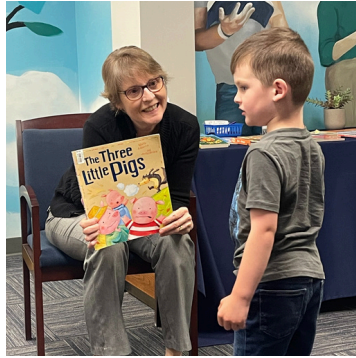
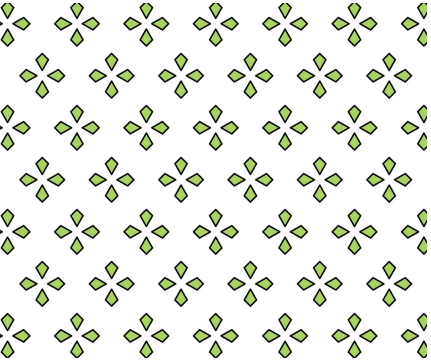
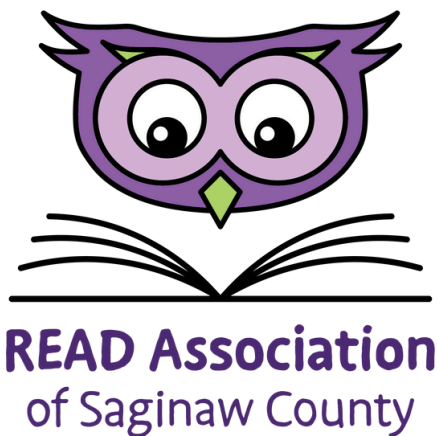
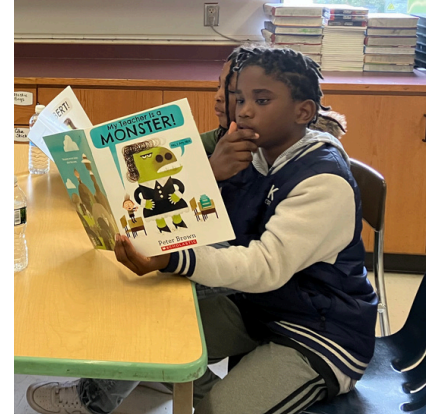


Changing Lives Through Literacy



July '24-
June '25



Annual Report

Table Of Contents



Our Vision & Mission	1
.....	
Letter from the President	2
.....	
Our Team	3
.....	
Branding Update	4
.....	
Program Achievements	5
.....	
Volunteer Impact	7
.....	
Events	8
.....	
Financial Reports	10
.....	
Donor Recognition	11
.....	

Our Vision



READ Association
of Saginaw County

READ envisions a strong future for Saginaw County, where improved literacy skills help residents achieve their goals, and the READ Association is seen as the hub of literacy support throughout the county.



Structured Tutoring



Reading Practice



Book Ownership



Family Support

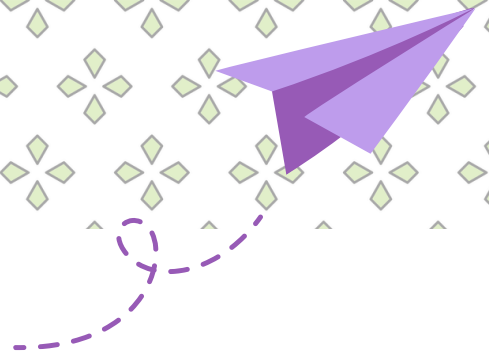


Our Mission

READ began in 1966 with the mission of improving the reading skills of Saginaw County children and spreading the joy of reading.

It's a simple mission with a big impact. Reading unlocks worlds, opportunities, and futures that can change our community. While we have added programs, this mission still serves as our north star after all of these years.

