with its Family Engagement working group and administered a citywide survey translated



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into nine languages and disseminated through working group partners to gather feedback on the final strategic approach.

C. OST READING SUPPORT LANDSCAPE

We laid the foundation for this work by conducting a series of activities designed to define the project parameters and gather information to inform the strategy and identify key players in the OST and reading support space.

1. Reading Support Definitions

The following framework, developed by Read by 4th's reading support working group with input from system partners, clarified the focus of our planning efforts by distinguishing the range of reading support options and their benefits.

GENERAL SUPPORT

Reading-related activities

Activities that indirectly use reading skills (e.g., cooking recipes, playwriting lines in drama, science projects)

Reading-enrichment programs

Programs designed to strengthen general reading skills (e.g., book clubs, story time, word games)

Reading mentoring or coaching

Programs that pair students one on one with an adult to support their literacy skills through reading motivation, book selection, and mentoring

TARGETED SUPPORT

Small group reading instruction and intervention

Formal reading instruction/intervention provided to a small group of children to meet their needs, facilitated by an individual trained in a research-based approach

Reading tutoring

One-on-one reading instruction/intervention tailored to the unique needs of a child and facilitated by an individual trained in a research-based approach

Each type of support serves a different purpose and students can benefit from any option if it's the right match for their unique strengths and needs. Our landscape review identified programs and efforts representing all support types, and our strategic focus homed in on targeted supports.

2. Elements of Effective Reading Tutoring

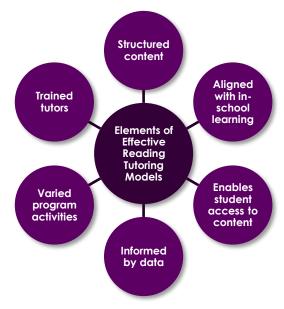
Informally, the term "reading tutoring" can be loosely applied to any one-on-one or small group engagement with a student—whether it's focused on homework help, test prep, or a research-based reading intervention program. However, as is evident in our reading support definitions, we are refining the term to indicate a very intentional level of targeted intervention meant to help a student make progress toward reading on grade level.



Research has shown that tutoring models that demonstrate gains in a student's reading ability follow the general criteria shown below.¹

While there is considerable variability across tutoring models, trends have emerged illuminating guidelines for best practices based on evidence-based programs.

Reading Tutoring—Maximizing Impact		
GROUP SIZE	One on one ²	
TIMING (TIME OF DAY, DURATION, AND FREQUENCY)	During school time ³ Minimum of 1 to 2.5 hours per week, 30 to 60 hours per year ⁴	
TARGET POPULATION	Focus on grades K-3 ⁵	
FORMAT	Direct interaction with tutor (i.e., not solely computer-based) ⁶	
TUTOR PROFILE	Education experience (i.e., a teacher) is ideal; paraprofessionals and volunteers can be effective with a sufficient support infrastructure (e.g., onboarding, oversight, ongoing support) ⁷	
SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE	Overseen by literacy expert ⁸	
MATERIALS	Uses a research-based approach (e.g., Orton- Gillingham)	



Making design decisions for any one model may require prioritizing one element over another. For example, while tutoring that occurs during the school day may be beneficial for a range of reasons, scheduling limitations can make afterschool time preferable for many students. Access to a tutor with training in a specific type of reading intervention may require a small group delivery model as opposed to one on one. We considered these balances as we used the research to guide the design considerations for our project's strategy.

⁸ See Hartmann, T., Comley R., Reumann-Moore, R., and Bowditch, E. (2017)



¹ Hartmann, T., Comley R., Reumann-Moore, R., and Bowditch, E. (2017) Supporting Literacy in Out-of-School Time: Summary of Evidence. Research for Action. www.researchforaction.org/publications/supporting-literacy-school-time-summary-evidence/
² See Hartmann, T., Comley R., Reumann-Moore, R., and Bowditch, E. (2017)

³ Nickow, A., Oreopoulos, P., and Quan, V. (2020) PreK-12 Tutoring Programs and Student Learning Outcomes: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence. Poverty Action Lab.

