



February 2007

[www.everybodywinsct.org](http://www.everybodywinsct.org)

Good afternoon, Members of the Education Committee, it's a pleasure for me to be here today. My name is Pat McClellan. This is my second year as the Program Director of The Readers as Leaders program, one of the 2 reading enrichment programs under EVERYBODY WINS!CT.

I am here today to thank you for the \$65K that Readers as Leaders has received for the past 3 years from the State of CT. That \$65K has granted us the opportunity to encourage leadership, reading and community awareness, through the Readers as Leaders program, at 5 schools, including our 2 new schools. We have realized an increase of 12% in student participation. Everybody Wins!CT understands the \$65K has once again been written into the budget for the 2007-2008 school year. We feel with an allocation of \$80K and the continued support of our established private foundations, we would be able to serve, at minimum, an additional 300 students in the 2008-2009 school year.

Readers as Leaders targets middle school students who are given the responsibility to be real role models by reading once a week, for 16 weeks, to a student in the kindergarten or first grade. This fosters community involvement because the younger students keep the books that the middle school students read to them and every 4 weeks we give our middle school Leaders, books of their own interest to add to their personal home library.. Given that adult literacy in Hartford is a horrifying 50%, Readers as Leaders fills an important gap by getting books into the homes of some families that otherwise wouldn't have them.

I speak to you not only as the Director of this powerful program, but also as a parent of a student who has benefited from participating in Readers as Leaders and Power Lunch (the other program Everybody Wins!CT facilitates). I have seen improvements in student behaviors and confidence with my own eyes. Not only do I feel passionate about this, but my students and their parents also recognize the positive effects. If you would permit me, I will read a few excerpts:

A young man from Noah Webster says "I have had perfect attendance this year, I have not missed any of my reading sessions because I do not want to disappoint my listener who looks at me as a role model."

Another young man from Burr Elementary states "During the leadership retreat at Camp Jewell, I met lots of new friends from other schools in my community. I liked getting to know them because they're interested in doing well in school and in being a role model, just like I am. Readers as Leaders gives me a chance to do that."

A young lady from Fox reports that "Readers as Leaders has shown her how to be patient with the young listeners and how to persevere in difficult situations."

And lastly one day a young Hispanic mom stopped me in the hallway and said "Thank you so much for reading to my son. He comes home and tries to read the book to me. I love it. Thank you."

Since our primary goal is to build self-esteem, character and community awareness among our students, we provide leadership training, starting with a 2night 3day retreat at Camp Jewell , and periodically continuing with more classroom training sessions. We have begun compiling outcome results and this year we have introduced a Leadership Film series where examples of everyday citizens making a difference in their communities are reviewed. As you can see, Readers as Leaders provides many forms of enrichment for our students, always keeping the vehicle of literacy as a tool for growth and education.

Once again Everybody Wins!CT and the Readers as Leaders program would like to express a sincere thanks for your support and we are hopeful that you will consider increasing our allocation to \$80K.

Our informational packet contains my contact information. Please feel free to request a schedule if you would like to visit one our reading sessions.

