



2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Freedom
School
Partners

freedom-schoolpartners.org



College Servant Leader Intern Demographics

Number of Servant Leader Interns: 18

Gender

Male	29%
Female	71%

Race

Black	71%
White	20%
Hispanic	6%
Mixed	3%

Experience

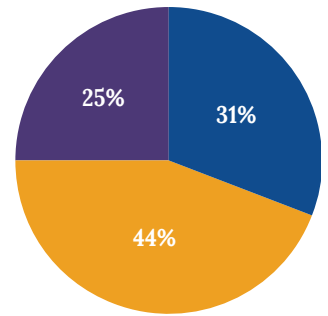
Returning	68%
New	32%

Scholar Numbers

Average number of scholars (grades K-8) served per week: **1,200**

Estimated grade level %:

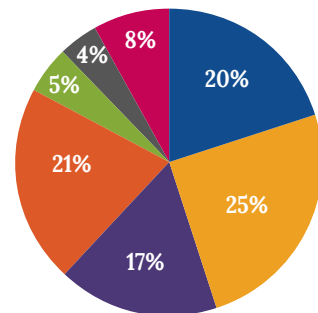
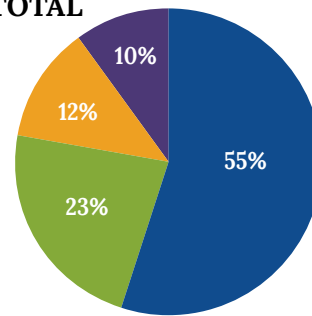
- 31% - grades K-2
- 44% - grades 3-5
- 25% - grades 6-8



Expenses

Program*	\$1,140,660
Fundraising	\$482,984
FFTC Endowment and Reserve Funds	\$250,000
Administration	\$217,767

TOTAL \$2,091,411



Revenue

Faith and Community Partners	\$483,480
Foundations	\$599,815
Individuals & Families	\$393,217
Corporations	\$506,500
Special Events	\$129,129
Other	\$103,716
Public Support	\$166,902

TOTAL \$2,382,759

*2020 surplus due to a number of factors including one-time COVID-19 response funding opportunities (\$227k), reduced program expense because of program alteration, and revenue restricted for 2021 program due to COVID-19 impact. A portion of surplus was allocated to FSP reserve and endowment funds.

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Dear Friends,

Looking back, no one could have imagined all that 2020 would have in store for us. Between the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought our world to a grinding halt, months of unrest and trauma following the broadcasted murders of unarmed black men and women, and a tumultuous election season, 2020 is not a year any of us will soon forget. Through it all, Freedom School Partners has continued to stand with and serve vulnerable children and families in our community. I'm so proud of the ways we connected and engaged with scholars and families during this difficult year.

Due to the unprecedented environment created by COVID-19, we developed the FSP 2020 R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. (Reading and Enrichment for Scholars Plus Other Needed Supplies and Essentials) Program which occurred via pop-up sites at multiple locations this summer and was supplemented by a virtual component. The program ran for five weeks and ensured that much needed educational and basic resources went directly to families. FSP R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. included participation stations with reading, math and enrichment activities, music, books and take-home literacy and enrichment kits, school supplies and household resources for children and their families. Here are a few highlights from this extraordinary summer:

- More than 6,000 literacy and enrichment kits were distributed through FSP R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. sites and partnerships with other community providers.
- We served an average of 1,200 scholars per week through in-person and virtual learning opportunities over five weeks.
- Nearly 13,000 new and gently used books were provided to our scholars to help build home libraries.
- 1,800 Second Harvest nutrition bags were distributed to families to support their basic needs.
- 125 volunteers contributed more than 700 hours to our R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. effort.

While our program delivery method looked different this year, we held true to our core mission to promote the long-term success of children by preventing summer learning loss through igniting a passion for reading and inspiring a love of learning. We also maintained our focus on serving the whole child and family. Our 2020 curriculum and enrichment activities focused on showing scholars how to reach their full potential and develop the self-efficacy to make a difference in their lives, their families, their communities, their country and their world.

While this certainly wasn't the first year I expected to have as Freedom School Partners' leader, it is one I will always remember. I will never forget how we explored opportunities for partnership and collaboration in new and exciting ways or how we stepped up as a leader and convener of summer learning programs in Charlotte. We couldn't do any of this without your continued support and involvement, and I'm so thankful for your enduring commitment and generosity.

Following the extended learning loss our scholars have experienced, there is tremendous work to do. We enter 2021 with a renewed resolve to champion racial equity and social justice and do all that we can to give our scholars the tools and resources they need to explore and achieve their dreams in a country that sees and values them.