Summarized in an evidence review, The Transformative Potential of Tutoring for PreK-12 Learning Outcomes: Lessons from Randomized Evaluations.

www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/publication/Evidence-Review_The-Transformative-Potential-of-Tutoring.pdf

⁴ See Hartmann, T., Comley R., Reumann-Moore, R., and Bowditch, E. (2017)

⁵ See Nickow, A., Oreopoulos, P., and Quan, V. (2020)

⁶ Slavin, R. E., Lake, C., Davis, S., and Madden, N. A. (2011); Blog, R. S., and Blog, V. A. P. B. R. S. (2018, April 5) New Findings on Tutoring: Four Shockers. Robert Slavin's Blog. https://robertslavinsblog.wordpress.com/2018/04/05/new-findings-on-tutoring-four-shockers/

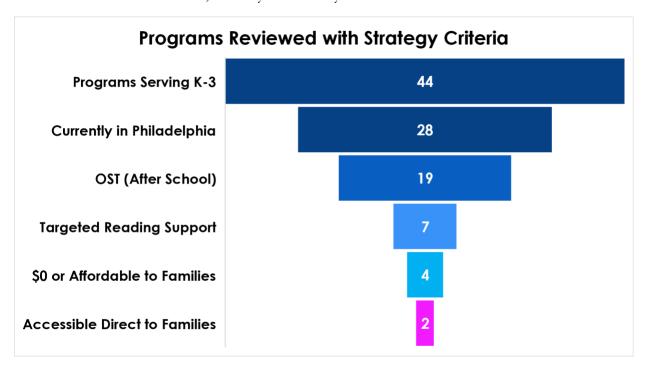
⁷ See Nickow, A., Oreopoulos, P., and Quan, V. (2020)

3. Feasibility Research Summary

Overall, our feasibility research illuminated an actively evolving OST reading support landscape in Philadelphia that offers exciting opportunities for further collaboration and innovation. With almost 60 percent of Philadelphia students in grades K-3 reading below grade level and COVID-19 further impacting their academic progress, the OST space is positioned to be a critical partner to schools in offering a range of supports including literacy and student engagement. The following highlights capture some of main takeaways that informed our strategy.

AFFORDABLE TARGETED READING SUPPORT OPTIONS ARE LIMITED IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL OST SPACE

• We could only identify four targeted OST reading support programs in Philadelphia that were also free or affordable to families, and only two had citywide access.



- In line with research, targeted reading support is more effective during the school day or with school-based programs where it can be aligned and integrated with a student's core instructional program in collaboration with teachers.
- OST programs that can offer more specialized tutoring typically come with a cost to the family.

OST PROGRAMS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE READING SUPPORT PUZZLE

- After-school programs offer many opportunities for reading-related activities and readingenrichment programs and should be supported and encouraged to continue with this effort.
- Many program models offer a one-on-one mentoring or coaching experience that can provide reading motivation and social-emotional support for students, which are particularly needed during this time of academic disruption caused by COVID-19.
- There are proof points of more targeted supports in after-school programs, but success requires additional funding and infrastructure and may be better suited to third-party programs operating through a club or virtual model that can embed and partner with in-person programs.



VIRTUAL TUTORING MODELS EXPAND POSSIBILITIES FOR ACCESSING SUPPORTS

- Acknowledging their limitations, the virtual models developed over the course of the 2020-2021 school year could present new opportunities for citywide access to affordable reading supports in the OST space.
- Families deserve more options that allow for direct access to reading support services, and citywide virtual programs could increase this access while minimizing costs associated with in-person programs.

4. Quality Criteria

To ground our planning in the knowledge gained through our research and stakeholder engagement, we developed a set of quality criteria. These elements articulate the standards for our efforts that will ensure alignment with potential partners, program development, and best practices.

Student-Centered

• Maintain an asset-based mindset, prioritize relationship building, and honor the whole child.

Aligned with Science of Reading

• Consider alignment with the Simple View of Reading and Scarborough's Rope.

Data-Driven

•Data should inform where the tutoring should focus and whether the tutoring is having the intended impact.

Culturally Responsive

•Indicate a commitment to reviewing materials through a lens of cultural responsiveness for the students served, thinking critically about material curation and creation, and considering diversity within the staffing and tutor pool.

Two-Way Family Communication

• View families as partners, and prioritize communication channels that allow for mutually beneficial information sharing.

Effective Tutoring Best Practices

- •Use trained tutors supported by centralized, experienced staff members who provide ongoing supervision and monitor student progress.
- Group sizes are one to one or small and grouped homogeneously by skill need.
- •Students should have a minimum of 30 hours of tutoring per school year.



