

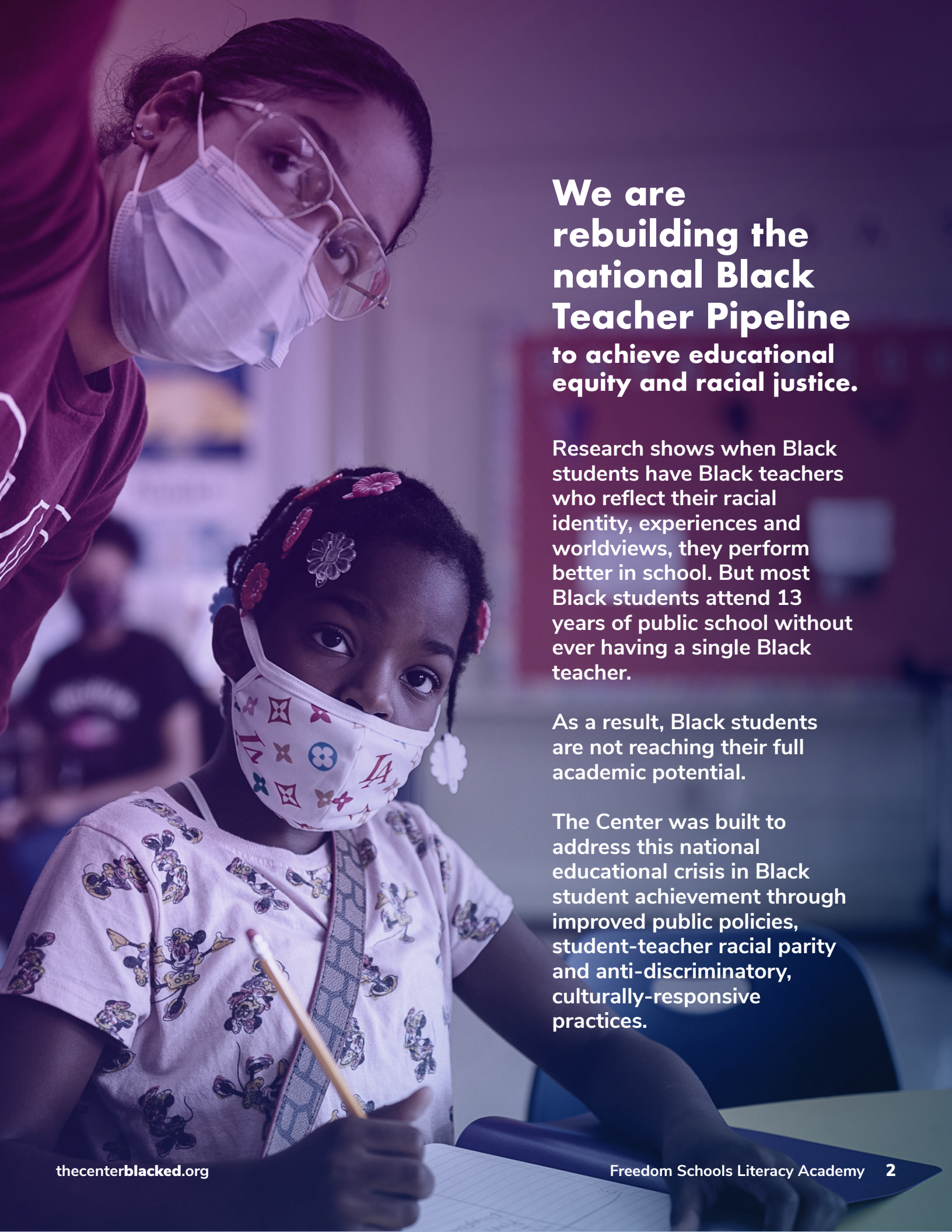
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**CENTER FOR  
BLACK EDUCATOR  
DEVELOPMENT**  
*Liberating Education*

2022 REPORT

**FREEDOM SCHOOLS  
LITERACY ACADEMY  
SUMMER SESSION**



**We are  
rebuilding the  
national Black  
Teacher Pipeline  
to achieve educational  
equity and racial justice.**

Research shows when Black students have Black teachers who reflect their racial identity, experiences and worldviews, they perform better in school. But most Black students attend 13 years of public school without ever having a single Black teacher.