Letter from the President

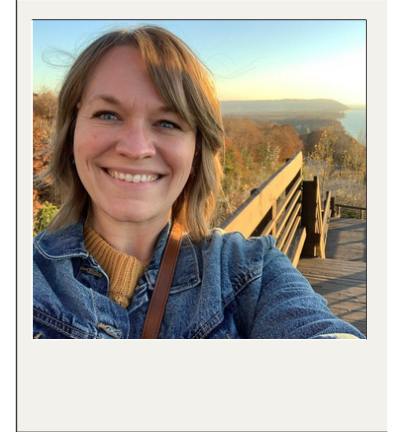


Dear READ Association Friends,

Over the past year, it feels like technological developments have been flying at us at warp speed. When it comes to the way READ approaches literacy work, we've had to consider these technologies and the way they affect the children in our programs. Often, we've decided to reinforce things like in-person engagement, physical books, writing in a journal, and some rather "old school" forms of learning. I think there is value in this approach and the research in the field supports these ideas. Here's what we've seen:

- One-on-one, in-person, reading support continues to help children improve their reading scores.
- Giving a child a physical dictionary sparks their curiosity and teaches them how to solve problems.
- Writing in a journal can help students improve their spelling skills.
- When a child holds a favorite book in their hands, their smile is contagious.
- Providing volunteers with the opportunity to step away from their own screens and give back builds a strong, empowered group of community champions.

"I believe the physical-world engagement READ has provided to hundreds of children...highlights the power of human connection..."



Samantha M. Engel

President / Director
READ Association of Saginaw County

The word "Luddite" is often used to describe someone who dislikes technology. It comes to us from early 19th century England when the textile workers (Luddites) protested against and even destroyed new machinery that threatened their livelihoods. Now, I wouldn't call myself a Luddite, but I believe the physical-world engagement READ has provided to hundreds of children over the past year highlights the power of human connection and tangible, tactile learning. We're all learning how to navigate this new world, and the best we can do is courageously follow our instincts, and the experts, while we try to make this world a better place.

Thank you for having faith in us as we work to build a stronger Saginaw, one child, and one book, at a time.

Samantha M. Engel

Our Team

Staff

Samantha Engel
President/Director

Linda Hawke
Family Literacy
Center Coordinator

Sarah Henicle
Raising Readers
Academy
Coordinator

Abbie Pedrotte
Office Manager

"Alone we can do so
little; together we can
do so much."
-Helen Keller



Board of Directors

READ's Board of Directors is made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds from across Saginaw County. These individuals play a critical role in the organization's governance, while also being champions of READ's work. You'll often see them volunteering at our events and programs!

Maria McCarville
Chair

Andrea Muladore
Vice Chair

Mimi Bell
Secretary

Kevin Frank, CPA
Treasurer

Lisa Tran, PhD
Immediate Past Chair

Bob Boldt

Kylie Bos

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Matt W. Peterson

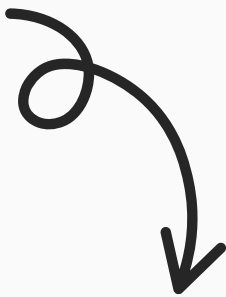
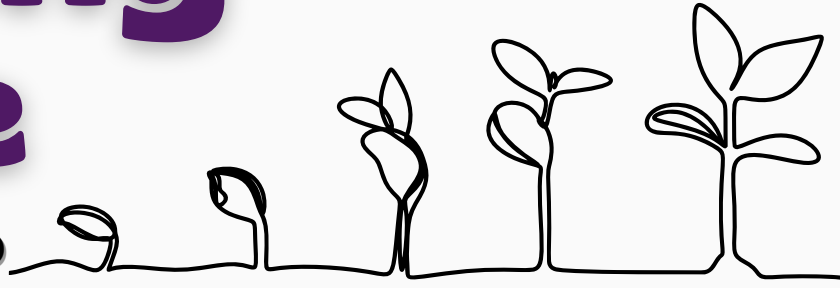
Ericka Taylor, PhD

