



2020 IMPACT REPORT



To our dedicated supporters,

No one could have planned for or predicted the difficult decisions we would be tasked with making in 2020. Time became irrelevant; information was being distributed so quickly much of it was outdated before it could be acted on. Like many non-profits, we were faced with a critical decision – close down and wait to see how things unfold or move forward without an understanding of what the future would hold. Rather than looking internally to make this decision, our organization decided to look externally. We contacted the partners we serve to let them help inform our decision-making process. What we heard back from them in March 2020 was loud and clear, books were needed NOW more than ever!

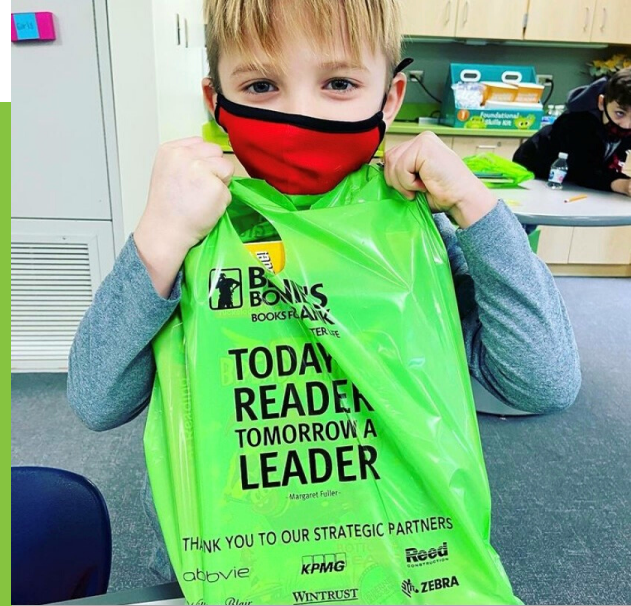
I believe that making the decision to do anything and everything possible to ensure under-served children received as many books as we could possibly distribute last year was the second most impactful decision our organization has ever made - surpassed only by Brian's decision to found Bernie's Book Bank in 2009.

This was a truly unprecedented year, it tested our resolve and grit.....I am SO PROUD to say we not only survived all of the challenges 2020 threw at us, but we also proved our organization is built to last!

Thank you for your generous support in 2020 and always, we are truly grateful.



Darrin Ulynek, CEO



"ACCESS TO BOOKS AT HOME IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT. WE THANK BERNIE'S BOOK BANK FOR THEIR GENEROUS EFFORTS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO BOOKS TO FAMILIES IN NEED."

**LATANYA D. MCDADE
CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER OF
CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



Bernie's Book Bank, a registered 501(c)3 organization, sources, processes and distributes quality children's books to increase book ownership among under-served children throughout Chicagoland.

Friends of Bernie's Book Bank,

As supporters of Bernie's Book Bank, you know very well that children's books provide mirrors and windows to their readers. They help children shape their identity, build a sense of belonging in the world, open doors to new opportunities and be inspired by the world of possibilities ahead. Books offer refuge from a hard day, trips to exotic locales, empathy to lives and experiences far more difficult than our own and a glimpse of the world of possibility. In short, books are the very foundation of a life well lived.

