

United  
Way



*Raise Your Hand - Williamson*

A United Way of Williamson County Program

# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Tutoring Program established in 2012

UNITED WAY OF WILLIAMSON COUNTY

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## **Executive Summary**

The Raise Your Hand Education initiative was developed by United Ways of Tennessee as a statewide collaborative effort to recruit volunteers to read, tutor, and mentor Tennessee's children to help them succeed in school and in life. In 2012, United Way of Williamson County used this initiative and created the Raise Your Hand tutoring program with a unique design to stimulate innovative strategies to help students achieve reading proficiency by eliminating learning barriers such as hunger, transportation and competitive classrooms.

The Raise Your Hand (RYH) tutoring program is an education initiative providing quality and exceptional academic intervention to students reading below grade-level in first through fourth-grade. Our tutoring services consist of instructing students one-on-one or in small groups, which has shown positive effects on their academic performance, especially with at-risk children experiencing reading problems. The literacy skills and academic supports that our students receive through tutoring solidify their efforts toward high school, college and career success. Our foundation for tutoring reaches a critical juncture starting with third grade, when a child's reading skills enable them to learn and retain knowledge. Results prove adding volunteer tutors can significantly improve our kids' academic success too.

Since United Way fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community, volunteering is at the core of United Way's values. It strengthens our communities by allowing individuals to identify and respond to human needs within their reach. All volunteer engagement, including tutors, must be intentional and strategic as an essential part of our brand promise. We hope this plan will be used as an internal document to assist your organization in the development of duplicating the Raise Your Hand tutoring program. We operate with very low overhead grant funding is solicited for program operations.

## **The State Supports Early Grades Achievement: Academic Intervention**

Almost half of Tennessee's students are not on grade level in reading and math by the time they complete third grade, and very few of those students achieve proficiency in later grades. To combat this trend and support the skill development and academic achievement of all students, Tennessee has adopted a framework for addressing individual learning needs called Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>). RTI<sup>2</sup> promotes the use of research-based, high-quality instruction and interventions and provides an integrated, seamless model that supports student progress at every level. Statewide implementation of RTI<sup>2</sup> occurred in elementary schools in 2014-15.

According to educator reports, elementary schools have embraced the RTI<sup>2</sup> framework, incorporating its key components into their daily routines. Despite schools' concerted



efforts to implement RTI<sup>2</sup>, student achievement data reveals that patterns of student growth still vary considerably between schools. This report uses evidence from the 2015 Tennessee Educator Survey to identify RTI<sup>2</sup> “high implementers” and addresses the following question: What differentiates the high implementers that are more successful than others at moving non-proficient students to proficiency?

## Key Findings

- Using data from the 2015 Tennessee Educator Survey, we found that, on average, the majority of teachers reported that their schools were either fully or partially implementing RTI<sup>2</sup>. However, only 153 of the 634 schools included in the Tennessee Educator Survey analysis were categorized as high implementers—schools in which almost all teachers reported implementing the key components of RTI<sup>2</sup>. This suggests that many schools can continue to refine and improve their RTI<sup>2</sup> implementation.
- On the surface, we found that implementation of key RTI<sup>2</sup> practices looks similar across high implementers. Staff at these schools conduct universal screening three times per year, monitor the progress of students receiving Tier II or III interventions at least every two weeks, meet regularly to review data, and receive training related to RTI<sup>2</sup> implementation. Yet, we found that some of the high implementers have been more successful than others at moving non-proficient students to proficiency between grades 3 and 5.
- After interviewing school leaders and staff in high implementers that were successful at moving students to proficiency (“big movers”) and high implementers that were not as successful at moving students to proficiency (“small movers”), we uncovered a few key differences: — Big movers use multiple data sources and constant communication among staff members to guide the RTI<sup>2</sup> decision-making process. — Big movers build strong RTI<sup>2</sup> teams with specialized role-players who are well-equipped to support student success. — Big movers use all available resources to create staggered, grade-level intervention periods and allocate space for small group work. — Big movers have strong leaders who encourage collective responsibility and engagement and learn from the early stages of RTI<sup>2</sup> implementation to make changes and improve.

