



Freedom
School
Partners

2024 Annual Report





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Dear Friends,

This first year back at FSP has been both exciting and deeply meaningful. One of my personal highlights was the FSP Jubilee where all 684 scholars and hundreds of staff and volunteers gathered to celebrate summer reading. I am incredibly grateful for the supporters, families, staff and partners who make this work possible daily. Witnessing the impact of our program—the joy it brings to our scholars and the growth it fosters in our young leaders—has been inspiring.

Summer 2024 was a season of impact. Our scholars stayed on track, with 81% maintaining or improving their reading skills, helping to prevent summer learning loss. But the effect didn't stop there. We saw incredible growth in our young leaders as well. Seventy Servant Leader (college) Interns gained real-world experience, developed leadership skills, and had the opportunity to mentor the next generation. This ripple effect of impact reminds us that when we invest in children, we also invest in future educators, leaders and stronger communities.

As we look ahead to **Summer 2025**, we are committed to continuing this momentum and deepening our impact. I'm excited to invite the community to experience an FSP summer firsthand—to be part of something bigger than any of us. Every gift, every volunteer hour, and every champion for this work makes it all possible.

In closing, I want to express my most profound appreciation to those who believe in and invest in our mission. The work doesn't stop when summer ends; your continued support keeps the energy alive year-round. I'm looking forward to what's ahead and to working together to make next summer even stronger.

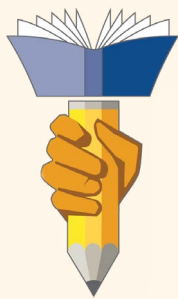
In Partnership,

Nikki Keith

CEO, Freedom School Partners

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

To inspire our scholars to love reading and learning, believe in themselves, and create extraordinary futures.

Freedom School Partners fulfills this mission by:

1. Delivering a culturally diverse and responsive curriculum that affirms our scholars with engaging literature and exposure to the broader community.
2. Serving families and children who lack access to high quality summer learning and enrichment opportunities and infusing every day with joy and Freedom School magic.
3. Addressing the whole child by supporting their academic, social, emotional and basic needs.
4. Offering a workforce development opportunity for college students that positions them to increase social capital and instills skills and competencies that will make them competitive in the professional marketplace.
5. Collaborating with diverse community stakeholders who contribute to and benefit from the partnerships.
6. Advocating relentlessly for our scholars by focusing on educational equity and on the root causes of academic achievement gaps.



Scholar Spotlight



Josh and Ellie Almendarez

The Grove Freedom School

Meet Josh and Ellie Almendarez, siblings at The Grove Freedom School. Josh, a returning Level 2 scholar, and Ellie, a first-time Level 1 scholar, shared their excitement about Freedom School.

For both, Freedom School is a place of joy and adventure. Ellie describes it as making her feel “happy and excited,” while Josh says he loves singing Harambee cheers and chants: “I really love singing and dancing. It gets everyone awake.”

Josh credits Freedom School for improving his reading skills over the past two summers. His favorite part of the day is D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) time, and he proudly shared his love for the book “Gus the Bus.” Ellie’s excitement for learning comes from her beautifully decorated classroom, which she says her Servant Leader Intern made special.

Having a sibling at Freedom School enhances their experience. “It’s nice to have someone to look after and talk to,” Josh shared, while Ellie added, “I really like school with my brother.”

Freedom School brings everyone together, from staff and volunteers to siblings like Josh and Ellie, building a community of support and joy.

Year-Round Engagement Spotlight

Freedom School Partners maintains high levels of engagement during the school year to help scholars develop resilience, build supportive relationships, and manage academic and emotional challenges more effectively while accessing resources and opportunities for skill development.

1 In School

The purpose is to build relationships and help support scholars to reaffirm the skills necessary to understand and manage social and emotional abilities during the Freedom School summer and the academic year.

2 Academy

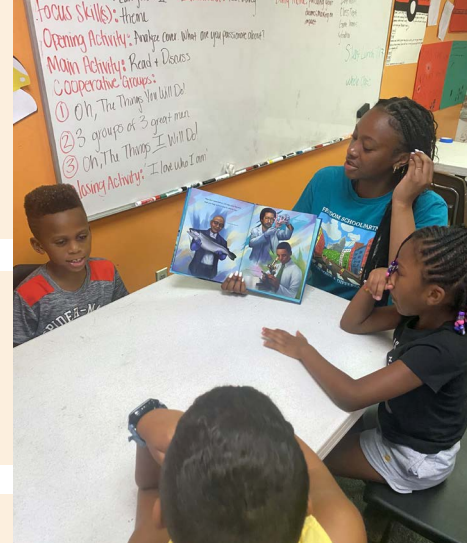
Our Academy is a high school mentorship and development program that aims to support scholars’ growth and success.