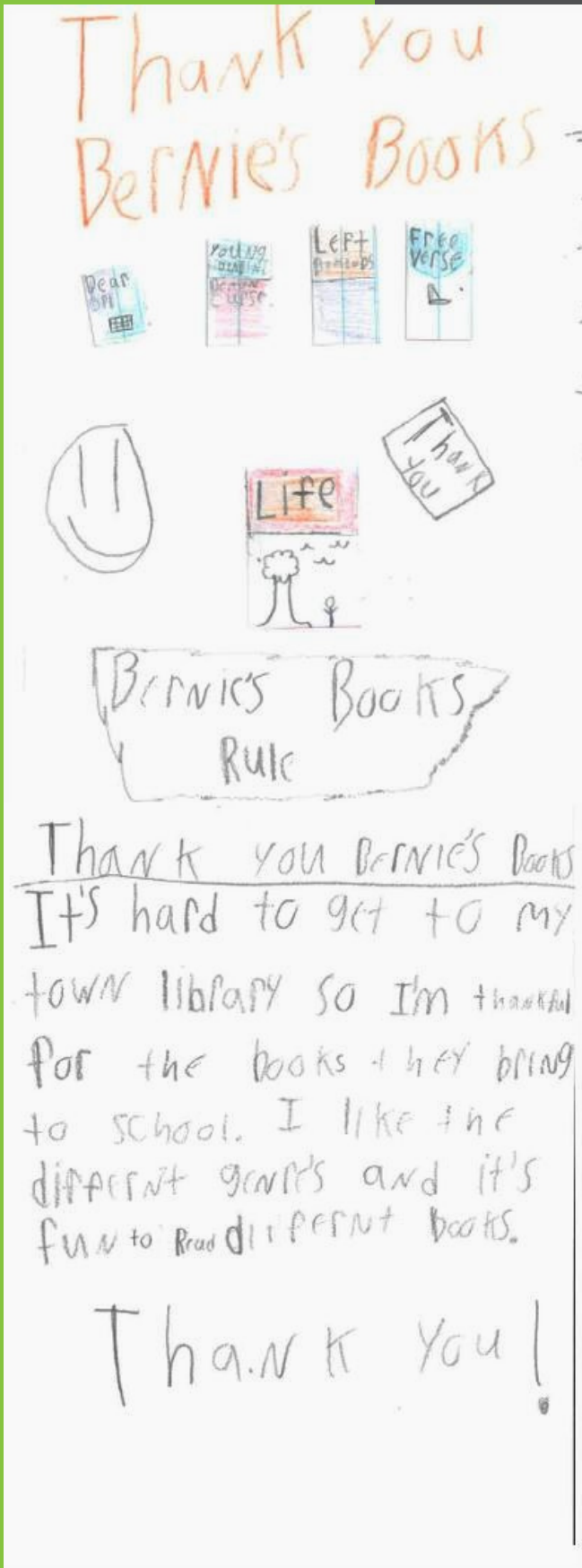
Thanks to your sustained and generous support, Bernie's Book Bank continues its focus on getting books in the hands of under-served children. In a year when life went online, the impact of a book has never been greater. As children grapple with learning loss and challenges of remote and hybrid learning, the value of having a library at home has become more essential than ever before.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I'd like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Bernie's Book Bank Team for their unwavering commitment, resilience and determination in fulfilling our mission. To our supporters, thank you for your commitment in being part of this journey. It only takes reading one of the thousands of thank you notes received to understand the return on your investment. To our educators, you are our heroes and you inspire us every day.

And lastly, to the children we serve, we are so proud of you. Keep reading!

Sara Granack

Chair, Board of Directors



SAME MISSION, DIFFERENT APPROACH

On March 18, 2020, Bernie's Book Bank made its **first COVID-19 book distribution**. North Chicago Community Partners received 32,000+ quality books. In the days to come, Bernie's Book Bank was **flooded with book requests** from districts forced to close their school buildings, non-profit partners and countless organizations who sought to receive books.

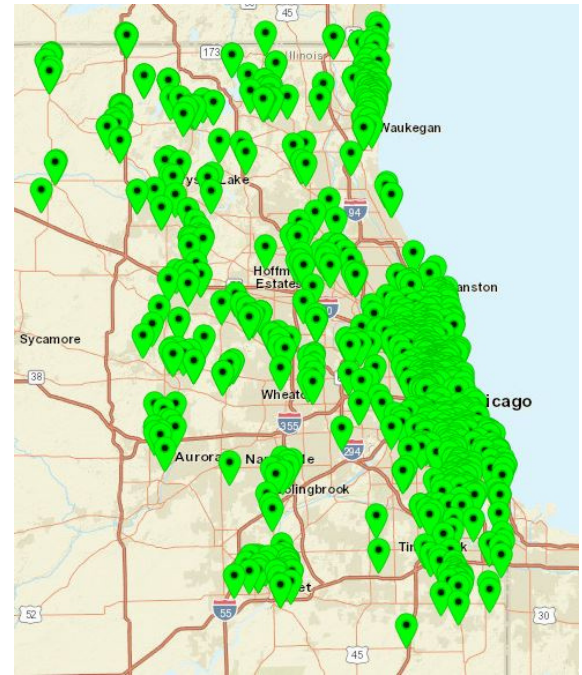
The Bernie's Book Bank Team pivoted quickly to distribute "Family Pack" style bags of books. The bags included six quality books ranging from birth to 6th grade reading level to appeal to all children in the family. This decision allowed us to efficiently produce more bags to **meet increased demands** as well as serve families with children of multiple ages more effectively.