*This report was written by Zachary Stone with support from Jonathon Attridge, Isaiah Bailey, Laura Booker, Shelby Buono, Lila Goldstein, Lacey Hartigan, and Nate Schwartz. This report was designed by Brad Walker.*



## Our Services

Raise Your Hand (RYH) offers out of school academic intervention (either before or after school) in reading and math only. Sessions can be set up as individual or in groups for tutoring. One-on-one sessions offer intense individual assistance with volunteers.

United Way of Williamson County secures funding through grants to provide a daily snack, extended-teacher salaries, and the cost of transporting the student's home. Teachers create daily plans that are specific to address the students' area of need. We boost involvement of the community by recruiting volunteers to work with teachers in the classroom. This establishes a team for each child and reduces the teacher-student ratio. RYH is a teacher-lead volunteer-assist program.

## Classroom Management

RYH tutoring sessions are led by certified teachers. We believe certified teachers bring a wealth of academic excellence as well as a proven record of tutoring. Our staff works with the school administration to establish a timeframe for implementing services. Generally, we plan for 10 weeks of tutoring sessions each semester between the days of Monday through Thursday. Daily site visits are conducted to monitor use of grant funds and volunteer attendance. We appreciate every RYH member and offer weekly support to ensure all members know how valuable his or her participation is to the program. We feel confident that the RYH formula works. You can see our evidence of success on the performance chart below.

| Program Success                                    | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total Volunteers                                   | 18        | 22        | 36        | 59        | 74        |
| Total Teachers                                     | 16        | 21        | 43        | 37        | 42        |
| Total Buses  | 6         | 8         | 9         | 11        | 10        |
| Total Schools                                      | 4         | 6         | 10        | 10        | 10        |
| Total Students                                     | 137       | 211       | 308       | 346       | 344       |
| Total 2 <sup>nd</sup> Graders increased in Reading | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       | 95%       | 97%       |
| Total 3 <sup>rd</sup> Graders increased in Reading | 100%      | 92%       | 93%       | 93%       | 96%       |
| Total 3 <sup>rd</sup> Graders increased in Math    | 95%       | 94%       | 97%       | 92%       | 91%       |
| Total 4 <sup>th</sup> Graders increased in Reading | 91%       | 88%       | 94%       | 87%       | 95%       |
| Total 4 <sup>th</sup> Graders increased in Math    | 97%       | 96%       | 87%       | 94%       | 95%       |

**Our Mission**

Our mission is to provide opportunities for students to achieve above proficiency in reading by building skills that support academic advancement from elementary school through high school graduation. RYH exists to help students achieve reading proficiency by the end of third grade. We take a unique and innovative approach to tutoring that help students connect with the subject matter they need to master. Through a personalized and focused tutoring curriculum, our students develop the skills they need for ongoing success in their fields of study. Our success depends on the collaboration of volunteers and teachers in the classroom helping each student achieve - we don't succeed unless our students succeed.

The program offers activities that support the following goals:

- Goal 1: Provide opportunities for 300 elementary students to explore their interests and creativity in reading and math.
- Goal 2: Build professional skills that support academic achievement for 100 High School and college students fulfilling service hour credit.
- Goal 3: Cultivate opportunities for community and parent engagement and other caretakers to support the above goals.

**RYH BEST PRACTICES:**

- **DISTRICT INVESTMENT.** Both Williamson County Schools and Franklin Special School District ensure their staff members understand academic intervention matters, why RYH is an important tool and how their participation will be a benefit for them and the students. They provide a financial match and deliver professional development related to RYH implementation plans for volunteers and teachers.
- **PROGRAM FUNDING.** Organization sustainability is provided by obtaining funding from foundations and private donors in the area of volunteerism, education and after school programing.
- **ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT.** Setting a clear organizational structure and management that supports student success. Team approach (staff and Volunteer Captains) with clear defined roles help improve our organizational management.
- **STUDENT RECRUITMENT & ACCESSIBILITY.** A best practice is to implement a clear plan to recruit and manage student participants from school assessments without biases or economic barriers establishes program validity.

