

AGENDA ITEM #10  
November 17, 2015  
**Public Hearing/Action**

**MEMORANDUM**

November 13, 2015

TO: County Council

FROM: Essie McGuire, Senior Legislative Analyst *EMC*  
Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst *my*

SUBJECT: **Public Hearing/Action** – Special Appropriation to the FY16 Operating Budget, Montgomery County Government, Children’s Opportunity Fund Non-Departmental Account, \$750,750 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)

**Joint Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education Committee Recommendation: Recommended approval (5-0) of the special appropriation to support the “Building Educated Leaders for Life” (BELL) Program. The funding will allow the County to leverage private partnership funds and to initiate the planning process for implementing the BELL Program in Summer 2016. The Joint Committee requested an update in February 2016 on the planning and implementation of the BELL Program, progress on the governance structure and priorities for the Children’s Opportunity Fund, and the collaborative collection of outcome data by the Department of Health and Human Services and Montgomery County Public Schools.**

The Council will hold a public hearing and consider action on the special appropriation to Montgomery County Government’s FY16 Operating Budget for the Children’s Opportunity Fund Non-Departmental Account in the amount of \$750,750 to support the “Building Educated Leaders for Life” (BELL) Program. The source of funds is General Fund reserves. The Council introduced this special appropriation on November 3. Councilmember Navarro wrote a memorandum to Councilmembers and the County Executive outlining the need for the special appropriation, the BELL program, and the public-private partnership opportunity that these County funds would leverage (circles 3-4). A draft appropriation resolution is attached at circles 1-2.

The appropriation will support the pilot implementation of the BELL program model in Montgomery County (descriptive materials about the BELL program model are attached at circles 5-12). The BELL model provides a summer academic and enrichment program to support students who lack the reading and math skills to perform at grade level. The program will partner with MCPS to expand learning time over the summer and mitigate the loss of

learning that often occurs during the summer break. The BELL program model has been shown to improve the reading skills of low performing elementary school children.<sup>1</sup>

Given the Council's interest in investing in high quality, evidence based interventions that support student achievement, particularly for students with low income and with other needs, all Councilmembers have expressed support for the concept and have signed on as sponsors of the supplemental appropriation resolution. The County Executive, MCPS leadership, and the Interim Director of the Children's Opportunity Fund have expressed support for the program concept and their intent to participate in planning how the initiative can move forward.

It is estimated that \$1.5 million per year is needed to implement the pilot in Montgomery County. The proposed funding model is for \$475,375 to come from the Norman R. and Ruth Rales Foundation (Rales Foundation); \$375,375 to come from other local fundraising, supported by the Rales Foundation; and \$750,750 to come from County resources. This is proposed to be a four year partnership. FY16 will be a pilot year for this program, following which the County and its partners will evaluate whether and how to continue or expand the program.

The appropriation is needed at this time to match the funding offered by the Rales Foundation and to allow planning activities to begin for service delivery in the summer of 2016. The Children's Opportunity Fund will work with the relevant partners in the next few months to develop the implementation mechanisms and structure for the BELL program in this first year.

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<sup>1</sup> The Urban Institute completed a random assignment study to evaluate the effectiveness of the BELL summer program in New York and Boston, and found that children in the BELL treatment group gained about a month's worth of reading skills more than their counterparts in the comparison group during the summer.

Resolution No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: November 3, 2015  
Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Lead sponsor: Councilmember Navarro  
Co-sponsors: Council President Leventhal, Education Committee Chair Rice, Councilmembers  
Berliner, Elrich, Floreen, Hucker, Katz, and Riemer

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SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the FY16 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Government  
Children's Opportunity Fund Non-Departmental Account  
\$750,750 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)

Background

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. The Council is committed to investing in high quality, evidence based interventions and programs that support student achievement, particularly for students with low income and with other needs.
3. The "Building Educated Leaders for Life" (BELL) program partners with schools to expand learning time over the summer and mitigate the loss of learning that often occurs during the summer break. The summer program is designed to support students who lack the reading and math skills to perform at grade level through a model of both academic and enrichment support.
4. In Montgomery County, the BELL model will be a public-private partnership that leverages funding from the Rales Foundation as well as other local philanthropy to support public investment in a sustainable funding model.

