



# THE ALBUQUERQUE READS PROGRAM

## HISTORY

The Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce (GACC) has been serving the needs of the Albuquerque Business Community since its founding in 1917. Today, it is the leading business membership organization in New Mexico.

Investors with the Chamber consistently tell us that a main concern employers have in doing business in Albuquerque is the public education system. In response, the GACC established the Career Guidance Institute (CGI) in 1984, a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation. CGI desires to work alongside the Albuquerque Public School (APS) system in creating programs that serve our children where the need is greatest. A sound education system is the key to a community's economic vitality. The chief program of the CGI is Albuquerque Reads.

After launching a number of legislative initiatives in the area of education, the Chamber turned its focus to the practical, hands-on side of the equation. The Chamber realized that the business community could directly effect the success of classroom teachers by creating a conduit for community members to tutor students in a structured environment. Aimed at reinforcing what was being taught in the classroom, in 2003 The Albuquerque Reads program was born.

Through the vision, energy, and support of Chamber President & CEO, Terri Cole, and former APS Superintendent, Joseph M. Vigil, a dynamic partnership was struck between GACC and APS. The design team at Bel-Air Elementary School was commissioned to customize a program that fit the needs of New Mexico's children while maintaining alignment with district and state standards. A curriculum, including scope and sequence, along with an overall organizational structure was created.

Operating under a Memo of Understanding, APS hires one site coordinator and one educational assistant for the ABQ Reads sites. CGI's responsibility entails securing volunteers for the program as well as materials (i.e books and school supplies) that are given to the students throughout the school year. Both entities stay in close communication as the program year progresses.

In 2003, the first class of ABQ Reads students at Bel-Air elementary eagerly participated in a program that brought shared accountability and responsibility to the art of learning to read. Endorsed by the school district's Title I department, ABQ Reads expanded to Atrisco and Wherry Elementary Schools the following year. In 2017 the program moved from Wherry to Whittier elementary. Seeing countless of students served, ABQ Reads continues its mission in Atrisco, Bel-Air, and Whittier schools to this day.

## ALBUQUERQUE READS . . .

- Is a partnership with Albuquerque Public Schools and CGI.
- Pairs a kindergarten student with a volunteer creating a strong bond between tutor and student and aids in literacy development.
- Is composed of three 30-minute weekly tutoring sessions taking place September through April.
- Is a student-centered program with emphasis on all aspects of reading.
- Is volunteer driven with a yearly requirement of ~300 tutors
- Only requires an hour and half each week from the volunteers.
- Offers many options for busy professionals.
- Has a uniquely designed and highly structured curriculum that aligns with Common Core and APS standards.
- Tutoring sessions are built into the students' school & in conjunction with current classroom learning.
- They are composed of three, 10-minute segments for reading, writing, and literacy skill development.
- Is designed to be multi-sensory and includes interactive activities.
- Provides a book a month and two Reading Goodie Packs (December & April) to every student.
- Gives 20 books throughout the year to each student.
- Is completely grant and donation supported.

## GOALS

The program’s approach will continue to be results-oriented, with the two end targets being that of nurturing a capable and educated workforce and sustaining Albuquerque’s appeal as a great place to live, work and raise a family. This is achieved through the following goals:

1. Maintain and improve the teaching and learning materials used in the ABQ Reads program.
2. Secure financial resources sufficient to support the implementation of ABQ Reads.
3. Create a nurturing environment in which students’ reading proficiency is improved. By the end of the school year:
  - (a.) There will be a 30% in-

crease of students reading at the highest proficiency level. (b.)

There will be a 30% decrease of students reading at lowest level.

4. Recruit, train, manage and retain a cadre of volunteers to meet the yearly tutoring demand. Each kindergarten student will have a tutor for each of the three weekly sessions.
5. Every student will receive a total of twenty books to add to their personal libraries. This will come in the form of eight monthly books and two Reading Goodie Packs each containing six additional books.
6. Yearly celebrations will take place in April to recognize another successful program.

## S T A T S

- 46% of New Mexican adults are functionally illiterate. (*newmexicoliteracy.org*)

- The most successful way to improve the reading achievement of low-income children is to increase their access to print. (*bookspring.org*)

- Higher reading exposure was 95% positively correlated with a “hub” region supporting semantic language processing in the brain, controlling for household income. (*bookspring.org*)

- The first three years of schooling are a critical time to learn the basic skills needed to tackle a more advanced curriculum, yet many who enter fourth grade struggle with reading. (*Reading is Fundamental*)

## RESULTS

- Students reading at the highest proficiency level improved by 31% which was nine percentage points better than district counterparts.
- Students reading at the lowest proficiency level decreased by 32% which was ten percentage points better than district counterparts.
- ABQ Reads does accomplish its ultimate



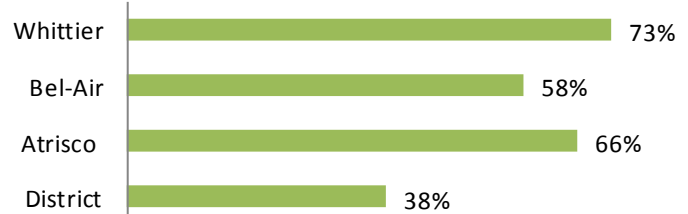
[www.abqreads.com](http://www.abqreads.com)



**Contact:**  
**505-764-3728**  
**[mbilly@abqreads.com](mailto:mbilly@abqreads.com)**

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Students Directly Certified\* to Receive Free Lunches



\*Refers to students who are directly certified by the state to receive free meals due to their confirmed participation in a state subsidy program (i.e. SNAP, TANF), homelessness, or other qualifying factors.

### Ethnicities Served