Long-time partner Chicago Public Schools (CPS) received more than 250,000 quality books from Bernie's Book Bank to strengthen their online/remote curriculum. Books were distributed as part of meal and school supply sites.

New partners emerged, highlighting the need across six counties. Bernie's Book Bank teamed up with Northern Illinois Food Bank at Pop-Up Markets in Gurnee and Joliet, serving more than **5,000 families with 30,000** quality books. Bernie's Book Bank established relationships with local organizations as part of our COVID-19 response, including Keeping Families Covered, Kids Above All, Arbolibro, Curt's Café, OMNI Youth Services, Brown Books & Paint Brushes, Project H.O.O.D., Rose Cafe, Reach Out & Read, Veteran Homes and numerous others. **Total distribution for 2020 was 2.2 MILLION quality books.**

In 2020, generous Book Partners donated **more than 1.4 million books**. We are extremely grateful to partners like ABDO, Albert Whitman, Cottage Door Press, Booksource, IPG, Jumping Cow Press, Kidsbooks, Lillypost, Little Bee Books, Macmillan, Norwood House Press, Simon and Schuster, Weigl, William B. Eerdmans and World Book Inc. In addition, the generosity of Book Depot, Candlewick Press, Cherry Lake Publishing, Lerner, Peachtree, Sourcebooks and WorldPub was inspiring; these Book Partners **truly prioritize the children we serve.**

2020 DISTRIBUTIONS 2.2 MILLION QUALITY BOOKS



“ WE ARE THRILLED TO HAVE BERNIE’S BOOK BANK JOIN OUR POP-UP MARKETS TO DISTRIBUTE AMAZING BOOKS TO OUR FAMILIES. NOT ONLY ARE WE ABLE TO NOURISH THEIR BODIES WITH NUTRITIOUS GROCERIES, BUT WE’RE ABLE TO NOURISH THE MINDS OF OUR YOUNGEST NEIGHBORS WITH BOOKS DURING THIS CRITICAL TIME. - JULIE YURKO PRESIDENT & CEO OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD BANK ”

2.2 MILLION

Books distributed in 2020

~100K

Books collected at pop-up book drives in 2020

750

Active school and U6 partners

STRONG SUPPORT DRIVES MISSION

On March 12, 2020, Bernie's Book Bank suspended all volunteer sessions for the safety of Volunteers and Team Members. With approximately 45,000 volunteers annually, our Team relies on volunteer support to collect quality books, process and pack them for the children we serve. Overnight, we re-engineered our Lake Bluff facility to allow our small but mighty team of 30 to sort, process and distribute more than 1.2 MILLION quality books in a safe manner. We continue to monitor guidelines carefully and hope to welcome volunteers back into our Processing Center as soon as it is possible.

With many book drop locations closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, our Team partnered with communities looking to help during such a difficult time. New Trier Township, Glen Ellyn, Vernon Hills and other towns hosted contact-free book drives, collecting and sorting nearly 100,000 books for the children we serve.

All books are sorted in accordance with our Book Philosophy, which aims to distribute books that are age-appropriate, high-interest and culturally relevant. Our goal is to increase the number of books distributed featuring diverse characters and story lines that better reflect the children we serve. While we have recognized the value of inclusive books since 2009, recent events have underscored the importance of our role.

Educators know books that act as a mirror* to a child's own experience are crucial in creating lifelong readers. Additionally, books that act as a window into a world of possibilities allow the children we serve to uncover new opportunities and "read their way to a better life."

The children we serve have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and 2020. They faced additional obstacles and unique challenges adjusting to remote learning. In addition they experienced heightened racial tension and social unrest. Bernie's Book Bank provided much more than reading materials in 2020, we offered comfort, hope, and opportunities to escape these difficult times.