3 Junior Servant Leaders (JSL)

Academy scholars have the opportunity to gain hands-on professional experience as Junior Servant Leader Interns.

4 Social Emotional Support

Procedures and resources are in place to address and support scholars during emergencies or incidents, encouraging positive interactions between scholars and staff, and fostering a supportive, inclusive environment.





2024 by the Numbers

684 scholars served

115 summer staff

91 Servant Leader Interns

81% of scholars attended the full term

8,341 hours of service provided by **1,635** volunteers

19,710 books distributed to build at-home libraries

35,568 meals provided

42.5% of Servant Leader Interns were first-generation college students

2,264 total engagement hours by **348** parents/caregivers

81% of scholars maintained or improved their reading ability during Freedom School.

90% of parents/caregivers indicated that their child(ren) enjoys reading.

95% of interns believe their scholars demonstrated higher confidence after participating in Freedom School.

99% of parent/caregivers reported that their child(ren) enjoyed attending Freedom School.

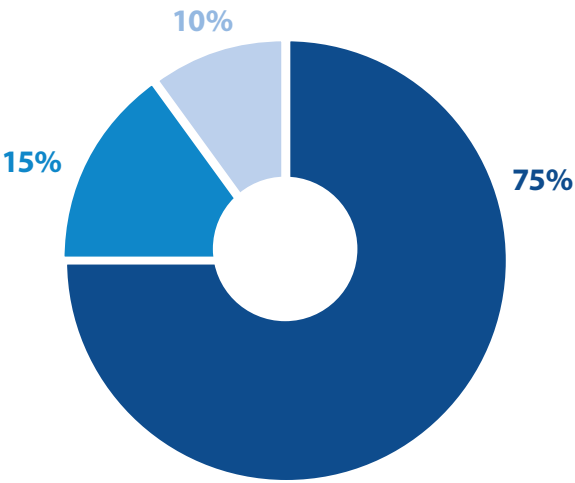
90% of scholars enjoyed the books read during Freedom School.

93% of scholars believe they can make a difference after participating in Freedom School.



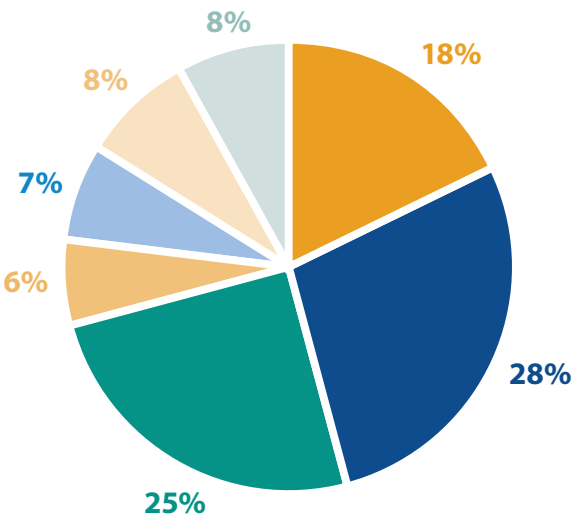
Expenses

Program	\$2,005,464
Fundraising	\$399,181
Administration	\$261,506
Total	\$2,666,151



Revenue

Faith & Community	\$325,178
Foundations	\$514,630
Individuals & Foundations	\$459,080
Corporations	\$113,836
Special Events	\$120,000
Public Support	\$141,552
Other*	\$140,065
Total	\$1,814,341



*Reflects unrealized investment gains and interest income.

In 2024, Freedom School Partners experienced a net negative income in part due to strategic plan investments and expenses related to FSP’s leadership transitions.

Freedom School Partners is a 501(c)(3) organization. Financial information about the organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 919.807.2214. The license number is SL002429. The License is not an endorsement by the State. A copy of the complete audited financial statement will be available at freedomschoolpartners.org.



