

SMART Northwest Area 2015-16 Year-end Report



SMART
START MAKING A READER TODAY™

SITES



STUDENTS
SERVED



VOLUNTEERS



HOURS OF
READING



BOOKS GIVEN



NORTHWEST

38

1,570

650

23,382

18,403

STATEWIDE

267

10,101

4,979

126,750

163,577



Faces of SMART

While memories of the books Dyvisha Gordon read as a child in SMART have blurred, there is one that still stands out: *A Bad Case of Stripes* by David Shannon. While the race of the main character is ambiguous, Dyvisha was drawn in by her appearance. “Most of the books at school were about white people,” she remembers. “While I was too young to really analyze that, it made me happy to see a book with someone who looked like me.

As for the books Dyvisha received from SMART? “I still have them in a green

chest at my parents’ house. I’ve kept this trunk full of books so that if I have children someday, I can give them these books and show them what I used to read,” she says.

Now, Dyvisha is in the paralegal program at Portland Community College and just landed a job as a Community Aid Worker for the Portland Housing Bureau.

10,100 Kids for the first time in 10 Years

SMART’s 24th year came to a close in May with the exciting news that we’d surpassed our goal of serving 10,000 children for the first time in nearly 10 years. In addition to fulfilling our core mission of bringing the love of reading to kids, SMART continued advancing our two key organizational initiatives: Equity and Program Quality.

Here in the Northwest Area, we wrapped up another successful year. We are excited about our growing partnership with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and with the Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub, who we will partner with on a new initiative that will help fund SMART’s expansion into more local preschool

programs. We also welcomed a new bilingual Program Manager, Erica Heisler, who is already working to build new partnerships and increase our number of bilingual and Spanish speaking Readers in the fall.

In the 2016-17 year, we’ll celebrate 25 years of bringing the love of reading to Oregon kids with special activities throughout the year and the release of our very own children’s book, *Oregon Reads Aloud*. As we prepare to mark this important milestone, we’re reflecting on how much we’ve accomplished and how much is left to do.

In many ways, our work to empower children for success through positive, culturally affirming experiences with

books and reading is more important than ever. SMART’s future holds unique promise as we continue to become more effective, intentional, and inclusive with our work. As always, we’ll need the ongoing support of our incredible donors, volunteers and supporters to make it happen.

Here in the Northwest area our goal is to provide one-on-one reading support, as well as books to take home and keep to 1,565 students next year. At the cost of \$300 per child, we’ll need \$469,500 and 634 volunteers to make our goal a reality. Thank you for joining us in the transformative journey of inspiring young readers for academic and life success!



When Chihao Mac saw an email looking for volunteers to join SMART in his inbox at Daimler Trucks North America, he was hit by a wave of nostalgia.

"I remembered the impact SMART and reading had on my life, and I wanted to give that fun experience to other kids," he says.

Now, Chihao is a Design Engineer at Daimler Trucks North America with a degree in mechanical engineering from Oregon State University. Inspired to help other children develop a love of reading, he joined SMART as a Reader at Beach School in Portland.

Parent and Educator Feedback

Each year, SMART gathers input from parents with children in the SMART program and from educators with SMART in their schools to learn about our impacts, outcomes and areas for improvement. Here's what we learned this year:

87% of educators indicated SMART contributed significantly to reading motivation and enjoyment for their students.

94% of parents agreed that their children benefited significantly from the SMART program.

83% of parents said their children demonstrated improved reading skills as a result of participating in SMART.

Local Snapshot

17	Cities
14	School Districts
47	Site Coordinators

It's hard to articulate just how incredible and valuable SMART has been for my child and her schoolmates. She comes home brimming with excitement to share her new books with our family, and her reading skills have blossomed.

– SMART Parent

All students involved are so excited to get books to take home! This has increased their motivation to read.

– SMART Northwest Educator

Student Milestones

Each April, SMART teachers are asked to participate in a voluntary survey reporting progress observed for each participating student. Teachers evaluate students' progress in grade-appropriate benchmarks in key areas related to success in literacy development.

95% of SMART students consistently showed improvement in measures of literacy development. These measures, which align with classroom standards, include:

- Understanding that stories have a structure
- Making good predictions about what might happen in a story
- Giving appropriate details when retelling
- Making connections between the story and personal experience

94% of SMART students exhibited more confidence in reading skills.

95% demonstrated improved vocabulary

97% of students demonstrated increased pleasure in reading or being read to.



By the first grade, Olivia had perfected the art of hiding her struggles with reading. "I got really good at making up stories from the pictures," she says. As a child, Olivia's education was disrupted as she moved frequently.

"Because of SMART, I am able to read. Without the time working with my [volunteer]

Readers, I would have been shuffled along or held back. SMART was key to changing that."

Today, Olivia is a graduate of Oregon State University and works for a drug and alcohol treatment facility, helping adolescents struggling with substance abuse and working with women in recovery to develop parenting skills.