

ADOPT-A-CLASSROOM TUTORING PROGRAM

In 1998, St. Paul's volunteers initiated a tutoring program to provide regular one-on-one reading and academic skill building for every child in one Kindergarten class at Rochester's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School #9.

Today Adopt-a-Classroom continues this successful tutoring program in 17 classrooms at the school: all five Kindergarten classrooms, five 1st grade, five 2nd grade, and two special education classrooms. We train, schedule and supply materials for more than 65 volunteers who served approximately 345 students during the 2012-2013 school year.

Our dedicated and skilled volunteers are drawn from St. Paul's and seven other parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester: Christ Church, Pittsford; Christ Church, Rochester; Church of the Good Shepherd, Webster; Church of the Incarnation, Penfield; St. Luke's, Fairport; St. Peter's, Henrietta; and St. Thomas', Rochester. We are also joined by volunteers from partner faith communities at St. Mary's, Guardian Angels, and St. Louis' Roman Catholic Churches; Incarnate Word Lutheran Church and Asbury United Methodist Church. In addition, many volunteers have come to the program through referrals from those already involved. Tutoring begins in mid-October and runs through mid-May every academic year.

Budget cuts in 2007 eliminated library aides. Several of our volunteers now provide weekly assistance in the school library, enabling the librarian to concentrate on classes and ensuring that books in the collection are available to the students and teachers.

Adopt-a-Classroom also provides direct student support.

* At Christmas-time volunteers wrap crayons and a small activity book for every student served by the tutoring program.

* Before the February school vacation, every student receives five new books, a bookmark and a pencil in a bright blue My Vacation Books bag.

* Before summer vacation, volunteers pack another bag of books for each student, including a list of summer reading and activities from the school's librarian in each bag.

The program provides vocabulary-building field trips annually for the Kindergarten and 1st grade students, and annual visits from Genesee Country Village and Museum's interpreter for 2nd and 4th grade students. Adopt-a-Classroom volunteers also help the Kindergarteners and their families celebrate Moving Up Day every spring.

In the fall of 2011, Adopt-a-Classroom picked up an initiative begun by St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church and has been providing a new book for each student in the school on the occasion of their birthday. With this gift we remind 750-plus students that they are remembered, that they have intrinsic value and that their education is important to their community.

For more information or to get involved, contact Paula Valeri, City School Outreach Coordinator, at [585-748-7048](tel:585-748-7048) or pdvaleri@gmail.com.