D. STRATEGIC APPROACH

1. Strategic Framework

Strategic Intention

While our research and outreach process illuminated multiple potential paths forward, we grounded our decision-making process in a framework focused on opportunities that lie at the nexus of the following three components:

- **MEETS LOCAL DEMAND AND INTEREST**—Where do partners already exist who have expressed interest in working in alignment with our strategy?
- **FEASIBLE TO ACHIEVE**—What can be developed within the next year?
- **IS A UNIQUE OFFERING (NOT DUPLICATING EFFORTS)**—What can we add to the OST space, without competing for existing resources?



We also clarified the student profile we intend to impact through our efforts. Assuming most students ideally have their needs met by in-school instruction, OST programming can still offer an important opportunity for students to receive additional time and more individualized attention. We acknowledge the benefit that reading-related activities and reading enrichment offer to many students as a boost to their school-day experience and focus our strategy instead on the smaller subset of students who benefit significantly from more time with targeted literacy practice.







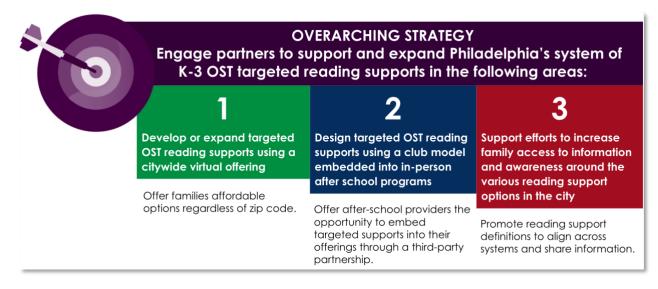
Program Criteria

Finally, we used the following criteria to gauge alignment between existing programs and models and the goals of our strategy.

PROGRAM CRITERIA			
	Out of school	Does the program occur after school, during the school year?	
	K-3 targeted reading support	Does the program offer reading instruction that matches our definitions for small group instruction or intervention or one-on-one reading tutoring?	
	\$0 (or affordable)	Is the program free of charge to families, or does it make accommodations for the income level of families?	
\prod	Families can access	Can families directly access the program (i.e., citywide access), or is participation limited to affiliation with a specific school?	

2. Strategic Approach

We considered several potential initiatives to meet our strategic framework, and, after a round of pressure testing with key stakeholders, we refined our strategy to the following three-strand approach:



All strands build on existing efforts identified across the Philadelphia landscape and will require ongoing engagement with key partners to both guide and innovate in moving this work forward.



Strand 1: Citywide Virtual Offering

This strand aims to build on the momentum gained from the 2020-2021 school year to explore opportunities for expanding and evolving existing virtual programs and increasing the number of programs that can offer targeted support while ensuring they are also financially accessible to families.

Strand 2: Embedded Club Model

Acknowledging the logistical limitations that can make it difficult for after-school providers to directly implement a targeted reading support model, this strand explores a "club model" approach wherein a third party would handle the staffing and support infrastructure necessary to implement a reading program as a rotation within an in-person program's schedule.

Strand 3: Family Information Tool

This strand aims to bring our reading support definitions and knowledge of the OST landscape in Philadelphia to families seeking to better understand their child's needs and available supports through a webbased tool that will also connect with the city's OST Program Locator.

E. IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP SUMMARY

1. Design Elements

For each strand, we considered the essential elements needed for implementation related to infrastructure, systems, and outreach.

Outreach & Impact Infrastructure **Systems** Staffing Staff management Sustainable funding **Tutor management** Tutor pool Program evaluation and data collection Curriculum and materials Student intake and measuring student monitoring Virtual platform (if impact applicable) Partner management (if Marketing materials for applicable) Communication platform recruitment and Student investment fundraising (if applicable) Family communication

Partner Readiness Assessment Tools

Given that we intend to build on the infrastructure and experience of existing programs, we also built out readiness assessment tools to support partners in gauging alignment with our strategic goals and quality criteria and support the creation of plans for a pilot.