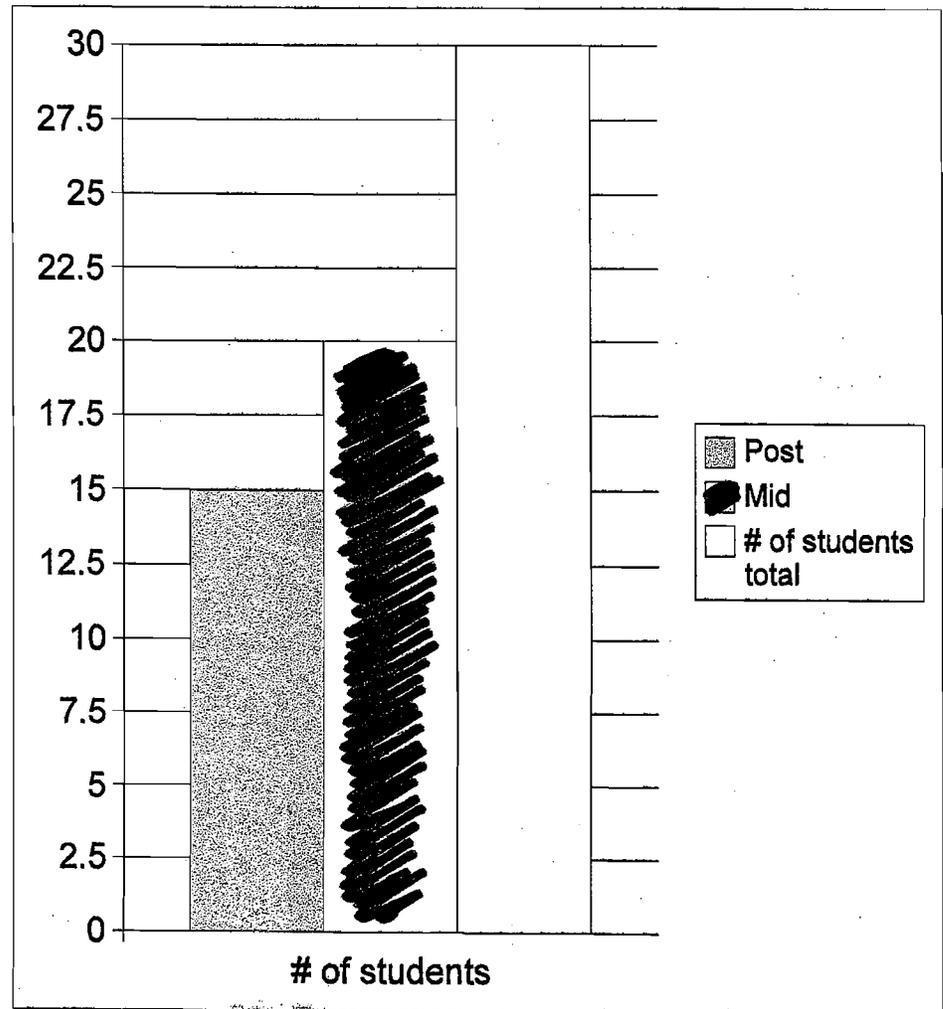
Thank you for hearing me today.

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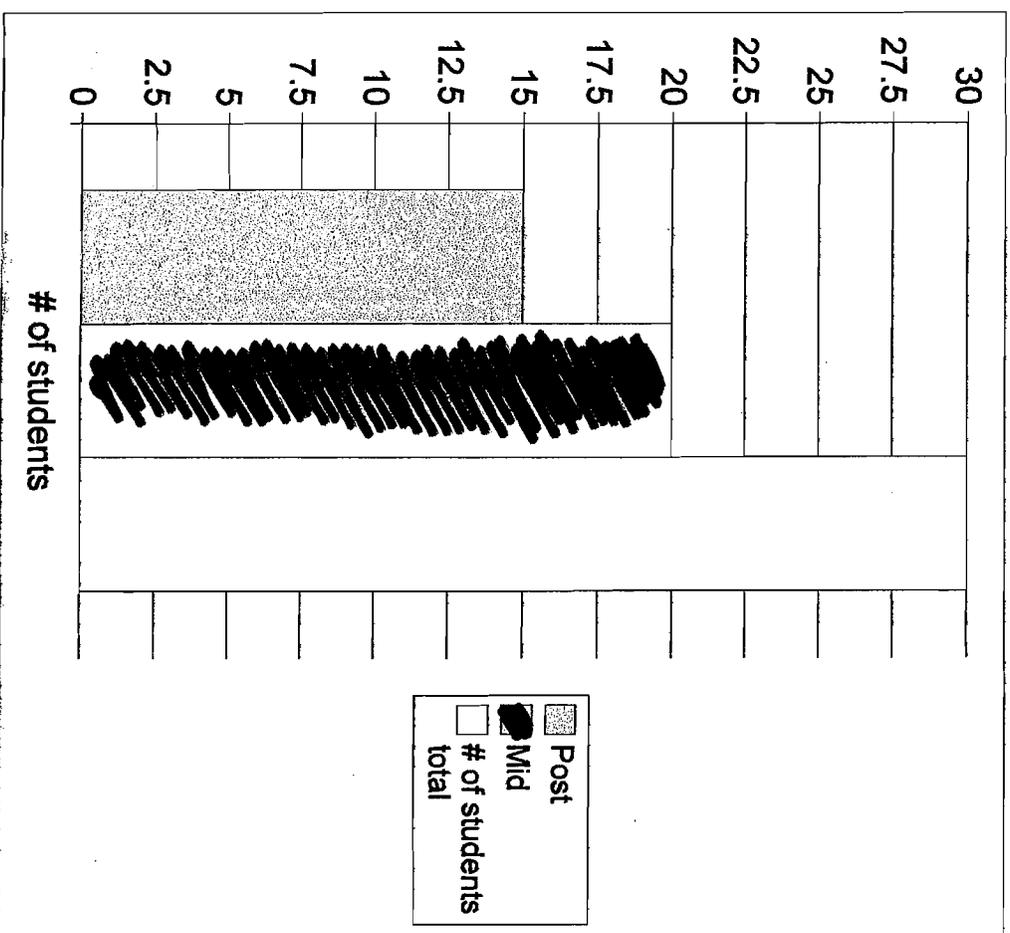
# Fox Middle Outcome Measurements