As a result, Black students are not reaching their full academic potential.

The Center was built to address this national educational crisis in Black student achievement through improved public policies, student-teacher racial parity and anti-discriminatory, culturally-responsive practices.



## 26 FSLA former participants have joined the teaching force.

### ABOUT

#### FREEDOM SCHOOLS LITERACY ACADEMY

Freedom Schools Literacy Academy (FSLA) is the Center for Black Educator Development's flagship program for rebuilding the Black teacher pipeline.

An afterschool and five-week summer program, FSLA merges the philosophy of Freedom Schools (its focus on Black pedagogy, positive racial identity and intergenerational support) with the science of teaching literacy.

Through FSLA, we leverage well-documented research that Black students are best positioned for success when they are taught in a context of cultural understanding by people who can serve as mirrors, and not just windows, to their world.

We further that the racial-parity model by matching Black college and high school students interested in teaching with experienced Black educators as their coaches.

Our faculty of dedicated Black teachers mentor and support the professional development and student-teacher experiences of Black high school and college students interested in teaching careers. The Black "teacher apprentices," in turn, provide early literacy instruction to young Black scholars.

Fourth-year evaluation results show significant gains during the 2022 summer session in both teaching the aspirations of our high school and college students and literacy skills of our participating scholars.

The Freedom Schools Literacy Academy research was designed and conducted in consultation with Maryann Corsello, Ph.D., a developmental psychologist with more than 25 years of experience conducting evaluations of community-based educational programs to support continuous quality improvement. Dr. Corsello is professor emeritus of the University of New England.

# ABOUT

## PARTICIPATION AND REACH

In 2018, the Center for Black Educator Development piloted Freedom Schools Literacy Academy in Philadelphia with one site. The next year, we offered two in-person sites. In 2022, we expanded to five in-person sites across three states (three in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, two in Camden, New Jersey, and a pilot program in Detroit, Michigan) as well as a virtual program that spanned 13 states.

In total, 359 high school, college and graduate-school “teacher apprentices” have participated in FSLA. In 2022, the 142 teacher apprentices represented a growth of nearly 300% from the 2019 cohort of 36.

|   | 2019       | 2020       | 2021       | 2022       | TOTALS       |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>College and Graduate Students: Servant Leader Apprentices</b><br>97% Black/Brown in 2022 | 12         | 25         | 61         | 73         | <b>171</b>   |
| <b>High School Students: Junior Servant Leaders</b><br>97% Black/Brown in 2022              | 24         | 57         | 61         | 69         | <b>211</b>   |
| <b>Elementary School Students: Scholars</b><br>91% Black/Brown in 2022                      | 120        | 106        | 233        | 244        | <b>703</b>   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>   | <b>156</b> | <b>188</b> | <b>355</b> | <b>386</b> | <b>1,085</b> |



Over one summer here,  
I've learned more about  
Black history than I  
have over 12 years  
in school.

—Junior Servant Leader

# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

For this report, we combined results for college and graduate students (“Servant Leader Apprentices”) and high school students (“Junior Servant Leaders”) to analyze the overall effects. Results of the Detroit pilot program are presented separately at the end of this report.


## COLLEGE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS:

### Servant Leader Apprentices

(Almost a third are returning teacher apprentices.)


**Goal:** Build teaching skills and professional confidence.

**Programming:** Training in Black pedagogy, instructor experiences, expert coaching and peer support.



**We need Black teachers because our Black students need to know they have advocates who have been through similar experiences to encourage them.**

—Promise Harvey  
Junior Servant Leader



**It's important to have Black teachers because Black kids should be able to see somebody they can relate to, somebody they can see themselves in, and think, I'm going to be like this person.**

—Keyana Lang  
Servant Leader Apprentice

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

### Junior Servant Leaders

**Goal:** Encourage interest in a teaching career.

**Programming:** Mentoring student scholars. Workshops, group assignments and independent research and presentations on Black history and pedagogy with peers.

# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

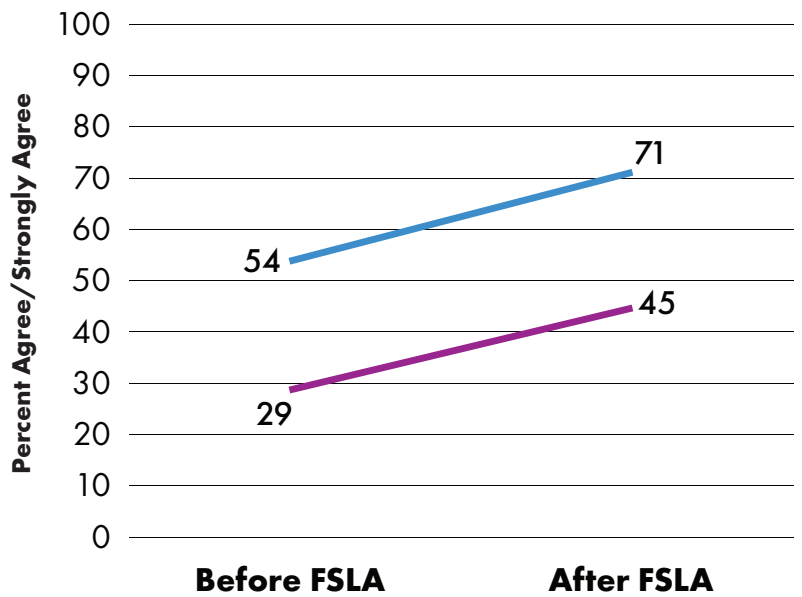
## INTEREST IN TEACHING AND GROWTH IN TEACHING SKILLS

Among Servant Leader Apprentices, interest in teaching and, more specifically, teaching Black children, remained at high levels before and after their participation in FSLA.

Junior Servant Leaders, however, showed significant increases in both. By the end of the program, 45% (from 29%) expressed an interest in teaching and 71% (from 54%) an interest in teaching Black children.

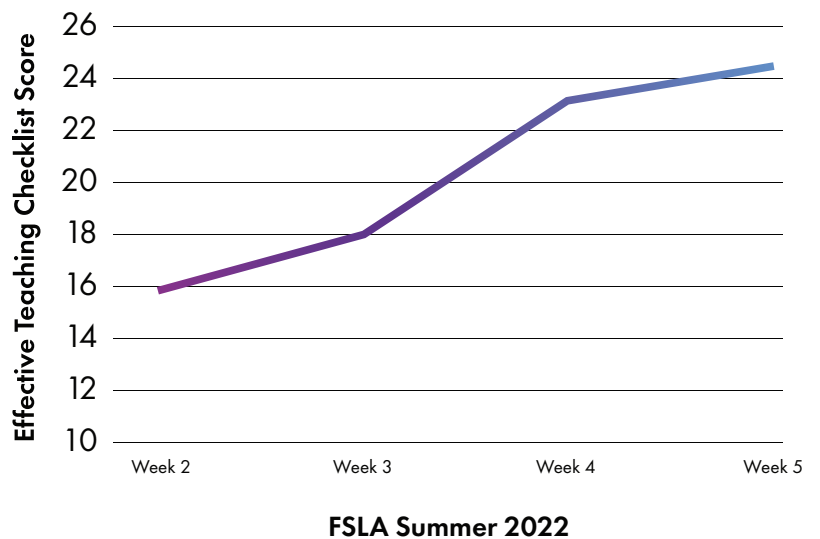
### JUNIOR SERVANT LEADERS INTEREST IN TEACHING AND TEACHING BLACK CHILDREN

Interest in Teaching      Interest in Teaching Black Children



### SERVANT LEADER APPRENTICES GROWTH IN TEACHING SKILLS

Weekly average scores based on coach observations of teaching behaviors using the SLA Effective Teaching Checklist.



# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

## ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY

Teacher Apprentices showed growth in all areas of academic self-efficacy, mindset, habits of mind and strategies for academic and personal success. Statistically significant increases were seen in four areas as shown in the table below.

| Changes in Teacher Apprentice Academic Self-Efficacy                    | Before FSLA | After FSLA | Change | Statistical Significance |
|---|-------------|------------|--------|--------------------------|
| I have strategies for handling tasks that are academically challenging. | 71%         | 86%        | +15%   | p=0.001                  |
| When I come across difficult reading content, I know what to do.        | 81%         | 90%        | +9%    | p=0.009                  |
| When I need help, I know how to ask for it.                             | 73%         | 81%        | +8%    | p=0.045                  |
| Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.                   | 85%         | 90%        | +5%    | p=0.052                  |

Table represents the statistically significant increases in average ratings of academic self-efficacy based on changes in the percentage of Teacher Apprentices who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement before and after FSLA.



**This program expands your knowledge no matter what role you take.**

—Junior Servant Leader

# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

## POSITIVE RACIAL IDENTITY

Teacher Apprentices maintained high average ratings of positive racial identity (90% before and after FSLA based on the percentage of teacher apprentices who agreed or strongly agreed with each of the following statements:

- 1** I am proud to be Black/Brown.
- 2** I feel good about Black/Brown people.
- 3** I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.
- 4** While I recognize that oppression/racism exists, it won't prevent me from achieving my goals.

Teacher Apprentices showed statistically significant growth in eight areas of positive racial identity as shown in the table below.

| Changes in Teacher Apprentice Positive Racial Identity  | Before FSLA | After FSLA | Change | Statistical Significance |
|---|-------------|------------|--------|--------------------------|
| I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.             | 59%         | 80%        | +21%   | P=0.008*                 |
| I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions and customs. | 69%         | 87%        | +18%   | P=0.001*                 |
| If I were to describe myself to someone, one of the first things that I would say is that I'm Black/Brown.    | 69%         | 84%        | +15%   | p=0.007*                 |
| I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.                               | 71%         | 86%        | +15%   | P=0.027*                 |
| I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.  | 79%         | 89%        | +10%   | P=0.005*                 |
| In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group. | 71%         | 80%        | +9%    | P=0.015*                 |
| I have a strong sense of belonging to other Black/Brown people.   | 81%         | 89%        | +8%    | P=0.018*                 |
| I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.  | 84%         | 92%        | +8%    | p=0.036*                 |

Table represents the statistically significant increases in average ratings of positive racial identity based on changes in the percentage of Teacher Apprentices who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement before and after FSLA.





**It feels empowering knowing what I now know about my history.**  
 —Junior Servant Leader

# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

## PREDICTING INTEREST IN TEACHING

After further reviewing the data separately on Servant Leaders Apprentices and Junior Servant Leaders through multiple regression analysis to predict interest in teaching and interest in teaching Black children based on subscales gauging racial identity, academic self-efficacy and a social-justice orientation, research showed that:

### FOR SERVANT LEADER APPRENTICES:

A **positive racial identity** significantly predicts Interest in teaching and in teaching Black children.

Positive racial identity significantly predicted 34% of the variability in interest in teaching Black children ( $t(3,34)=3.914$ ,  $p=0.001$ ) and also significantly predicted 19% of the variability in interest in teaching ( $t(3,34)=2.741$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

### FOR JUNIOR SERVANT LEADERS:

A **social-justice orientation** significantly predicts Interest in teaching Black children.

Social justice orientation significantly predicted 24% of the variability in interest in teaching Black children ( $t(3,34)$ ,  $2.933$ ,  $p=0.006$ ) after participating in FSLA.

# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

## COACHING EXPERIENCE

Both sets of Teacher Apprentices (Servant Leader Apprentices and Junior Servant Leaders) worked closely with coaches. Each coach was assigned about eight Teacher Apprentices.

Most SLA Coaches are accomplished veteran Black educators. Aligned with our intergenerational, peer modeling approach, JSL coaches include in their ranks former JSLs and teachers who have recently entered the education workforce.

SLA Coaches focus on mentoring and training college students on classroom instruction based on the Friends on the Block Literacy Curriculum and culturally-affirming teaching practices.

JSL Coaches teach high school students Black history and social-justice movements through weekly lectures and lively discussions on assigned readings. These sessions are designed to support an independent education activism project each is required to present at a summer-end symposium. The JSL Coaches also support JSLs with providing read-aloud sessions and classroom observations on reading behaviors of their elementary school scholars.

All coaches support personal growth, racial identity, academic confidence and teacher aspirations through communal racial healing practices and discussions on social and educational justice issues.



# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

## COACHING EXPERIENCE

### SERVANT LEADER APPRENTICES' OVERALL RATINGS OF COACHING EXPERIENCE

| Statement on Coaching Experience   | Percent Agree or Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------------------|
| I feel respected, valued and comfortable with my coach throughout this week of training.             | 99%                             |
| I am a better teacher because of my experience with my coach.  | 99%                             |
| My coach affirmed my racial identity.  | 98%                             |
| My coach affirmed the racial identity of Scholars who will be in the summer academy.                 | 98%                             |
| The support my coach provided was of high quality.   | 98%                             |
| My coach consistently followed up with me to understand how I am experiencing this week of training. | 98%                             |
| I received the right amount of support from my coach throughout the first week of training.          | 94%                             |
| Throughout this week, I was clear on the pre-work and next steps for the following day.              | 93%                             |

Table summarizes average weekly ratings of coaching experience based on the percent Servant Leader Apprentices agreed or strongly agreed with each statement.

### JUNIOR SERVANT LEADERS' OVERALL RATING OF COACHING EXPERIENCE

Nine out of ten JSLs agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported by their coach.



# WHAT SERVANT LEADER APPRENTICES SAY

## ABOUT SLA COACHES

My coach has given me some great tips to help better manage my classroom.

I had a great discussion with my coach about our racial identity.

One thing I learned was different ways to keep the students engaged during the class.

The most important thing I learned from my coach was that I can be myself.

My coach instilled that our students need teachers like us who are passionate about educating our youth.

We reflected on our students over the last five weeks..how much they have grown and now glow.

I've learned from my coach how to implement more culture into our teaching.

I learned from my coach to be patient with myself. I am very grateful to her.

# WHAT SLA COACHES SAY

## ABOUT SERVANT LEADER APPRENTICES

He has an amazing relationship with his scholars; he can understand issues they may be dealing with and speak to them calmly.

He believed every scholar could excel, which was evident in his classroom's learning environment.

She always brings a happy and positive mindset and meets the expectations of completing the work for scholars.

He embodies Freedom School energy and has an investment in the children.

She took on her role as an educator with fidelity.

She has a heart for children and their success.

She built a welcoming classroom space that centered on the social and academic needs of her scholars.

She brings joy in her classroom.

He learned that there is more to teaching than just showing up. His growth is exponential.

I could not be more proud of her. She has all of the tools to be an excellent teacher in the future of her career.

She was very cognizant and intentional about her role as an educator, which was shown throughout her teaching.

# WHAT JUNIOR SERVANT LEADERS SAY

## ABOUT THEIR READ-ALoud EXPERIENCES

My scholar asked her mom to buy the book for her.

They were interested in reading the book themselves, which made me super happy.

They kept trying even when things got challenging.

They were really engaged and upset when I had to pause in the middle of the book.

They gave me applause, which made me feel so much better about the whole thing.

Even before we called on them, they showed their excitement.

# WHAT JUNIOR SERVANT LEADERS SAY

## ABOUT SUPPORT FROM THEIR COACHES

She makes sure that we are heard.