*Rudine Sims Bishop credited with Windows & Mirror concept



Bernie's Book Bank fills the imaginations and expands the worlds of over 275,000 children each year. The Gorter Family Foundation has been proud to support these efforts from the start, turning Bernie's Book Bank's dreams of reaching their goals into the dreams of children with new vistas to explore.

-Cheri Richardson

Executive Director at Gorter Family Foundation

It has been such a struggle this year to get books into our students' hands, so you have helped us tremendously with that goal...When I visit students via Zoom for library time they are thrilled to show me the Bernie's Books they have read already.

-Ms. Hanson, Library Para Educator

INVESTING WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

Just days into the global pandemic, Bernie's Book Bank launched a "Change Their Story" campaign focused on the children we serve who were disproportionately affected by school closures and community resource challenges. Sub-campaigns launched with 50+ families and corporations participating. These campaigns continued to provide vital revenue stream while in-person fundraising events were restricted. As guidelines eased, Bernie's Book Bank hosted a hybrid of large virtual events and smaller in-person outdoor events.

Generous funding from corporate partners, family foundations and dedicated individuals supported the children we serve at a time when books were desperately needed.



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Reed Construction has been a proud sponsor of Bernie's Book Bank since 2019. In that time, we have learned that their team's dedication and devotion to ensuring school-aged children are "reading their way to a better life" is evident in their generous and meaningful approach to the communities in which they serve. It has been an honor and a privilege to promote their mission of increasing book ownership among under-served children throughout Chicagoland. We look forward to building our relationship with Bernie's Book Bank and supporting them as they expand their mission beyond Illinois.

- Bill Birck, CEO of Reed Construction

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Since our founding 11 years ago, the goal has always been to create a metropolitan-based children's book bank model which was ultra-effective, efficient, sustainable and scalable; these elements have guided all of our decision-making and vision throughout our journey. It was clear from the start, in order to accomplish this, we'd need to take a "non-traditional" non-profit approach to our organization. As such, a key pillar of our success and growth has been our mindset of wanting to be a "partner, not just their charity" to individuals, families, foundations, civic organizations and companies who provide support; we needed to work to try and provide just as much value back to them, as they provided to us.

- Brian Floriani, Founder of Bernie's Book Bank



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2020 STRATEGIC PARTNERS

abbvie

KPMG

Reed
CONSTRUCTION

William Blair

WINTRUST
COMMUNITY BANKS

ZEBRA
CAPTURE
YOUR EDGE

DISTANT BUT UNITED IN MISSION



BIRDIES & BOOKS

Observing COVID-19 guidelines, Bernie's Book Bank and Presenting Sponsor Reed Construction hosted Birdies & Books Charity Golf Classic at Shoreacres in Lake Bluff. Through distanced participation, the event raised critical funding to provide books for under-served children throughout Chicagoland.



WALK AS ONE CHICAGO

ESPN 1000 host David Kaplan led the inaugural Walk As One Chicago, completing a 29 mile walk with our own Darrin Utynek and achieving the ambitious goal of raising nearly \$100,000 for the children we serve. Participation from the Chicago Blackhawks, Northwestern University, Chicago Wolves, Loyola University, Zebra Technologies and Rose Pest Control yielded valuable press coverage and increased support.



BOOK LOVERS' EVENTS - VIRTUAL

Bernie's Book Bank re-imagined our signature fundraiser to host a 3-part Virtual Book Lovers' Series presented by KPMG, William Blair & Zebra Technologies. The series featured New York Times best-selling authors Jenna Blum & Elizabeth Berg, NAACP Award nominees Kimberly Jones & Gilly Segal and inclusion experts Charnaie Gordon & Frank Murphy.



PATRICK MANNELLY AWARD - VIRTUAL

The 2nd annual Patrick Mannelly Award honoring the top collegiate Long Snapper was hosted virtually to an international audience. Presenting Sponsor William Blair partnered with Braggs In The Stands, Dave Lockhart productions, Intrado, Obvious Shirts, Tighthead Brewery, and Tribal Media Co., to present Thomas Fletcher from Alabama with this prestigious award benefitting Bernie's Book Bank.

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

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- Scott Patterson, William Blair & Company, LLC
- David Raye, The Goddard School
- Darrin Utynek, Bernie's Book Bank
- Lynn Van Cleave, Wintrust Financial

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As my wife and I looked for charities to support, Bernie's Book Bank stood out in its mission to address childhood illiteracy in under-served communities. By focusing on this one issue, Bernie's Book Bank helps prevent many downstream social problems caused by poor reading skills.