5. It is estimated that \$1.5 million per year is needed to implement this program in Montgomery County. The proposed funding model is for \$475,375 to come from the Rales Foundation; \$375,375 to come from other local fundraising, supported by the Rales Foundation; and \$750,750 to come from County resources. This is proposed to be a four year partnership. FY16 will be a pilot year for this program. Following FY16 the County and its partners will evaluate whether to continue or expand the program going forward.
6. The Children's Opportunity Fund will be responsible for working with Montgomery County Government, Montgomery County Public Schools, and other community stakeholders to determine the implementation mechanism and structure for the BELL program.
7. Notice of public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following action:

A special appropriation to the FY16 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Government Children's Opportunity Fund Non-Departmental Account is approved in the amount of \$750,750. The source of funds is General Fund Reserves. This appropriation must only be used to implement the BELL program through a public private partnership.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

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Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council



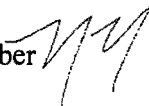
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

**NANCY NAVARRO**  
COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 4

**MEMORANDUM**

October 19, 2015

**TO:** Councilmembers  
Isiah Leggett, County Executive

**FROM:** Nancy Navarro, Councilmember 

**SUBJECT:** Children's Opportunity Fund Program: Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL) and Rales Foundation Public-Private Partnership

Last year, the County Executive included \$250,000, at my request, to establish a Children's Opportunity Fund (Fund) in the FY16 Operating Budget. During the FY16 Budget Savings Plan, the Council approved the County Executive's recommendation to reduce the Fund by \$125,000. Since then, the Executive Branch has hired former Board of Education member Shirley Brandman to serve as Executive Director of the Fund.

As Ms. Brandman begins establishing the governance structure and goals for the Fund, I believe it is essential to also move forward with concrete programs that will help close the achievement gap. As long as Montgomery County Government and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are experiencing budget challenges, it is essential that we retool our efforts to make sure we are most effectively utilizing our scarce resources. Programs designed to close the achievement gap must be deliberate, efficient, and rigorously evaluated. We can no longer continue funding programs without empirical evidence that shows real results.

Several weeks ago, Joshua Rales, the president of the Norman and Ruth Rales Foundation (Foundation), approached me with an exciting opportunity for a public-private partnership. The partnership would bring a proven summer program to Montgomery County that is designed to address the knowledge drop that occurs during the summer months, which contributes to the achievement gap. The Building Education Leaders for Life (BELL) Program has served more than 100,000 students nationwide since 1992. The Montgomery County BELL Pilot Program would expand educational

opportunities for 1,050 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders each year for four years, ultimately serving 4,200 total students. The program is based on a “data-driven, small group” model that utilizes “certified teachers and highly trained tutors.” BELL’s outcome measures have been rigorously tested in a Randomized Control Trial study conducted by the Urban Institute, a nationally respected policy think-tank. BELL measures student progress utilizing STAR Assessment computer adaptive testing and conducts surveys of parents and teachers.

BELL is a 5 to 6 week, 5-day per week, 6 to 8 hour per day program that would employ more than 100 MCPS certified teachers and teaching assistants. Based on extensive research and decades of experience, the program focuses on literacy, science, math/technology, arts and health. The Program also has the added benefit of feeding the participants two meals (breakfast and lunch) every day. The program includes hands-on enrichment, field trips, and community service projects. Please find the attached BELL materials for detailed information about the program and outcome data.

The Foundation proposes a four-year contribution of \$1,601,500 (25%) to support the program. In addition, BELL employs a sustainable funding model that commits to raising an additional 25% for the program. I propose a four-year County contribution of \$3,003,000 for the remaining 50% of the cost. Attached, I have included a Special Appropriation resolution for \$750,750 for FY16 that would allow the program to begin this coming summer. I request that the County Executive include an additional \$750,750 in the Children’s Opportunity Fund in his Recommended FY17 Operating Budget for our second year commitment.

This public-private partnership with the Foundation is an exciting opportunity to take concrete action to close the achievement gap. This is an important first step toward aligning our policy goals with programs with a proven track record of success. The Montgomery County BELL Pilot Program, with a generous contribution from the Foundation, will provide a model for future partnerships with private funders. Moving to the ultimate goal of creating a Children’s Trust will only be possible if we can demonstrate early programmatic success utilizing the Children’s Opportunity Fund. Leveraging private partnerships, in collaboration with data-driven, results-oriented programming, is the key for ensuring all of our students—regardless of race or socioeconomic status—have the opportunity to succeed.