Coach is very motivating, optimistic and kind.

She helps when we're stuck.

He gives examples of servant leadership.

He sends daily texts of encouragement.

He values our voices and opinions.

She gives us the platform to create change, and pushes us to our full potential.

# WHAT JUNIOR SERVANT LEADERS SAY

## THEIR COACH NEEDS TO KNOW

That I love and appreciate her!

I appreciate her more than I can truly explain.

That I am always and forever grateful that we crossed paths this summer.

I will miss you coach. Coming to work was a joy.

That I take this work very seriously because I want to be an educator in the future.

I hope my coach continues to treat future students the way he treated all of us.

I appreciate my coach.

This program means a lot to me.




# 2022 TEACHER APPRENTICES

## OVERALL EXPERIENCE

| FSLA Experience   | Percent Agree or Strongly Agree |
|---|---------------------------------|
| I gave 100% effort and commitment to this work.   | 94%                             |
| I think that participating in the program will help me become more focused and committed to my own education. | 94%                             |
| Since participating in FSLA I know I can complete difficult tasks.  | 92%                             |
| I learned a lot from participating in the program.  | 91%                             |
| I have helped young scholars acquire stronger literacy skills.  | 89%                             |
| I think that participating in the program will help me with my future career.                                 | 88%                             |
| The program's activities are challenging and interesting.   | 83%                             |
| My symposium project allowed me to respond to a social issue (JSLs only).                                     | 83%                             |
| Adults in the program listened to what I had to say.  | 82%                             |
| Since participating in Freedom Schools Literacy Academy, I am interested in becoming a classroom teacher.     | 57%                             |

The table summarizes the average ratings of specific aspects of the FSLA experience about which Teacher Apprentices agreed or strongly agreed.





## 2022 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOLARS

**Goals:** Make gains in early literacy and reinforce positive racial identity.

**Programming:** Classroom instruction and tutoring in reading and writing, using the Friends on the Block Literacy Curriculum, an intensive early literacy intervention, as well as a curriculum grounded in Black pedagogy.

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Over the course of FSLA's five-week summer program, Black and Brown children entering first, second and third grades in the fall are taught by Black educators, college students and high school students to develop literacy skills and promote racial identities.

Each day starts with Harambee, an interactive community-building activity. This is followed by direct instruction in literacy and phonemic awareness using literacy curricula curated by Friends on the Block.

All books and materials feature Black characters and experiences so children can recognize themselves and their families. The program also includes project-based learning, fun activities and field trips.

Children are assessed before and after the program on individualized literacy growth goals and an increase in positive racial identity.

**“Growing up, I went to a school where I had many Black teachers, and I know how pivotal they were in my life.”**

—Sydney Smith  
Servant Leader Apprentice

# 2022 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOLARS

## READING GAINS

Research has shown students, especially those from marginalized communities, experience learning loss over the summer, which could place them as much as three months behind their peers when school reopens.

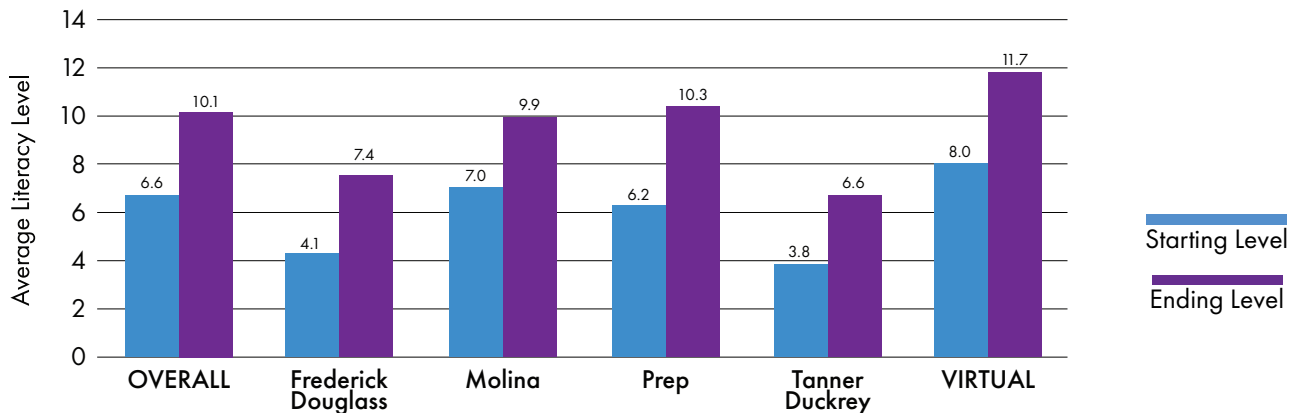
But instead of experiencing any kind of “summer slide,” FSLA’s Elementary School Scholars increased their reading ability by an average of 3.5 levels (53% change from 6.6 to 10.1) in five weeks.