- **TUTORING INTERVENTION.** A best practice is to provide high-quality tutoring interventions (lessons) that are aligned with classroom instruction. Use and recruit the most experienced teachers.
- **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT.** Finding volunteers to serve for a long-term project without getting burned out. So, offer smaller commitments on projects 11 weeks or more with credit hour certification, if needed.
- **COMMUNICATION.** A best practice is to give volunteers direct access to United Way staff during program hours to address any concerns, questions or attendance using a volunteer hotline.
- **EVALUATION.** A best practice is to use systematic evaluation to assess RYH's impact on student outcomes and continuous improvement from teachers, Principals and Volunteers.

Tutoring sessions focus on helping students grasp the concepts they will need to know to perform well in their class, as well as developing study strategies to effectively prepare for exams in their class.

## **RYH History**

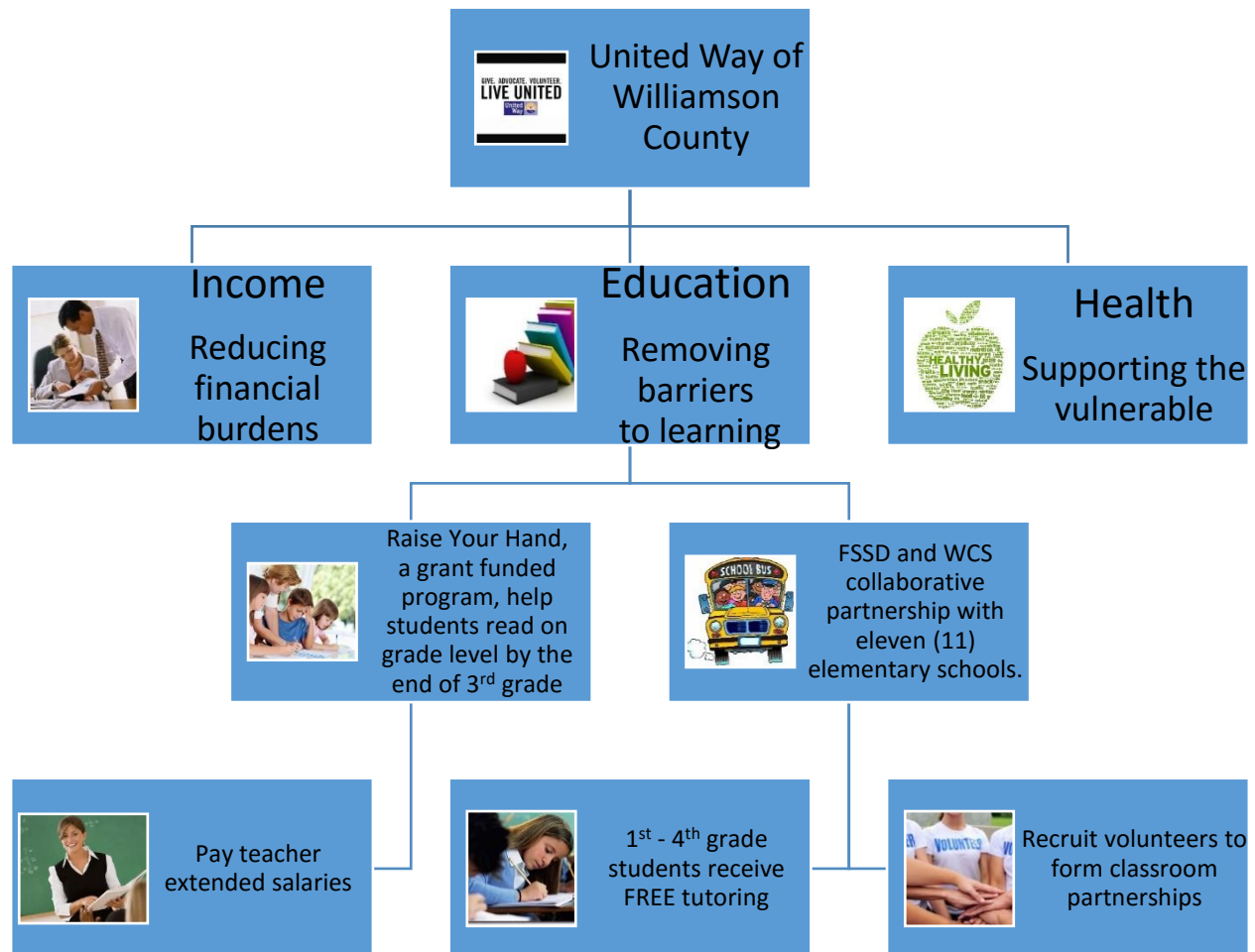
United Way of Williamson County wanted to help children in targeted elementary schools become proficient readers by the end of third grade. We felt the best practice would be to provide young learners with additional resources in their classrooms and connect them with committed volunteers who would spend time reinforcing the classroom curriculum, while providing the volunteers with the tools and training they need to help our children succeed. However, after reviewing the 2010 TCAP performance report, we realized additional support services were needed to achieve this success. That data revealed that 30% of the third graders in Williamson County did not score proficient on the state standard test in 2010. So, we sought grant funding and founded Raise Your Hand Williamson (later named the Raise Your Hand tutoring program in late 2011) to address the need for high quality, affordable, and customized tutoring in reading and math for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who tested below proficiency. **School Principals, using the AIM Web and STAR Assessment to measure grade-level proficiency selects students who score below the 40<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> benchmark. The 25<sup>th</sup> gets you into tier 2 with each school still having room to enroll students at/below the 40<sup>th</sup> percentage.**