I look forward to discussing this proposal with you in more detail and moving quickly to establish the BELL Program in Montgomery County.

**bELL**<sup>TM</sup>

building educated  
leaders for life

**BELL is a non-profit organization that partners with schools to expand learning time in the summer and after school. Its mission is to transform the academic achievements, self-confidence, and life trajectories of children living in under-resourced communities.**

## APPROACH

BELL expands learning time to help students become scholars. We partner with schools to bring the classroom into the community, and the community into the classroom. Working with teachers, parents, and principals, we deliver programs that blend academics with hands-on enrichment activities, field trips, and service projects. Our programs are designed to serve students in grades K-8 who are performing below grade level. We seek to achieve the following goals:

- Scholars will increase their literacy & math skills.
- Scholars will strengthen their self-confidence & social skills.
- Parents will become more engaged in their children's education.

## IMPACT

BELL's programs increase scholar achievement. An independent random-assignment study found strong evidence of impact that the BELL Summer program increases the academic achievement of elementary school students, while also increasing parent engagement. Assessment data from summer and after school programs show that scholars consistently gain skills in the summer, return to school in the fall better prepared to succeed, and learn at a faster rate than their peers during the school year.

Since 1992, BELL has expanded learning time for more than 120,000 students in schools throughout the country. In 2015, BELL is working in CA, MD, MA, NJ, NY, NC, OH, and SC. Through a partnership with the YMCA of the USA and its national network, BELL is also serving scholars in AL, CA, CO, CT, FL, ID, KY, MA, MN, NE, OH, TX, WA, and Washington, DC.

## REPORT CARD (2014-2015)

**12,000+**  
Scholars Served

**K-8**  
Grades Served

**96**  
School Partners

**+2.4 Months, Reading**

**+3.5 Months, Math**

**Average Summer Learning Gain**  
achieved by scholars who started the  
summer the furthest below grade level  
(<25<sup>th</sup> percentile)

**89%**

Parents reporting that BELL Summer  
increased their child's self-confidence

**91%**

Parents reporting they are more engaged  
in their child's education because of  
BELL

[experienceBELL.org](http://experienceBELL.org)

## PROGRAMS

- **BELL SUMMER**  
A robust learning experience that helps scholars gain core skills, transition effectively from grade to grade, and develop an interest in learning. BELL Summer operates up to eight hours per day, five days per week, for six weeks. Small-group academic instruction is blended with camp-like enrichment courses, team-building activities, field trips, and community service.
- **READY SCHOLARS**  
A grade-level reading brings together best practices in early literacy development to help scholars in grades K-3 gain core phonics and text skills while gaining a love of reading.
- **POWER SCHOLARS ACADEMY**  
BELL shares its expertise and builds capacity through training and technical assistance to enable YMCA Associations across the country expand summer learning impact.
- **BELL AFTER SCHOOL**  
Data-driven tutoring and hands-on enrichment equip scholars with the skills and attitude needed to succeed in school. The program operates during the school year for up to three hours per day, three to five days per week, for up to 30 weeks.

## STAFF

BELL works with Principals and partners to identify and recruit high-performing teachers to lead academic instruction in the summer and after school. Program Managers, Instructional Coaches, Enrichment Instructors, and Assistant Teachers are drawn from the school community. Staff participate in BELL's blended training model and receive ongoing coaching and technical assistance.

## PARENTS

Parent involvement is a key part of BELL's approach. BELL involves parents in the expanded learning experience through orientations and events, "Bring Your Parent to School" day, educational workshops, regular communication from teachers, and the provision of books and reading materials.