Elementary school scholars increased their reading ability by an average of 3.5 levels. This represents a 53% increase from level 6.6 to 10.1 in five weeks.

Increases were statistically significant for students in virtual programming and all five in-person sites, whether they had higher or lower pretest scores.

All of these results also represent further gains when compared with 2021.

## Changes in Friends on the Block Literacy Levels at Elementary Schools



### Elementary School Scholars:

83% improved at least one or more reading levels.

100% at one Philadelphia site (Tanner Duckrey School) improved two or more levels.

### Correct letter sounds increased:

From an average of 35.5 sounds to 49.2 sounds.

### Reading whole words significantly improved:

From an average of 9.7 words before FSLA to 17.6 words after FSLA.

### Oral reading fluency increased:

From 50.1 words/minute to 56.1 words/minute.

# 2022 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOLARS

## POSITIVE RACIAL IDENTITY

Over five weeks, Elementary School Scholars are taught by Teacher Apprentices (college and high school students) who look like them and whose backgrounds match their own, affording rare opportunities to affirm each other's racial identities, cultural experiences and worldviews.

The impact of this racial parity is clear. **By the end of the program, there was a significant increase (83% to 93%) among scholars who agreed or strongly agreed that they were happy to be Black/Brown.**

**First graders**—all new to FSLA—showed a statistically significant increase in the total score for racial identity (71% to 90%).

**Second and third graders**—most of whom attended FSLA last summer—scored high rates for racial identity in the pre-test (ranging from 4.1 to 4.8 on a 5-point scale), suggesting a sustainable effect.



**When they look at you,  
they see not just a Black  
teacher, but someone that  
looks like a family member  
and it makes them a little  
bit more comfortable.**

—Makiah Burroughs  
Servant Leader Apprentice

# 2022 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOLARS

## PARENT FEEDBACK

In a continual effort to improve our programming, we asked the parents of Elementary School Scholars what they thought of their FSLA experience.

### Teacher Apprentice Overall Ratings of FSLA Experience

The table summarizes the average ratings of specific aspects of the FSLA experience about which Teacher Apprentices agreed or strongly agreed.

### Parent Survey Responses

**96%** reported that their child liked attending Freedom Schools.

**91%** indicated they planned to sign their child up for FSLA next summer.

**79%** reported an increase in their child's overall confidence.

**75%** reported their child listened and learned with enthusiasm.

**71%** reported their child was happier.

**67%** reported their child felt good about themselves and enjoyed reading.



My boys aging out of freedom schools makes me sad because they both improved in reading skills and confidence.

— Parent

# WHAT PARENTS TOLD US

## ABOUT FSLA

I really like that different people step up to be site leads. I like that students from college and high school get an internship experience in education. I like that scholars get to do fun stuff.

### Great program!!!

Both of my boys improved in reading skill and confidence. Now they aged out of Freedom Schools, which makes me sad. 😞

The closing celebration was especially good at Prep this year. I appreciate it and all the hard work that was put into it.

If I could be of any help with Freedom Schools, please let me know. Other than that, it's been real 🙌 and please keep going!