- Greg Gliniecki

2021 Bernie Cup Commissioner &
Revenue Development Committee Member

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ASSOCIATE BOARD

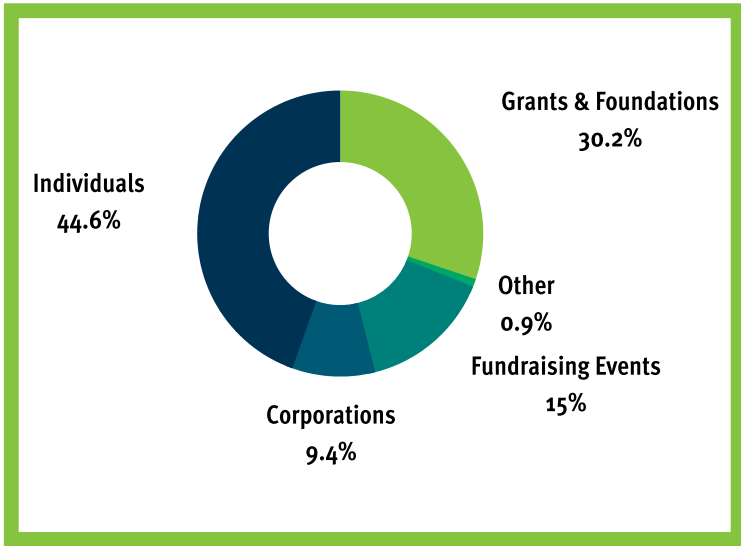
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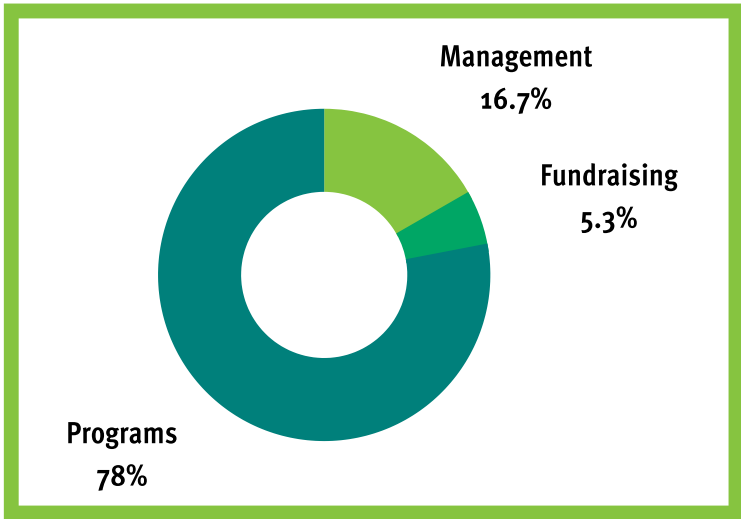
BOOK ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Maggie Binz (Librarian), Jefferson Elementary School
- Jackie De Leo (VP, GMM) Bookstore at Barnes & Noble, Inc.
- Jane Fleming (Director of Literacy), Chicago Public Schools
- Rita Gertie (Teacher), Cullen Elementary School;
50 Hour Club Member – Bernie's Book Bank
- Kennan Marsh, (Senior Research Fellow), AbbVie;
50 Hour Club Member – Bernie's Book Bank
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- Sasha Quinton (Executive Vice President)
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- Yesenia Sanchez (Chief Academic Officer),
North Chicago Community Consolidated Unit School District 187
- Tinaya York, PhD (Director of Elementary School Design
Programs and Supports), Chicago Public Schools