## PARTNERS

BELL partners with schools, school districts, and community organizations to deliver quality learning experiences for the scholars who need them most. By blending public and private resources and serving the scholars who have the most to gain from more time on task, we maximize return on investment. Some of BELL's partners include:

### Schools

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|    |   |
|----|---|
| CA | Community School for Creative Education (Oakland)<br>Franklin-McKinley Unified School District (San Jose)<br>San Bernadino Unified School District & National CORE<br>San Rafael City Schools |
| MD | Baltimore City Public Schools   |
| MA | Boston Public Schools   |
| NC | Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools<br>New Hanover County Schools (Wilmington)<br>Winston-Salem / Forsyth County Schools  |
| NJ | Newark Public Schools   |
| NY | New York City Department of Education<br>NYC Department of Youth & Community Development  |
| OH | Mad River Local Schools<br>Trotwood-Madison City Schools  |
| SC | Greenville County Schools   |

### Nonprofit Partners (partial list)

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Boston Afterschool & Beyond  
Family League of Baltimore  
First Presbyterian Church (Charlotte)  
Khan Academy  
National Summer Learning Association  
Project LIFT  
ReadySetSoar  
TASC  
YMCA of the USA







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# Public-Private Partnership: Summer Learning to Address the Achievement Gap

[experienceBELL.org](http://experienceBELL.org)



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## Executive Summary: About BELL

### Mission:

BELL is an award winning non-profit organization that partners with schools to expand learning time in both summer and after school. Its mission is to transform the academic achievements, self-confidence, and life trajectories of children living in under-resourced, urban communities.

### BELL Expands Learning Time:

To mitigate the impacts of the Achievement Gap, BELL has designed its summer and afterschool programs to support children who lack the reading and math skills to perform at grade-level.

At BELL, students, whom we call "scholars", gain academic skills through data-driven, small-group instruction. They gain self-confidence by experiencing success in the classroom and through a wide range of enrichment activities. The classroom experience is characterized by targeted and intensive instruction in small group settings led by certified teachers and highly-trained tutors. Utilizing proven curricula and the most current instructional strategies, BELL ensures strong academic outcomes for all scholars. Working closely with school leaders to deliver expanded learning experiences that are aligned with school-year priorities and Common Core standards, BELL combines public and private resources to sustain high-quality programs for the scholars who need them most.

### History of Success:

BELL has expanded learning time for more than 100,000 students in schools throughout the country since 1992. BELL's programs have been nationally recognized for impact, including a rigorous, independent Randomized Control Trial study conducted by the Urban Institute that found statistically significant evidence that BELL's Summer program increases scholars' reading achievement and parental engagement. Most importantly, assessment data from summer and after school programs show that scholars gain skills.

**22** Years in operation

**100,000+** Scholars served since inception

**K-8** Grades served

**12,000** Scholars served (FY15)

**\$24M** Fiscal Year budget (FY15)

**19** Communities served (FY15)

**+1.2** Average Grade-Equivalent Reading Gain, in Months (summer program)

**+1.8** Average Grade-Equivalent Math Gain, in Months (summer program)



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## Executive Summary: Montgomery County Proposal

### Proposal for Montgomery County Program:

BELL proposes that the Rales Foundation and the Montgomery County Schools work together to launch a high quality summer learning program for scholars in summer 2015.

Although the BELL model is designed to support scholars in grades K-8, we propose that we work together to meet the needs of Montgomery County scholars in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade because reading proficiency by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation, career and life success.

### Benefits of BELL:

BELL's model combines academic and enrichment support to offer a robust, effective summer program that provides greater dosage, garners more student interest and engagement, and relieves the district of the burden of planning for summer while running its school year program.

### Sustainable Funding Model:

BELL's aim for a sustainable funding model asks districts to contribute half of the cost per scholar, with BELL committing to raise the remaining revenue in philanthropy, first from a seed-funder, then with sustaining local funders. The cost of the BELL summer learning model will be \$1430 per scholar; of which the Rales Foundation would commit 25% of the costs over the next four years. In addition, BELL will commit to raising 25% of the costs from other philanthropic sources, resulting in a cost per scholar of \$715 for the district.

By combining resources and sharing program costs through this type of public/private partnership, BELL, the Rales Foundation and the school district can deliver a sustainable summer learning experience to help scholars narrow the achievement gap, perform better in school, and transition from grade to grade successfully.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you.

