

# The Shadow Project Annual Review

2016-2017



The  
Shadow  
Project



*Changing Lives for Children with Learning Challenges*

# The Shadow Story

Founded by a Portland mom whose dyslexic son was ready to give up on school in second grade, **The Shadow Project's mission is to make learning more accessible and engaging for children with learning challenges so they can achieve their full potential.** The *only* nonprofit of its kind in the country, Shadow has helped foster success for nearly 11,000 children in grades pre K-8 whose special education needs include dyslexia, ADHD, and autism.



With the conviction that all students can graduate from high school given access to the right supports, The Shadow Project provides innovative tools and techniques tailored to diverse learners and supports teachers in integrating those tools into their classrooms.

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Shadow Project is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, working to remove longstanding barriers that block the path to educational success for students with learning challenges who are diverse in race, culture, and socio-economic status.

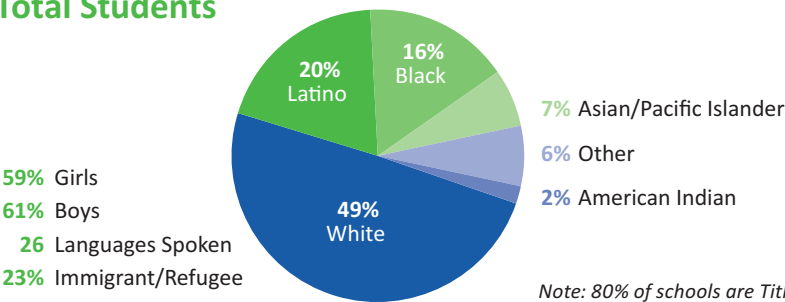
As part of its Strategic Plan, Shadow began serving children more inclusively throughout their school day, including in their general education classrooms where kids in special education now spend 80% of their time. Our model is central



to equity because it addresses the whole child, not just the disability. Working to reduce barriers that prevent children from feeling valued—such as shame over reading, or limited English proficiency—the organization is a valued community partner in strengthening student and family connections to school, and normalizing what it means to learn differently.

# Shadow Demographics

1,630 Total Students



"Reading is easy now." –Trenton

Trenton struggled to read but ended the year with a schoolwide award for **perseverance** in reading.



"Shadow makes me work harder." –Antonia

Antonia often lost homework or forgot to turn it in. The Shadow Project gave her the **courage** to make mistakes and keep trying, and she is on track to be the first in her family to graduate from high school.



"I wear headphones to block out noise and focus." –Tay

Tay used to say, "I'm not smart," and was grades behind in reading, but he built **confidence** and even increased his time spent reading using sensory tools provided by The Shadow Project.



"Our students with disabilities are seeing themselves as readers. I see them perform at higher rates, and take part in extra reading activities. They're so excited when they meet their goal. They feel like they belong in the school community."

—Katherine Polizos, Principal  
Woodmere Elementary

## Evaluation Highlights

In 2017, The Shadow Project began coaching students who were one to three-years below grade level in reading, using audio-visual books designed for children with disabilities. Half of coached students were from communities of color.

*An assessment found that students:*

- ★ Increased, on average, **1.3 grade levels** in reading at a pilot elementary school;
- ★ Gained, on average, **23 words per minute** in oral reading proficiency.

*Shadow also conducted its first child-level assessment on self-efficacy, with results mirroring teacher responses:*

- ★ **72% of students** strongly believe mistakes help them learn; **94% of teachers** report Shadow empowers students to learn from their mistakes;
- ★ **78% of students** describe themselves as readers; **90% of teachers** say Shadow empowers students to become independent readers.

## Financial Summary

*July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017*

### Income

Foundations	\$159,500
Individuals	26,417
Corporations	29,150
Earned Income & Government	87,579
Gifts In Kind	40,228
Other	40,771

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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$383,645</b>
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### Expenses

Program	\$316,891
Development	32,532
Administration	26,537

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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$375,960</b>
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iving in school. In Oregon,  
reading proficiency  
kids deserve better.

g Coaching pilot,  
dren with disabilities  
e years behind  
ng ability. As books  
at home.

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1. **Identify the problem.** The first step in the problem-solving process is to identify the problem. This involves recognizing the issue, gathering information, and defining the problem clearly.

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"The Shadow Project is a vital partner. Our kids have the **TOOLS** to access learning, and our teachers have the **TRAINING** to help them. That's how you **EMPOWER** children."

—Tamala Newsome, Principal  
Rosa Parks Elementary

## On the Cover

*Portland special education teacher LaShell Holton, M.S. (center), uses Shadow's signature goal setting program to motivate her struggling readers. Eric (left) and Haraa (right) persevered to become students who always raise their hands to read out loud.*



The **Shadow Project**

The Shadow Project's mission is to make school more accessible and engaging for children with learning challenges, so they can achieve their full potential.

*For more information, or to make a gift visit*

**shadow-project.org**

2154 NE Broadway, Suite 130 • Portland, OR 97232  
971-373-3457 • [info@shadow-project.org](mailto:info@shadow-project.org)



# Major Donors

Thank you to our major donors for empowering children with learning challenges, during fiscal years 2016-2017.

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The **Shadow Project**