Third grade readers are the core of our program because third grade is the transitional year when a child moves from *learning to read* – using their knowledge of the alphabet to identifying words – to *reading to learn* as a source of information. The National Research Council links the problem to future failures as any child who's not reading fairly well by the end of third grade is unlikely to graduate high school. Children who

are unable to successfully transition to fast and fluent reading develop a learning gap among their peers that continues to grow.

Third grade struggles will lead to difficulties in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade where assignments continue to rely upon knowledge acquired from this transitional period. After meeting with the School District's Superintendents, we received authorization to launch a pilot program in 2 schools (College Grove and Franklin Elementary Schools) in the spring semester of 2012. We enrolled 76 students with over 30 volunteers. Only 66 students completed the program. United Way of Williamson County received a volunteer grant of \$10,000 to cover 100% of the cost to operate Raise Your Hand which included 4 teachers at \$25 per hour, 4 bus drivers at \$33.15 per hour and a daily snack at \$1.50 per student.

This diagram display our school district partnership.



## **School Agreements**

School administrators are encouraged to make an investment in RYH through advocacy and grant matching. Each school must enter a school agreement containing services they are willing to provide annually. Each school district Superintendent enters an agreement granting UWWC access permission and outlining services allotted with financial support. We negotiate on the fees for bus driver and snacks which may vary annually.

Teacher rates are established by the district and are non-negotiable, which are:

- Certified Teacher, \$25/hour
- Non-Classified Staff at \$17.50/hour

Here is a sample Memorandum of Understanding with school districts:

### **Memorandum of Understanding Sample**

RYH is based on an existing partnership with Franklin Special School District (FSSD), Williamson County Schools (WCS) and United Way of Williamson County. Each partner has agreed to steps that began the implementation of the project in January 2012 which has continued to the fall of 2015-2016 with the support of your approved funding.