Key Features:

- Virtual
- Free or affordable to families
- Citywide, direct access to families

Key Features:

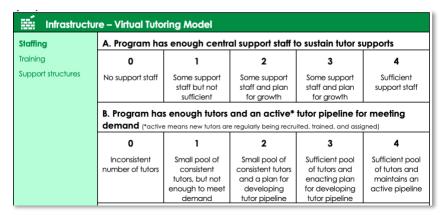
- In person or virtual
- Free to families
- Access via afterschool programs

Key Features:

- Norm across system partners
- Build resources and tools for families and partners



Excerpt from Partner Readiness Tool



Partner Bridge Implementation Plans

Given dependencies on pilot incubation and partner readiness, we also developed draft bridge plans to articulate a preliminary approach to each scenario, such as:

- Expand and diversify a tutor pipeline
- Scale staff infrastructure to support demand
- Identify and adopt a third-party evaluator to assess student impact
- Adopt a targeted reading support curriculum (for use by a trained volunteer)
- Design a tutor training program
- Develop tutor personnel management structures

Coplion A: Expand and diversity tulor pipeline This bridge plan would help a program self-asses its need for tutor expansion and diversification and explore strategies to build out its recruitment pipeline. Coplion A: Expand and diversity tulor pipeline. Coplion A: Expand and diversity tulor pipeline. Coplion A: Expand and diversity tulor pipeline. Colect formal data (or informal data depending on what's available) in the current demographic of students currently served by the program and the current demographic of futors and where futors are sourced (demographics can include race, ethnicity), language, etc.] Conduct self-reflection on program's model, compensation structure, current recruitment and futor support practices and consider where improvement is needed in creating more inclusive and equilable practices. Collaborate with partners and peer organizations to learn if they have best practices or recommendations to learn if they have best practices or recom

2. Implementation Roadmap

The culminating *Implementation Roadmap* captures the discrete tasks, deliverables, leads, support and resources, and timeline with projected start and completion dates for each of the following domains:

IMPLEMENTATION DOMAINS

- A. Strategic Roadmap Finalization
- B. Partner Engagement
- C. Strands 1 & 2: Pilot Planning
- D. Strand 3: Family Information Tool
- E. Pilot—Partner TBD
- F. Funding

Screenshot of Implementation Roadmap (Google Sheet)



Additional resources include risk

mitigation and contingency plans, budget considerations, and guidance for engaging funders in support of this work.



3. Partner Engagement and Communication Plan

OST/Reading Support Community of Practice

The strategies identified in this plan were created using the following parameters:

- Build upon existing programs and infrastructures.
- Look for connections between identified programs and infrastructures to support new efforts.
- Maintain a focus on systems-level change and how to impact students across the OST landscape.

The success of this plan will lie in continuing to bring together key players who represent both the OST and reading support spaces in Philadelphia. We recommend this take the form of a community of practice (COP) that will offer regular touchpoints for programs to network, communicate, and collaborate.



The intention is for this COP to incubate pilot programs to explore each of our strategy's strands and support each other with securing the funding necessary for preliminary efforts and ongoing sustainability.

Engaging & Educating the Community

Disseminating information about this strategy and ongoing progress is already underway across Read by 4th's partner network and will be added to its website and shared with cross-sector partners.

In addition, there are several deliverables coming out of this planning work that can be used for ongoing communication efforts across various partnerships.

Communication Tools

- Summary slide deck
- Partner readiness tools
- Partner bridge implementation plans
- Family information tool
- Reading support definitions
- Quality criteria resources

Continuing to develop these into resources that can be easily shared and disseminated will help with alignment and opportunities for collaboration.

4. Recommendations for Future Efforts

Finally, this plan represents hundreds of hours of work conducted within a finite six-month project time frame. Given the unique impact of COVID-19 on the school system, on the OST system, and on families and students, there were inevitable limitations placed on the scope of our work. We recommend continued attention to the following areas as the work shifts into implementation:

- 1. Capture the full picture of after-school programming in Philadelphia.
- 2. Incorporate diverse voices (after-school providers, schools, families, and students).



- 3. Explore system-wide access to student reading data.
- 4. Create an informal referral system between reading support programs.
- 5. Incorporate in-school tutoring programs into a systems-level perspective.

F. PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

This work would not have been possible without the involvement and commitment of many stakeholders both locally and nationally. Bloom and Read by 4th are incredibly grateful to everyone who contributed with their expertise, their feedback, or their support.

Working Group Participants

The reading support working group served as the backbone to the strategy development process, convening monthly between January and June 2021, reviewing materials and providing feedback. The following people were able to attend at least two meetings over the course of this process.