DemonD Tibbs



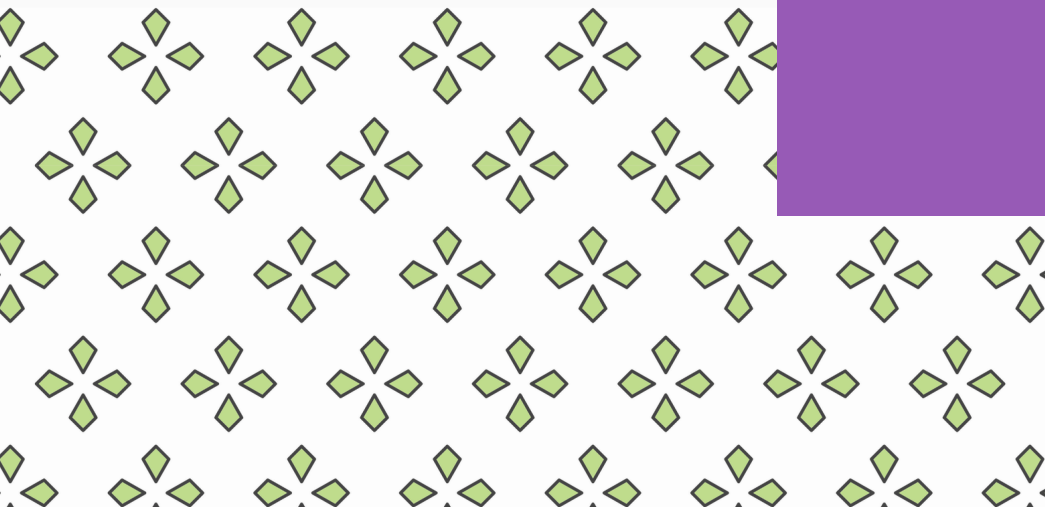
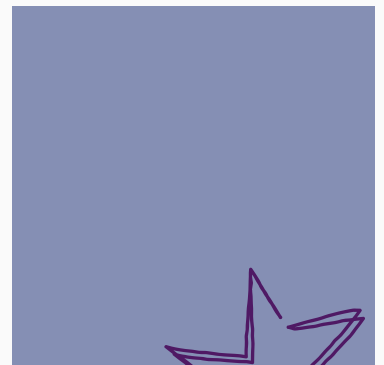
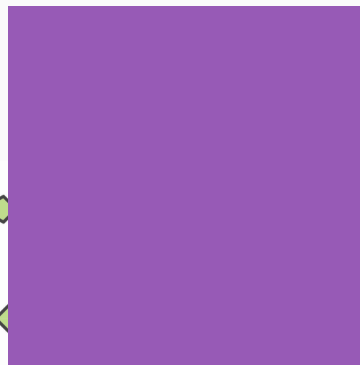
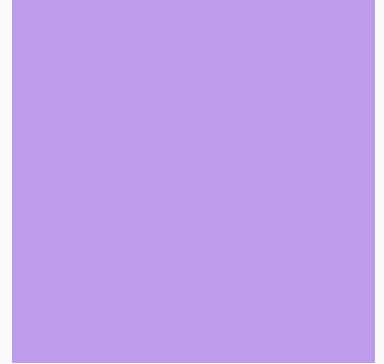
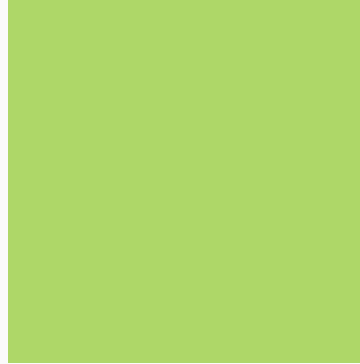
Branding Update

A fresh new look for READ



READ Association
of Saginaw County

Over the last year, you may have noticed an updated color palette and new graphics on our printed materials and social media. In late 2024, READ began building on these changes, and we are happy to launch our official rebrand. Our new logo and design elements offer a fresh update and align with our mission and goals for the future.



Program Achievements



2024 - 2025 Mentor Program

Since 1966, READ has focused on the power of one-on-one reading practice through its Mentor Program. This program reaches throughout Saginaw County, serving students in our urban, suburban and rural communities. **During the last school year, 289 students participated in the program, and 259 of them showed improved reading fluency and/or a more positive attitude toward reading!** In addition to those improvements, strong cross-cultural and multigenerational bonds are formed between the students and their mentors. Sometimes a child needs to know there is a community caring for them, and the Mentor Program provides just that. READ staff also worked hard to update the mentor handbook and develop new ways to build connections between mentors.