United Way of Williamson County will:

- Continue to coordinate the project, including bringing community partners together to identify volunteers as readers, tutors and mentors.
- Work with Columbia State Community College, O' More College of Design and High Schools for potential teaching interns.
- Work collaboratively with both FSSD and WCS to develop and submit a fundable proposal to support the continuation of this project.
- Through the Williamson Country Volunteer Center, process applications for volunteer tutors and mentors and ensure background clearance information.
- Once identified, meet with school personnel to finalize project for implementation.

Williamson County School and Franklin Special School District will:

- Identify the necessary schools for the continuation of the project.
- Provide overview of the program with key school personnel and gain buy-in.
- Provide staff to work on final development of the project.
- Conduct background checks for all volunteer readers.
- Provide space, transportation, drivers, and teachers for the project.
- Create an environment that is welcoming to parents.
- Provide training for volunteer readers, tutors and mentors as well as monitor classroom activities.

It is through these partnerships and cooperation that we will continue to see improvement in test scores and graduation rates for the population we have identified.





## **Marketing Strategy and Data Collection**

The real key to staying ahead is retaining records of the changing student roster. It is important to collect all data from current students and those promoted out of RYH. Testimonials by prior students, teacher, volunteers and parents are very helpful.

Advertisement may vary, but should include:

- Print advertising in local papers read by the target market
- Print ads in school graduation programs per brand recognition/congratulate seniors
- Google AdWords focused on combinations of keywords such as "tutoring," &" etc.
- Direct Selling by marketing RYH at every community event inside the county. Request one-on-one meetings with community leaders, Schools, library, churches, groups and organization plus filtrate the social media with program information. While finding volunteers the old fashioned way through referrals and local contacts still works best, plus the use of online volunteer matching sites.
- Campaign Staff, Corporate Partner and Community Agencies
- The Volunteer Center can help with messaging for both programs, create a call to action and aid in increasing volunteerism.
- Local programs such as FLIP and Against the Grain have non-disclosed agreements to refer potential volunteers unable to serve during the day to RYH.

The marketing strategy will also incorporate a networking focus with other tutoring programs. This allows RYH to be quite familiar with the material and process of other programs. It also provides the Program Coordinator with an opportunity to offer referrals and exchange of resources that the school cannot provide.

## **RYH's Competitive Edge**

To provide a comprehensive tutoring program requires covering every possible aspect of the students' need, curriculum, teachers, daily snack, and transportation and service fees. Using the school creates a relationship that provides a safe place for students to learn where they are already familiar. The best sales strategy of RYH is the offering free sessions and transportation home. Free sessions are designed offer financial relief to working parents. Make sure you are in contact with other programs providing the same specialized and targeted services who share your market. This gives your organization an edge that will help it to survive for some time to come. Gain much experience and knowledge about your county's core values and state required standards to stay ahead. The majority of competition comes from one-on-one tutoring programs conducted by friends of the parent or from school referrals.



**Grant Funding Strategy**

RYH program operations are funded by private grants and donor designations. The Strategic Initiative Grant Writer will seek opportunities identified by the team. Our projected cost for the 2016-2017 school year was \$119,925.25 which included 10 schools, with 5 classes, 5 teachers and 2 buses per school. This breaks down to \$2385.05 per grade class and \$216.82 per student.

**Below is a Sample Budget for 10 Elementary Schools** This Budget Narrative is the justification of 'how' and/or 'why' a line item helps to meet the program deliverables