How many Fox Middle students have library cards?



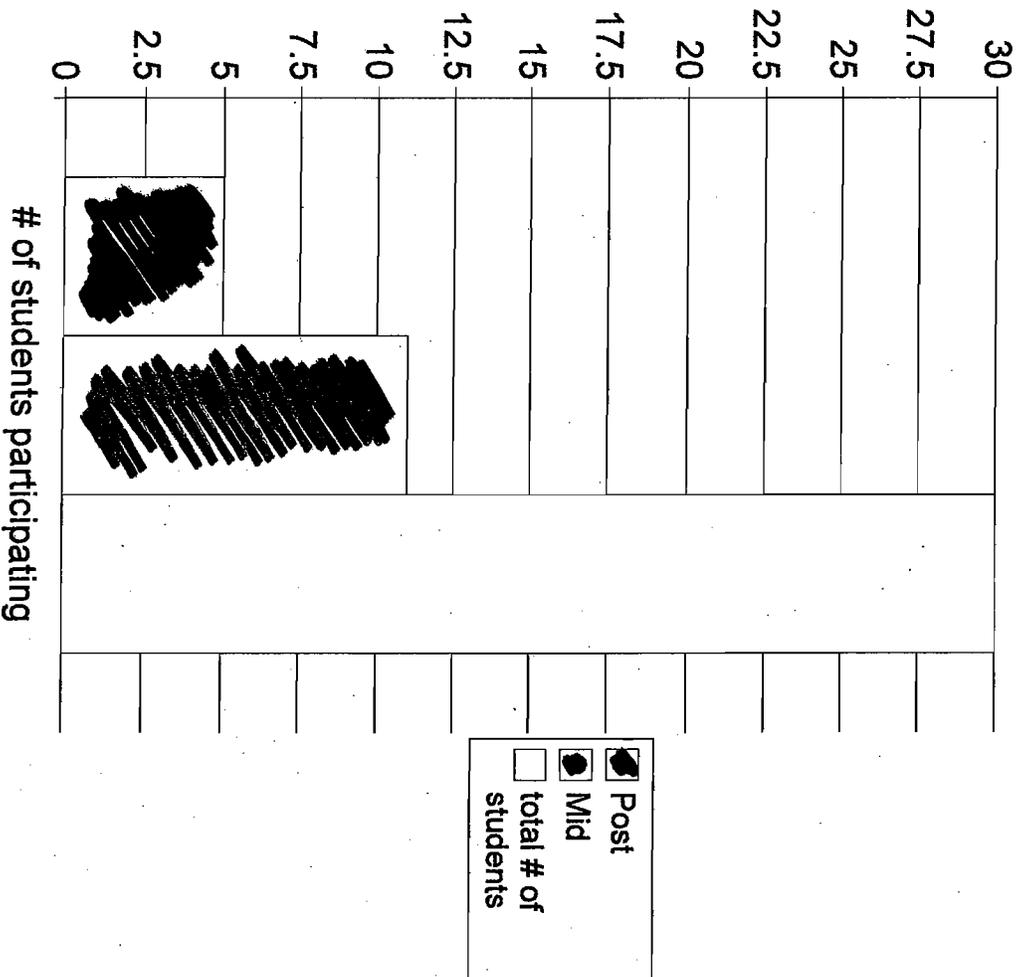
# Fox Middle Outcome Measurements

How many Fox Middle students have library cards?