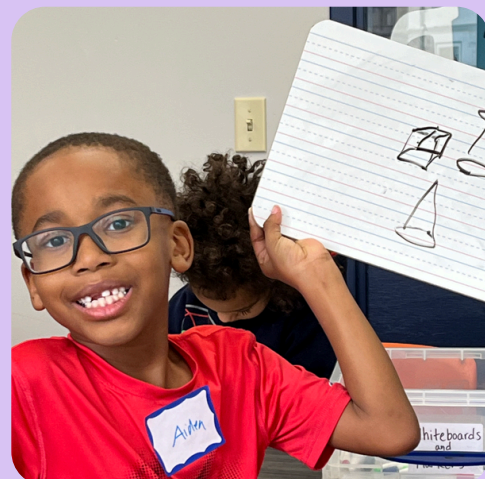
22
Mentor Sites

289
Students Served

Program Achievements

Raising Readers Academy

READ ran 7 sessions of this multi-week program at during the past year. Locations included: our Family Literacy Center, The Castle Museum, area schools, and Zauel Memorial Library. Here, children engage in open centers that feature literacy activities, while parents have conversations about topics related to literacy development, soft skills, and the love languages of children. They learn how to build homes that support their children's development. This program, led by certified educators, works to break down generational cycles of illiteracy in Saginaw County.



153

People Participated
in Raising Readers

78%

Students Improved
Their Soft Skills



Carolyn R. Otto

Family Literacy Center

The FLC is a hub of literacy activity. Weekly Storytime provides important early reading exposure to kids. Staff have noticed improvements in the attention span and other soft skills of regular attendees. Additionally, our Barton Tutoring Program provides structured literacy support to students who struggle to read at grade level. **The 38 students in the program**

during the last year all made progress toward grade-level fluency and 17 graduated from the program. Parents also receive support as they navigate challenges with their students through workshops and meetings with our FLC Coordinator.



38

Children
Enrolled in
Barton
Tutoring

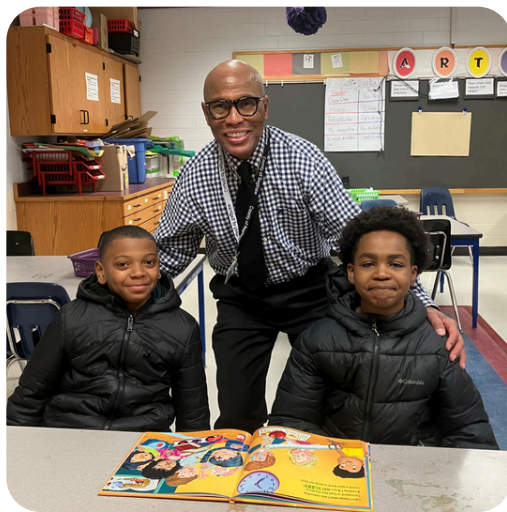


Volunteer Impact



231

Total Volunteers



3,553
**Total Volunteer
Hours**

139

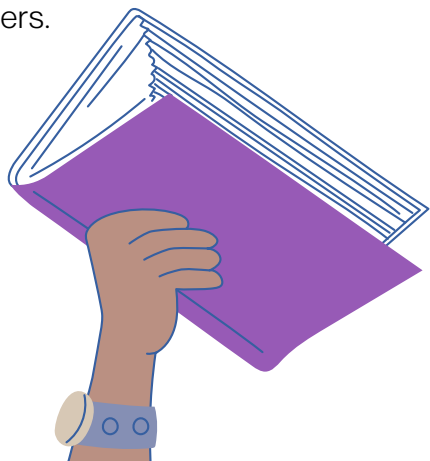
**Mentor Program
Volunteers**

38

**Barton Tutoring
Volunteers**

Book Delivery

Access to age and interest-appropriate books improves children's attitudes toward reading, helping them become stronger readers. To that end, this program helps build home libraries. The three books given to each child are all hand-selected, packaged and delivered by READ staff and volunteers.



366
**Households
Registered**

661
**Children Received
Books**

1,983
Books Distributed





Events

Books for Breakfast

Books for Breakfast, held on March 9th at Saginaw's Hunger Solution Center, brought in volunteers, families, and READ fans to get excited about National Reading Month. We were joined by the Castle Museum, Public Libraries of Saginaw, Children's Zoo, Mid-Michigan Children's Museum, and Saginaw art Museum, who all added crafts and activities to the morning. Thanks to the support of Jolt Credit Union, we awarded two bikes, dozens of books, and cash prizes to the winners of our poster contest.

DEAR at the Zoo

Drop Everything and Read at the Children's Zoo was a blast this year! Over 900 adults and children came out to get free books, enjoy puppet shows and story times, complete crafts, and connect with 28 community partners. **READ covered the admission for the first 100 children and every child left with a new book!** We are grateful for all of the time our volunteers put into this event and for our partners who carved time out of their days to be there. Thanks to the Frankenmuth Credit Union and 1st State Bank, families enjoyed free carousel and train rides all day!