**1,050**

Scholars served annually

**4,200**

Scholars served over four years

**2-3**

Grades Served

**\$1.5M**

Project Budget (annual)

**\$1,430**

Cost per scholar

**\$715**

Cost to district per scholar

**6.5**

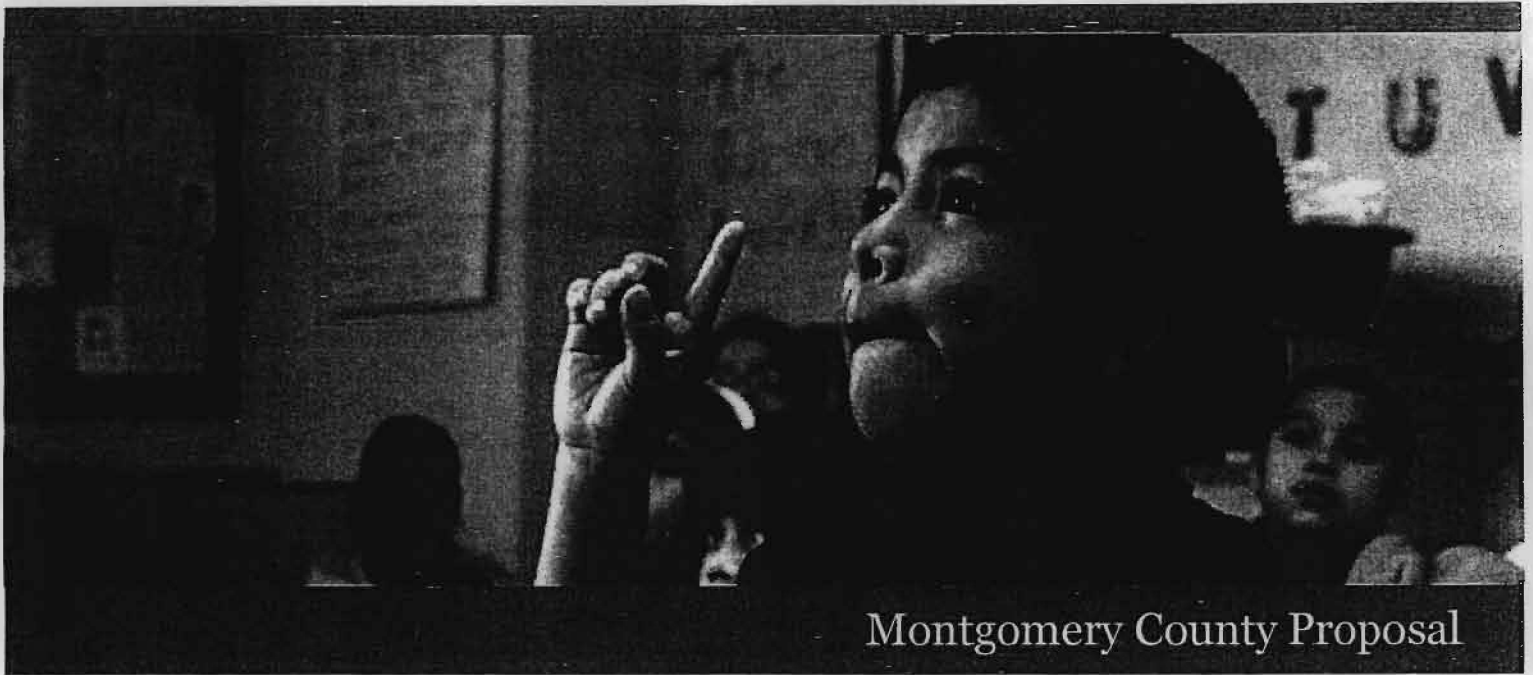
Hours per day of programming

**5**

Days per week and number of weeks

**105**

Certified teachers and teaching assistants hired



## Montgomery County Proposal

### History in Mid-Atlantic

BELL launched programs in Baltimore in the fall of 2006, serving 416 scholars. Since then, BELL has become a valued partner of Baltimore City Public Schools and the community. We have grown to serve 1,200 scholars in Baltimore through a public/private funding model. In addition, through partnership with the YMCA, BELL has launched programming in DC, serving 120 scholars in summer 2014 and projected to serve 240 scholars in 2015. We see an important opportunity to leverage our presence in the region in order to serve Montgomery County Public Schools students and help address the system's achievement gap.