# Fox Middle Outcome Measurements

I read a lot at home...





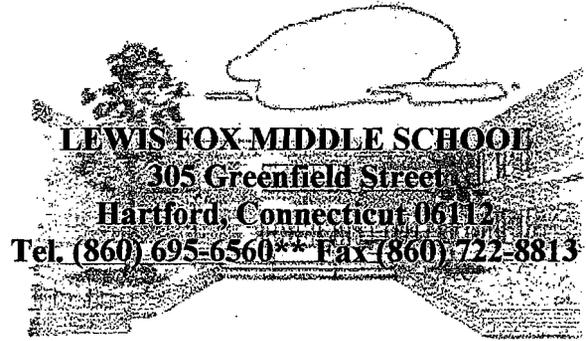
**Steven Adamowski, Ph. D.**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**Andrew Serrao**  
*Principal*

**Yvonne Coachman-Francis**  
*Assistant Principal*

**Sheldon Neal**  
*Assistant Principal*

**Angela Thomas**  
*Instructional Leader*



February 5, 2007

Dear Honorable Members of Congress,

Readers as Leaders began at Fox Middle School five years ago as a partnership between the students at Fox and the first grade students at Martin Luther King Elementary School across the street. Approximately forty students were trained to read to young children.

In addition to enhancing the reading ability and confidence of the seventh and eighth graders at Fox, the training also develops leadership skills and gives the students an opportunity to earn service learning hours which is a promotion requirement from the middle school and a graduation requirement from high school.

The training included a stay at Camp Jewel where the students not only built friendships, and enjoyed what for some was a first time experience away from home but they also learned to trust themselves and others. Going to Martin Luther King weekly gives the students an opportunity to share themselves, be positive role models, foster friendships, and begin to think about possible careers in education.

This program is invaluable in enhancing the curriculum and helping the young people to grow in confidence and maturity.

Sincerely,  
  
Judith Glover  
School Coujsleor

*"Growing the Future of Hartford Through Quality Education for All Students"*



**ALFRED E. BURR SCHOOL**



**Steven J. Adamowski Ph.D**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

**Donna Caldeira, Principal**  
**Diane Kutsavage-Prescod, Assistant Principal**

To Whom It May Concern:

We are very fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in the *Readers as Leaders* leadership and literacy program for the fourth year in a row. This program, whose purpose is to teach and enhance leadership skills in middle school students by training them to be mentors to children in our kindergarten and first grade classes through the reading of books, has been very meaningful for our middle school participants. It is also a very positive way to introduce literature to our younger students; the four books they receive through the program are the first books many of them own.

The leaders receive training by a reading specialist from the Hartford Public Library to teach them reading strategies to help their young partners enjoy their new books. They also observe classroom teachers reading to their classes, further impressing these strategies on the Leaders. To enhance their leadership skills, the Leaders went to the YMCA's Camp Jewell for a three day leadership training retreat. The emphasis that *Readers as Leaders* places on reflection encourages pride in our students for serving their community in the valuable way they do.

Through the *Readers as Leaders* program our students have distinguished themselves not only for good scholarship and involvement in school organizations, but also for excellent leadership qualities and potential in community action. Each and every Burr Leader is involved in the program for a reason. I believe that they will be able to inspire and motivate others to take action to better their communities. In my opinion, the Burr School Leaders help shape the lives of the future by helping young students gain a greater appreciation for reading. They learn how to involve a young child in reading and how to make reading fun for their partners.

Our students recognize the values of this program. By soliciting comments, I have learned that our students see their participation in *Readers as Leaders* as a way of encouraging them to be curious, to "help little kids", to improve their own reading, and to graduate from high school. As administrators, we see the benefits in terms of academic achievement, character development, and the creation of a greater sense of community and responsibility in our school.

They have earned my respect and the respect of adults and peers at Alfred E. Burr School for accepting the challenge of bettering tomorrow today. Without reservation, we at Alfred E. Burr School support the continuation and expansion of this program and look forward to our continued participation.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Smagin  
Alfred E. Burr School Counselor

**"Strong Traditional Academics for Responsible Students"**