- Thomas Bailey, Parent Council Liaison
- Karisa Barlow, PA Migrant Education Program
- Jana Barrett, Lincoln Financial Group
- Alexis Bivens, Tremaine Foundation
- Jenny Bogoni*, Free Library of Philadelphia, Read by 4th
- Jinaki Bright, Read to Succeed Philadelphia
- Amanda Charles, William Penn Foundation
- **Justin Ennis,** After School Activities Partnerships
- **Janaye Evans,** Free Library of Philadelphia, Read by 4th
- Nyshawana Francis-Thompson, School District of Philadelphia Office of Curriculum
- Kate Hayes Hoffman*, Bloom Planning
- Liza Herzog, Drexel University School of Education
- Maisha Jackson, Office of State Senator Art Haywood
- Andy Jones, City Year
- **Hillary Kane**, PHENND
- Cathy Kaufman, Independent Tutor

- Ayana Lewis, School District of Philadelphia Office of Strategic Partnerships
- Angela Marks*, Reading Allowed
- Lauren McCutcheon, Mighty Writers
- **Garrick Morgan,** After School Activities Partnerships
- Sheila O'Steen, Free Library of Philadelphia
- **Simone Partridge,** Free Library of Philadelphia, Read by 4th
- Johniece Ray*, City of Philadelphia Office of Children and Families
- Lori Severino, Drexel University School of Education
- Jill Smith, SOWN
- Abby Thaker*, Free Library of Philadelphia, Read by 4th
- Katy Tipson*, Bloom Planning
- Dave Weinstein, City Year
- Janine Wright, PHENND
- Victoria Wylie, City of Philadelphia Office of Children and Families
- Kevin Zimmer, Mastery Schools



^{*}Indicates members who provided planning and facilitation support for working group meetings.

Contributors

The following people provided their time and input either through interviews, attending a working group meeting, or contributing with virtual feedback.

- Luis Bernal*, Springboard Collaborative
- Makael Burrell*, Center for Black Educator Development, Freedom Schools Literacy Academy
- Nakola Cameron, School District of Philadelphia Office of Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Loraine Carter*, AARP Experience Corps
- Sonya Castellino*, Read Charlotte
- Becca Channing*, CORA YouthCOR
- Yolanda Coleman*, Team Tutor
- Ben Cooper*, Sunrise of Philadelphia
- Carys Davies*, City of Philadelphia Office of Children and Families
- Vicki Ellis*, School District of Philadelphia Office of Strategic Partnerships
- Mike English*, Turn the Page KC (Kansas City)
- Joseph Ezekiel, Parent Council Liaison
- Elizabeth Farruggia*, Mastery Schools
- **Derrick Ford,** After School Activities Partnerships
- Mariama Grimes, United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
- Donte Haslam, Parent Council liaison
- Elle Hogan, Turn the Page KC
- Laura Johnson*, Sunrise of Philadelphia
- Tracy Johnson*, Vessels of Hope
- Shawn Kairschner*, Achieve Now
- Michelle Knapik, Tremaine Foundation
- Michele Kreisler*, OurVillage Tutoring
- Katja Krieger, School District of Philadelphia Office of Strategic Partnerships

- Colleen Landy*, School District of Philadelphia Office of Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Kelly Lemberger*, Boys & Girls Clubs of Philadelphia
- Stacy Leonard*, CORA
- Michael Lombardo*, BookNook
- Jennifer Lutz*, Horizons
- **Deborah Lynam***, AIM Academy for Learning & Research
- Danielle Mancinelli*, Springboard Collaborative
- Madalyn Martin, BookNook
- Nicole Masloff*, Penn Literacy Network
- MJ Mathis, Bloom Planning
- Lavonne Nichols, AARP Experience Corps
- Suzanne O'Conner*, United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
- Ann Pearson*, Free Library of Philadelphia
- Munro Richardson*, Read Charlotte
- Merle Savedow, AARP Experience Corps
- Nancy Scharff*, Consultant, Read by 4th
- Sadie Sprague-Lott, Families Forward
- Valerie Taylor-Samuel*, Free Library of Philadelphia
- Severin Tucker*, School District of Philadelphia Office of Strategic Partnerships
- Diane Waff, Philadelphia Writing Project
- Lorrie Weaver*, Winsor Learning
- Mark Williams*, BellXCel



^{*}Participated in an interview as part of our research process.