### Expansion Opportunity

BELL has had preliminary meetings with the Title 1 Department of the Montgomery County Public Schools. Historically the district has offered a low-dose summer program; however, BELL's model that combines academic and enrichment support would offer a more robust, more effective summer program that provides greater dosage, garners more student interest and engagement, and relieves the district of the burden of planning for summer while running its school year program.

BELL's typical partnership experience includes a high-dosage summer learning experience that is data-driven, rigorous and enriching, resulting in nearly 2 months' grade-equivalent gains for the highest needs students. Our costs average \$1500 per scholar; with the majority of expenses attributable to teacher wages. Our aim for a sustainable funding model asks districts to contribute half of the cost per scholar, with BELL committing to raise the remaining revenue in philanthropy, first from a seed-funder, then with sustaining local funders that grow in number and amount over time. We have a history of success with this public/private model in both Baltimore City as well as our other core regions (MA, CA, OH, NC, NY).

Support from the Norman and Ruth Rales Foundation (Rales Foundation) and the district would allow BELL to launch programs in Montgomery County beginning in summer 2015 for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade scholars.

## Importance of Third Grade

Although the BELL model is designed to support scholars in grades K-8, we propose that we work together to meet the needs of scholars in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades. Research shows that reading skill-level at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade marks a particularly critical benchmark in a scholar's education. This is when children should make the shift from learning to read, to reading to learn. Children who have not mastered basic reading skills by this point will struggle with comprehension in all other subject matters. When scholars begin the fourth grade, instruction moves away from letter-sound recognition and basic text structure as scholars are expected to extract and use information from the text. Every year, more than 80% of disadvantaged children miss this milestone and are at risk of falling behind as their peers apply their reading skills to learn advanced content in social studies, science, and history.

Research also shows that these students are four times more likely than their peers to drop out of school later. Reading proficiency by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation, career and life success.

In May 2010, the Annie E. Casey Foundation published a KIDS COUNT special report, *Early Warning: Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*, to launch the national Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. Early Warning focused on grade-level reading proficiency as an essential step toward increasing the number of children who succeed academically, graduate from high school and do well in life.

*This report showed that early-grade reading proficiency in the United States continues to be unacceptably low for students from low-income families and children of color. In 2011, 82 percent of fourth-graders from low-income families — and 84 percent of low-income students who attend high-poverty schools — failed to reach the “proficient” level in reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.*

*Sociologist Donald Hernandez found that children who do not read proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma than proficient readers. Black and Hispanic children who are not reading proficiently in third grade are twice as likely as similar white children not to graduate from high school (about 25 vs. 13 percent). When we add poverty to the analysis, the findings are even more sobering. Hernandez found that the graduation failure rate for children who cannot read proficiently and live one year in poverty is 26 percent, which is more than six times the rate for all proficient readers. Overall, 22 percent of children who have lived in poverty do not graduate from high school, a figure about three times greater than the rate for children with no family poverty experience.*

Based on this research several states have enacted Read to Achieve legislation to support 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. This legislation has and will continue to create an enormous demand for high-quality summer programming for elementary school children who cannot demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency at the end of the school year. BELL's programs are designed to support children at this important time in their lives. BELL works in partnership with districts to select schools that have a high percentage of scholars who are in need of summer learning opportunities. In partnership with principals and teachers, BELL enrolls scholars who are most likely to be and to fall further behind without adequate intervention. The district partners provides transportation to scholars to ensure that mobility is not a barrier to participation.

<http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-EarlyWarningConfirmedExecSummary-2013.pdf>

## Proposal: Public and Private Partnership


Support from the Rales Foundation and the district would allow BELL to launch programs in Montgomery County beginning in summer 2015 for over 1,000 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade scholars. Cumulatively, this four-year partnership will provide a high-quality summer learning experience for 4,200 scholars during the summer months.

Utilizing its proven-model, BELL will partner with the school district to mitigate the impacts of Summer Learning Loss by supporting children who lack the reading and math skills to perform at grade-level. BELL will engage Montgomery County's highest-need scholars in academic and enrichment learning opportunities for 6.5 hours per day, five days per week, over the span of the five-week summer program (see prior pages for description of BELL's model).