Glenda Bernhardt
Chief Executive Officer

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What is Freedom School



Children's Defense Fund® Freedom Schools are six-week summer literacy and character building programs led by college student Servant Leader Interns. Freedom School Partners serves children who most need and can least afford summer learning opportunities.

Our Mission

Freedom School Partners promotes the long-term success of children by preventing summer learning loss through igniting a passion for reading and inspiring a love of learning.

Freedom School Partners fulfills this mission by:

1. Delivering a culturally diverse curriculum that affirms our scholars with engaging literature and exposure to the broader community.
2. Serving families and children who lack access to quality summer enrichment opportunities.
3. Addressing the whole child by supporting their academic, social and emotional needs.
4. Offering a work-force development opportunity for college students to gain professional experience, serve as positive role models and enter the teacher pipeline or social service pipeline.
5. Collaborating with diverse community stakeholders who contribute to and benefit from the partnerships.

Servant Leader Intern Spotlight

Sarai Williams said what she loves most about FSP is watching kids learn and grow over the summer. She looked forward to scholars having access to materials this summer. "It would be much harder going back to school without these resources from FSP," she said.

Williams also emphasized that FSP R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E sites are so important over the summer because they gave children something educational to do. Returning scholars and new scholars looked forward to having a routine.

Sarai Williams is a 2020 returning SLI and a junior majoring in Elementary Education at UNC Greensboro.



Noah Horn said, "I've never seen reading come alive like Freedom School Partners. We were able to make the largest impact despite limits and also read stories to our kids. This year, our most vulnerable kids lost out on experiences from March – June [due to school closures from COVID-19]. During the FSP 2020 R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. Program, we did everything we could to get them prepared for the next school year."

Noah Horn is a 4th year SLI, a UNC Charlotte alumni and a new 6th grade teacher since August 2020.



FSP Parent Spotlight

LaKeesha's son and niece both participated in the FSP 2020 R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. Program as well as Freedom School for many summers. LaKeesha said, "My son was enamored with just reading and being around other children who loved to read." She noted this summer was not a traditional Freedom School summer, but they still enjoyed their experience. They did the enrichment activities in the packets and loved the virtual field trips. LaKeesha mentioned they loved coming to this type of event just to interact with their interns.



2020

BY THE NUMBERS

During summer 2020, FSP developed the FSP 2020 R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. (Reading and Enrichment for Scholars Plus Other Needed Supplies and Essentials) Program to ensure that much needed educational and basic resources went directly to families. The program ran for five weeks via pop-up sites at multiple locations and was supplemented by a virtual component. FSP R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. included Friday participation stations with reading, math and enrichment activities, music and take-home resources for children and their families.

After the program,

74%

of parents surveyed reported they saw behavior that reflects growth in their scholar's reading or love for reading.

More than

95%

of parents surveyed reported their safety needs were met during the summer program and that they felt safe attending.

91%

of parents surveyed believed the FSP 2020 R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. Program met their expectations.

FSP 2020 R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. PROGRAM:

- Served an average of **1,200** scholars per week through in-person and virtual learning opportunities over five weeks.
- Included **12** site locations across Charlotte.
- Provided nearly **13,000** books to scholars to help build home libraries (including over **9,000** new or gently-loved D.E.A.R. books, over **1,600** curriculum books, and over **2,200** new Scholastic books).
- Disseminated **6,000** literacy and enrichment packets through FSP R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. sites and partnerships with other community providers.
- Engaged **125** dedicated volunteers who contributed more than **700** hours.
- Employed **48** summer staff.

Scholars from **41** different Charlotte schools ranging from Kindergarten to 8th grade participated in the FSP 2020 R.E.S.P.O.N.S.E. Program.

Our History

2000-2003

Freedom School Partners (formerly Seigle Avenue Partners) received start-up funding from Foundation For the Carolinas' *Building Youth Initiative* and Seigle Avenue Presbyterian Church.

2004

Freedom School Partners (FSP) was selected by the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) to join community organizations around the country and serve as a local sponsor for CDF's six-week, literacy-rich summer program called Freedom Schools. That year, in addition to maintaining its successful afterschool program in the Piedmont Courts neighborhood, FSP launched its first CDF Freedom Schools® program for 100 students.

2004-present

Freedom School Partners has developed a model of partnership with community organizations to expand Freedom Schools across Charlotte. Site partnerships have included a variety of faith-based organizations, corporations, universities, neighborhoods, and other community organizations.

an average of
1,200
Scholars
served
per week



A Look Ahead to Summer

Freedom School Partners will operate Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® summer programs both in-person (at multiple site locations) and virtually from June 14 – July 23, 2021.