2020 FINANCIALS

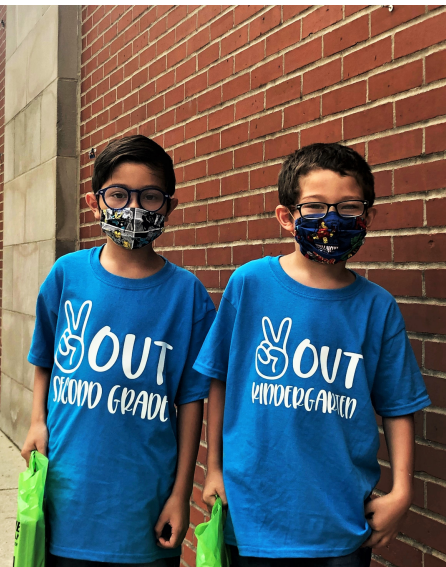


Percentage	Source	Amount
45%	Individuals	\$1,391,741
30%	Grants & Foundations	\$942,122
15%	Fundraising Events	\$468,466
9%	Corporations	\$293,027
<1%	Other	\$27,598
	TOTAL	\$3,122,954



Percentage	Category	Amount
78%	Programs	\$2,344,275
17%	Management	\$501,218
5%	Fundraising	\$159,041
	TOTAL	\$3,004,534

2020 Financial Information is Unaudited



THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 DONORS

\$250,000+

AbbVie Foundation

Anonymous

Hunter Family Foundation

\$100,000 - \$249,999

The Gliniecki Family Charitable Fund

Zebra Technologies Corporation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

KPMG's Family for Literacy

Reed Construction

\$25,000 - \$49,999

A Better Chicago
Abbott Fund
AbbVie

Bob and Cindy Broten
First Bank of Highland Park
Steans Family Foundation

Webb Financial Group/Chris and Diana Webb Family
William Blair

\$10,000 - \$24,999

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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Pam and David Waud
Kristin and Jamie Wildman

Many other generous donations were made in amounts ranging from \$12 to \$4,999. Bernie's Book Bank is grateful for every dollar invested in our mission.



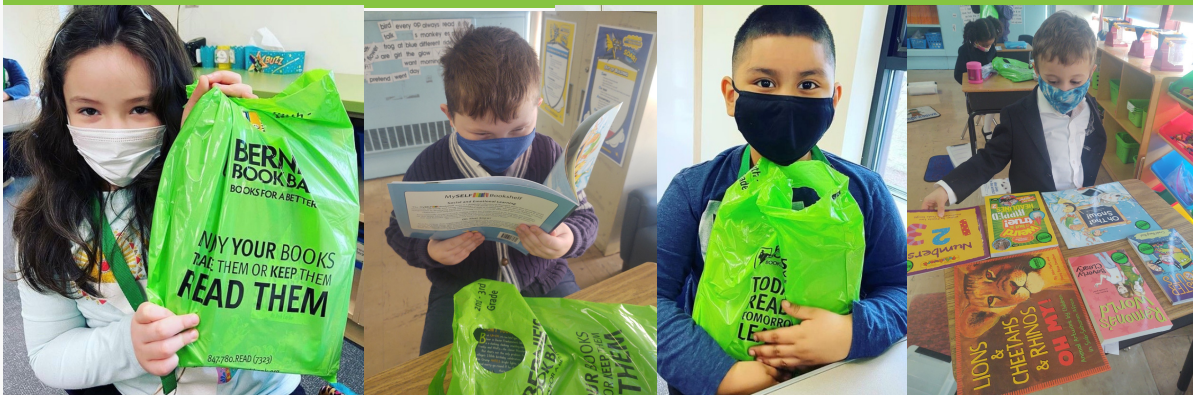
THANK YOU FOR CHANGING THE STORY

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I can't thank you enough! I'm just blown away! The books were perfect for each child, as if you knew them! Just amazing! My daughter loves all the princesses and my oldest loves the joke book, Star Wars everything and says he has plenty to read this summer now. Brings a tear to my eye. It's wonderful to know that we can focus on food and know the kids have new books and great books to enjoy all summer! Thank you again!

- Gina, Parent who received books at Food Bank Pop-Up Market

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Our children had shelves in their bedrooms overflowing with books that we read to them as infants as well as ones they loved reading themselves later on. Most families assume that children everywhere have this same opportunity to read at home. But Brian realized that was not the case and that many children live in homes where books are rare or totally non-existent.

Bernie's Book Bank has been an amazing success story that few organizations can match. We have been proud long-time supporters of this quest to bridge the book inequality gap and benefit hundreds of thousands of children in schools across northern Illinois.

- David Waud, Waud Family Foundation

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