Reading Camp

2020 Convention Report

Reading Camp’s mission is to provide Kentucky kids who are reading below grade level with non-traditional educational opportunities that build confidence and empower them to achieve academic success.

This has been our mission for years, but the emphasis on non-traditional is added upon the extenuating circumstances of 2020. The year began with two months of our successful afterschool programs, meeting at both Nicholasville Elementary and Dixie Elementary. When school doors closed in March, Reading Camp began to seek new ways to continue to build kids’ reading skills and confidence. While in-person programs are paused, Reading Camp:

- Gave physical books to local kids while libraries were closed by donating hundreds of books for distribution with school lunch pick up
- Paired up as pen pals to give kids positive and encouraging messages throughout quarantine
- Packed and delivered 85 backpacks full of books, art supplies, snacks, and fun surprises
- Started Reading Camp Book Buddies: a virtual literacy support program
  - 45 kids meet with a volunteer mentor virtually in a small group each week to read books and grow together throughout the school year
  - 13 dedicated volunteer mentors invest in these kids and their academic and personal success
  - New books (to keep!) are delivered to the students’ homes, while mentors receive the same books so that we can replicate the “buddy reading” component of our summer camp programs

We served 165 kids in some form this year, 40 more than in 2019. Most of our families are low-income, and Reading Camp’s model of providing all programming free of charge allows them to participate regardless of the family’s ability to pay. In this time of interrupted schooling and widening educational inequalities, this is more important than ever before.

In a time when many small non-profits are closing their doors, we are truly only able to serve these kids because of the partnership and support of the Diocese and the generosity of individuals and community partners. We are thankful for each of you who have supported Reading Camp as a donor, a volunteer, or in prayer. We hope to have a little more traditional 2021 season, but we are ready to continue to serve kids in need by any means necessary!