# DETROIT PILOT

The Center for Black Educator Development expanded the Freedom Schools Literacy Academy to Detroit, Michigan this past summer. Five Servant Leader Apprentices (college students), ten Junior Servant Leaders (high school students) and 29 elementary school scholars participated in this pilot.

## TEACHER APPRENTICES: Teaching Skills and Coaching Experience

SLA weekly observations by coaches and their Effective Teaching Checklist Score show their teaching skills increased.

SLA self-reflections show they learned how to prepare plans and manage their class, ensuring each scholar had what they needed to grow and learn.

SLAs survey respondents show that 100% agreed that their coach affirmed their racial identity and that of their scholars.

## What They Learned

“How to be one with yourself and your Blackness.”

“The importance of a community.”

“Harambee taught me that mornings should be joyful. I loved honoring our ancestors, singing, and dancing before we began learning.”

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOLARS: Leaps in Literacy

By FSLA end:

57% fewer scholars tested in the at-risk category

67% more scholars tested in the strong reader category

*Statistically significant changes in the reading level of scholars based on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) before and after FSLA, (X<sup>2</sup> (9,26) = 23.1, p<0.006).*

## Positive Racial Identity

By FSLA end:

100% of scholars saw themselves as good readers.

91-97% of scholars:

- Happy they were Black and knew that Black people have done great and amazing things.
- Did the best work they could at school and were proud of their schoolwork
- Felt special and believed they could be whatever they wanted when they grew up.

Scholars' pride in racial identity was significantly associated with hard work at school (Example:  $r=0.387$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

# DETROIT PILOT

## PARENT FEEDBACK

**100%**

of parents reported they intend to register their child for FSLA next summer.

**90%**

reported their child likes to attend FSLA.

**90%**

of parents reported an increase in overall confidence in their child.

**70%**

of parents reported an increase in their child's ability to read with confidence.





# REPORT CARD SUMMARY

## PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

The 2022 FSLA summer session was one of growth and greater impact.

- ◆ The number of sites and participants increased, extending our reach to 13 states.
- ◆ In our fourth year, there was a nearly 300% growth in the number of Teacher Apprentices from year one.
- ◆ Teacher Apprentices reported increases in their teaching skills and commitment to pursuing teaching and teaching Black children, as well as academic efficacy and an orientation to social justice.
- ◆ Servant Leader Apprentices reported increased interest in teaching tied to the excellent mentoring of their coaches.
- ◆ Elementary School Scholars of every grade and at all sites further increased their reading levels compared to past summers.
- ◆ Increases in positive racial identity of Teacher Apprentices and Elementary School Scholars.
- ◆ Parents reported higher rates of sending their children to FSLA next summer. They also said they saw growth in their children's reading skills and confidence, and that their children were happier.





## REPORT CARD SUMMARY

### GROWTH AREAS

FSLA will focus on the following areas for further improvement in programming and evaluation as we steadily expand to more sites and participants nationwide.

#### For Teacher Apprentices:

- ◆ Comprehensive recruitment and onboarding plan.
- ◆ Measuring cultural competencies and proficiencies, including adding culturally-responsive items to SLA Effective Teaching Checklist.
- ◆ A further review of social justice orientation efforts and evaluation.
- ◆ Continued involvement in Center programs of participants after the summer and tracking of individual progress on the Black Teacher Pipeline.

#### For Elementary School Scholars:

- ◆ Integration of a literacy curriculum for stronger readers as the Friends on the Block curriculum currently used is designed for students who need support with fundamental reading skills, such as decoding, phonemic awareness and phonological awareness.
- ◆ Engagement of more parents in survey responses.

#### For Sites

- ◆ Ramped-up fundraising for expansion, including a public-private dollar match for sustainability.
- ◆ Advocacy and public policy support. (See Big Win in Harrisburg: Creating the Teacher Diversity Pipeline.)
- ◆ Implementation fidelity in scaling.
- ◆ Observations by program evaluators.
- ◆ Formalized feedback from site leads.
- ◆ Increased communications among sites.