| PROGRAM EXPENSES                               | GRANT REQUEST      | GRANT MATCH by District (s) | TOTAL PROJECT      | United Way Match | Cost per school   |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Personnel Salary and Benefits</b>           |                    |                             |                    |                  |                   |
| (20) Teacher Salaries (\$500 per semester)     | \$ 20,000.00       | \$ 8,000.00                 | \$ 28,000.00       |                  | \$ 2,800.00       |
| (2) 2nd grade Teachers                         | \$ 2,000.00        | \$ 800.00                   | \$ 2,800.00        |                  | \$ 280.00         |
| Teacher Benefits and Insurance                 |                    | 1,6500                      |                    |                  |                   |
| United Way Manager                             |                    |                             |                    | \$ 30,000        |                   |
| <b>Professional &amp; Contractual Services</b> |                    |                             |                    |                  |                   |
| Background Check (10 adults)                   | \$ 420.00          | \$ -                        | \$ 420.00          |                  | \$ 42.00          |
| Marketing/ Advertisement                       | \$ 1720.00         | \$ -                        | \$ 1720.00         |                  | \$ 172.00         |
| <b>Supplies and Equipment</b>                  |                    |                             |                    |                  |                   |
| Daily Snack (\$0.72 per kid x 2 days per week) | \$ 5,760           | \$ -                        | \$ 5,760.00        |                  | \$ 576.00         |
| office Supplies                                | \$ 1,000.00        | \$ -                        | \$ 1,000.00        |                  | \$ 100.00         |
| Program Supplies                               | \$ 750.00          | \$ -                        | \$ 750.00          |                  | \$ 75.00          |
| <b>Transportation</b>                          |                    |                             |                    |                  |                   |
| (10) Bus Mileage & Fuel                        | \$ 20,020.00       | \$ 8008.00                  | \$ 28,008.00       |                  | \$ 280.80         |
| Staff Mileage                                  | \$ 1,500           |                             |                    |                  |                   |
| <b>Administrative Cost</b>                     |                    |                             |                    |                  |                   |
| Volunteer Recognition                          | \$ 500.00          | \$ -                        | \$ 500.00          |                  | \$ 50.00          |
| Postage  | \$ 350.00          | \$ -                        | \$ 350.00          |                  | \$ 35.00          |
| Printing (copy printer)                        | \$ 500.00          | \$ -                        | \$ 500.00          |                  | \$ 50.00          |
| Telephone                                      | \$ 456.00          | \$ -                        | \$ 180.00          |                  | \$ 18.00          |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                             | <b>\$54,976.00</b> | <b>\$33,308.00</b>          | <b>\$69,988.00</b> | <b>32,000</b>    | <b>\$4,478.80</b> |

## Volunteer Recruitment

Please review the following chart which details the venue we use to recruit volunteers. All volunteers must follow the regulations for school visitors, which includes a background check, sign in/out and participation in school safety drills. We recruit volunteer tutors through partnerships with O'More College of Design, Columbia State Community College and Williamson County High Schools to offer service credit hours for students. In addition, volunteer opportunities are extended to the general public, senior groups and United Way agencies through social media and commercial advertising. *During the 2016-17 academic year, volunteers donated 1020 service hours with a total of 1512 hours of tutoring.*





## **Milestones and Lessons**

Many milestones will be set for RYH throughout your journey as a way of monitoring progress of the organization in the pursuit of achieving realistic, lofty goals with the aim of building a model into a reputable program. The following details were specific milestones UWWC strived for:

- 1) Implementing 2<sup>nd</sup> grade reading classes as a core component of RYH.
- 2) Securing funding and teachers to offer summer services.
- 3) Provide free books to promote out of school literacy achievement.
- 4) Expansion of primary services to include early foundational grades from Pre-K through secondary education.

Also, we've learned that transportation is the greatest barrier to accessing afterschool intervention but necessary to avoid instructional interruptions. We've the following 2 points as obstacles but easy to address.

- **TUTOR TRAINING.** Adding a focus on the initial and ongoing training opportunities to build the capacity of tutors to best meet student needs with each districts' reading or curriculum Specialist.
- **TUTOR ENGAGEMENT.** Adding an expectation on teachers to create a clear plan that incorporate volunteer tutors in each session while building a partnership in the classroom.

**Thank you for expressing an interest to duplicating the Raise Your Hand tutoring program. This program is the proud product of United Way of Williamson County in Franklin, TN. If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact us at 615.771.2312.**