Through this public-private partnership, the district's investment of 50% of the cost of the program would be leveraged against national and local philanthropic sources. The Rales Foundation would be asked to serve as a seed-funder for the project, covering 25% of the costs; with BELL raising the remaining 25% from philanthropic sources. Leveraging multiple sources of funding creates a more sustainable model to impact more scholars. The Rales Foundation would also be asked to contribute an additional \$100,000 in year one to support the hiring of a development officer who will be responsible for growth of philanthropy to support the program's sustainability in Montgomery County.

|              | # scholars   | Total Cost  |                    | District Contribution |                    | Rales Contribution |                    | Other Local Philanthropy |                    |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
|              |              | Per scholar | Total              | Per scholar           | Total              | Per scholar        | Total              | Per scholar              | Total              |
| Year 1       | 1,050        | 1,430       | \$1,501,500        | 715                   | \$750,750          | 453                | \$475,375          | 358                      | \$375,375          |
| Year 2       | 1,050        | 1,430       | \$1,501,500        | 715                   | \$750,750          | 358                | \$375,375          | 358                      | \$375,375          |
| Year 3       | 1,050        | 1,430       | \$1,501,500        | 715                   | \$750,750          | 358                | \$375,375          | 358                      | \$375,375          |
| Year 4       | 1,050        | 1,430       | \$1,501,500        | 715                   | \$750,750          | 358                | \$375,375          | 358                      | \$375,375          |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>4,200</b> |             | <b>\$6,006,000</b> |                       | <b>\$3,003,000</b> |                    | <b>\$1,601,500</b> |                          | <b>\$1,501,500</b> |

(note: this scenario assumes teacher rates of \$35/hour, which would need to be negotiated with the district).



Evaluation and Impact  
Measurement of BELL



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### Why do we assess scholars during BELL Summer?

- *Differentiate instruction* toward scholars' strengths and areas of need
- *Monitor progress* to see if scholars are gaining necessary skills
- *Measure impact* of the program from beginning to end through a pre-test and post-test approach

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## Reliability and Validity:

- STAR Early Literacy™, STAR Math™, and STAR Reading™ are highly rated for progress monitoring by the National Center on Intensive Intervention.
- STAR Early Literacy™ is highly rated for screening and progress monitoring by the National Center on Response to Intervention.
- STAR Reading™ and STAR Math™ received the highest possible ratings for screening and progress monitoring from the National Center on Response to Intervention, with perfect scores in all categories.
- STAR Early Literacy: Internal Consistency – 0.85; Retest Reliability – 0.79
- STAR Reading: Internal Consistency – 0.97; Retest Reliability – 0.90
- STAR Math: Internal Consistency – 0.97; Retest Reliability – 0.93

Source: *The Research Foundation For STAR Assessments – The Science of STAR.* Published by Renaissance Learning



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## How does STAR work:



- **Computer-adaptive:** questions change throughout assessment based on correct/incorrect responses
- **Web-based** – requires no paper; real-time results
- Three assessment products:
  - STAR Reading & Math (2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - STAR Early Literacy (Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> grade)
- 30-34 multiple choice questions; completed in < 1 hr
- Generalized assessment = curriculum neutral
- Aligned to state standards; Common Core ready!
- Scholars require on average 30 minutes to complete each test (1 hour for two tests).



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| Early Literacy (K & 1 <sup>st</sup> )   | Reading (2 <sup>nd</sup> and up)  | Math (2 <sup>nd</sup> and up)   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>3 domains - 41 skills</b>  | <b>5 domains - 36 skills</b>  | <b>4 domains - 54 skills</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word knowledge and skills (i.e. vocabulary)</li> <li>• Comprehension strategies and construction meaning</li> <li>• Number and operations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word knowledge and skills (i.e. vocabulary)</li> <li>• Comprehension strategies and construction meaning</li> <li>• Analyzing literary text</li> <li>• Understanding author's craft</li> <li>• Analyzing argument and evaluating text</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers and operations</li> <li>• Algebra</li> <li>• Geometry and measurement</li> <li>• Data analysis, statistics, and probability</li> </ul> |
|                             |   |   |

| STAR Administration   |
|---|
| <p><b>How STAR is used during BELL Summer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BELL utilizes a pre/post evaluation approach.</li> <li>• <b>Pre-test</b> is administered first-week of program and establishes <b>baseline</b> measure of scholar performance.</li> <li>• Instructional staff use pre-test data to differentiate instruction in the classroom.</li> <li>• <b>Post-test</b> is administered last-week of program and is used to measure change/growth during program.</li> <li>• BELL measures <b>program impact</b> by analyzing differences between pre- and post-test measures.</li> </ul> |
|     |

## How STAR Works

### Test administration

Site leadership and instructional staff lead scholars to computer lab or testing classroom.