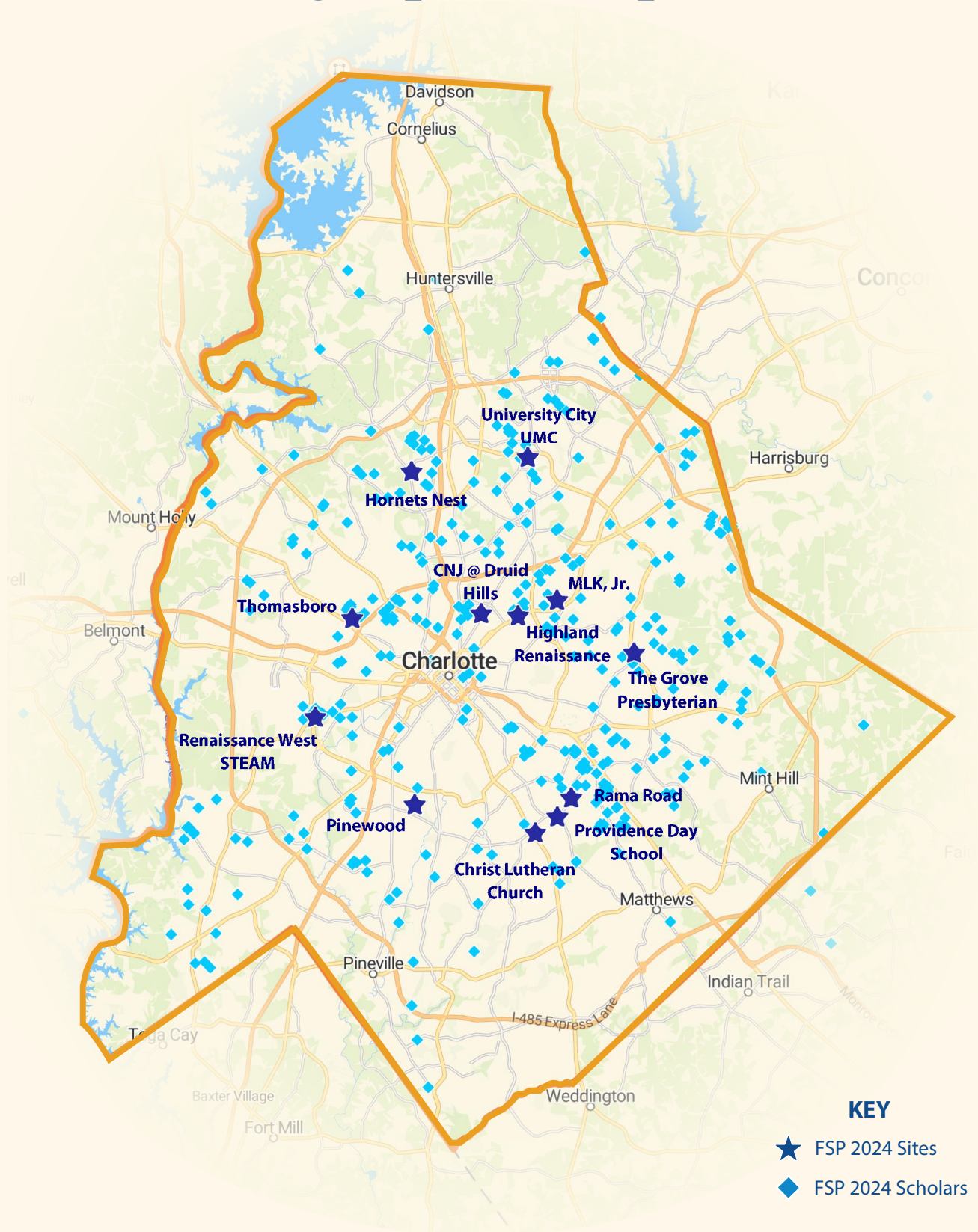
158 schools represented

Scholar Demographics 2024

Race/Ethnicity	
Black	79%
Hispanic	14%
White	1%
Asian	1%
Multi-Racial/Other	5%

Level Breakdown	
Level 1 (K-2)	43%
Level 2 (3-5)	39%
Level 3 (6-8)	18%

2024 Freedom School Geographic Impact



Our History

**2000
to
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
to
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, and over 11,000 scholars have been served since 2004.



Freedom School Partners

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