New this Year: Spring Open House



Since our Family Literacy Center is still under 3 years old, we're still working to harness its full potential. This year we hosted our first Spring Open House to welcome people into the space and introduce them to all of the programs and services READ offers. We met new families, connected with familiar faces, and even met some new adults who became volunteers. Every child left with a new book they selected from our book room, and a workbook for the summer, and each family took home activities, like Scrabble tiles, and some healthy recipes. We were grateful that our friends from Michigan Alliance for Families, the Saginaw ISD, and Great Lakes Bay Health Pediatrics were there to join us!



Community Events

One way that READ tries to tackle the issue of illiteracy in the community is by **getting books into the hands of children**. We take in thousands of books through donations and then head to events to give them back out. The excitement when a kid finds a book that matches their interests is heartwarming. Book ownership is directly linked to increased reading practice, improved reading scores, and a more positive attitude toward reading. Attending community events is also a great way to share our programs and resources with families and other community organizations!

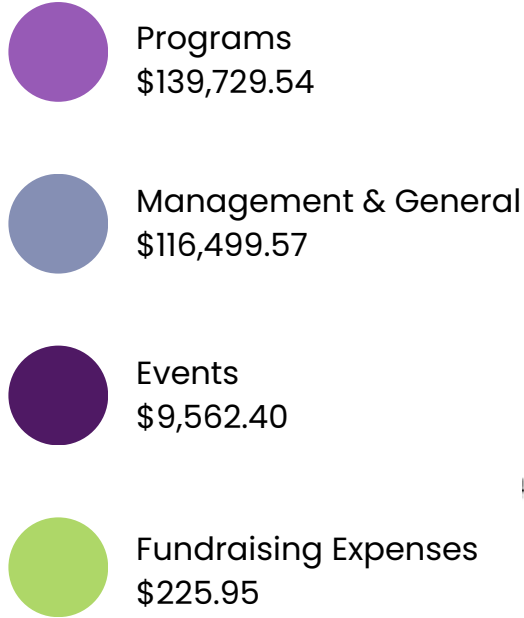
Over the last year, we've also worked with and even collaborated with other community organizations, like LLEAD, the Thomas Township Library, Saginaw County Parks, Thomas Township Nature Center and Preserve, CAN Council, most school districts in the county, and many more to help make Saginaw County a better place!



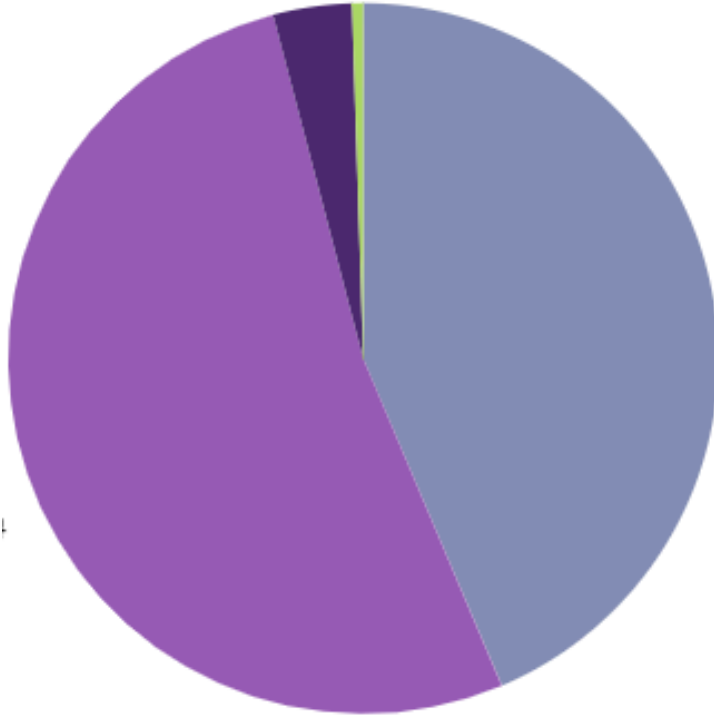
26
Community
Events
Attended



Expenses



Total: \$266,017.46



Revenues



Total: \$268,612.02



Financial Reports



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Bill

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Other

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Saginaw, MI 48607

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