Once scholars are seated and quiet, a staff member reads a BELL developed testing "script" outlining instructions for how to take STAR.

Staff then assist scholars logging into STAR, then testing begins.



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## How STAR Works

Scholars take between 1-5 practice questions, then begin full assessment (30-34 multiple choice questions). For scholars taking multiple tests (grades 2 and higher), once they finish the first test, they are instructed to begin the second test immediately.

### BELL TEST

2/24

The scrobat warned us not to attempt his tricks by ourselves.

- 1. envy
- 2. proceed
- 3. attempt
- 4. construct

Next



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## STAR Instructional Data Reports

### STAR data reports drive differentiated instruction

- STAR provides a strong array of data reports for instructional staff to drive small group and individual instruction.
- **Group Screening Report** – groups scholars into 4 groups - Above Level, On Watch, Intervention, Urgent Intervention
- **Small Group Instructional Report** – use data to group scholars and identifies key skill areas for instruction
- **Individual Diagnostic Report** – identifies key areas of strength and areas of growth for individual scholars
- **Growth Report** – shows pre- to post-test growth for individual scholars, class, or entire site.



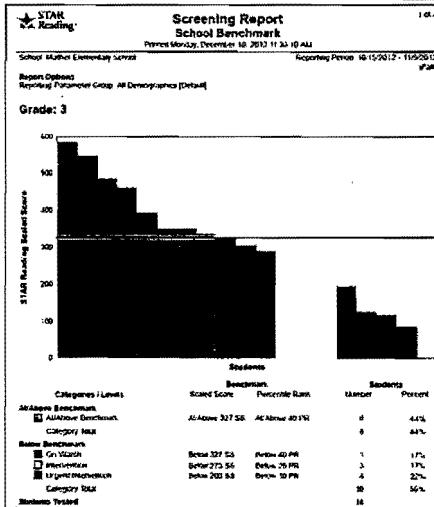
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## STAR – Screening Report

Screening Report: displays scholar test results based on four STAR benchmarks.

- **At/Above Benchmark:** scholars at or above 40<sup>th</sup> percentile
- **On Watch:** scholars between 25<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> percentile
- **Intervention:** scholars between 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> percentile
- **Urgent Intervention:** scholars below 10<sup>th</sup> percentile

Second page of report lists scholars in each category



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## Impact Measurement @ BELL

### Data analysis and reporting post BELL Summer

- All assessment data undergoes a rigorous data cleaning and review process to ensure the data is high quality.
- BELL's analytic approach accounts for statistical outliers, errors in testing, and other anomalies that can bias data analysis and reporting.
- Paired pre- and post-test scores are compared to determine growth across site, regional, and national programs.
- BELL routinely reviews its data analysis approach to ensure it meets the highest standards for educational evaluation.
- BELL considers its evaluation & impact measurement approach to be best in class among peers providing similar summer programs.



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## Impact Measurement @ BELL

### BELL's Evaluation Advisory Board (EAB)

Our measurement activities are guided, advised, and endorsed by our Evaluation Advisory Board, an external, interdisciplinary group that oversee the application of principles and standards established in the evaluation and assessment fields.

#### Advisors:

- Graciela Borsato, Senior Research Associate - The John W. Gardner Center
- Duncan Chaplin, Senior Researcher - Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
- Christian Friend, CA Friend Consulting
- Claudia Gentile, Associate Director of Survey Research - Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
- Leslie Goodyear, Principal Research Scientist - Education Development Corporation, Inc.
- Priscilla Little (Chair), Consultant
- Beth Miller, Director of Research and Evaluation - The Nellie Mae Education Foundation
- Lauren Smith, Boston University School of Medicine

#### BELL Representatives

- Tiffany Cooper Gueye, Chief Executive Officer
- Lauren Gilbert, Vice President of Program Impact
- Bryan Hall, Director of Evaluation



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