



Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Midwestern Region Read to Succeed (RTS) Initiative Application & Approval Guide

This document outlines the application process, procedures, guidelines, and evaluation rubric for the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Midwestern Region Read to Succeed (RTS) Initiative.

I. PURPOSE OF THE RTS INITIATIVE

The Read to Succeed Initiative is a signature Midwestern Region effort designed to:

- Promote early and sustained literacy development
- Strengthen school–community partnerships
- Provide visible, permanent investments (reading benches) that support long-term literacy engagement
- Align literacy efforts to school and organizational strategic plans, reading initiatives, and efforts to close opportunity and achievement gaps for students

II. ELIGIBILITY & GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Eligible Applicants

- Individual Brothers
- Undergraduate Chapters
- Alumni Chapters
- Districts (collaborative or multi-chapter projects)

General Requirements

- Projects must align with the core goals of the RTS Initiative
- Each application requires:
 - A non-refundable \$200 application fee
 - A \$1,000 project deposit (see refund policy below)
- Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to execute both the bench dedication and ongoing literacy programming

NOTE: Any approved chapters hold the sole responsibility to adhere to all mandated Risk Management requirements related to chapter activities while undertaking this project.

III. APPLICATION WINDOWS & PROJECT TIMELINES

Applications are accepted during the following annual windows:

Application Window	Submission Dates	Anticipated Project Delivery
Window 1	January 1 – January 15	April
Window 2	May 1 – May 15	August
Window 3	September 1 – September 15	December

- All applications will be reviewed and scored by the last day of the submission month
- Applicants will receive written notification of:
 - Approval
 - Conditional Approval (with revisions required), or
 - Non-Approval with feedback

IV. PROJECT CRITERIA (REQUIRED COMPONENTS)

Each proposed RTS project **must include all components below**:

1. Reading Bench Dedication Ceremony

- A formal dedication involving Alpha Phi Alpha members and community stakeholders
- Documentation (agenda, photos, or program outline) required upon completion

2. Long-Term Literacy Programming Plan

Projects must move beyond a one-day event and include a sustained literacy strategy, such as:

- Adults reading to school-aged youth
- Book donation or literacy resource drives
- Greeting, mentoring, or literacy-focused engagement programs
- English as a Second Language (ESL) or family literacy initiatives

3. School/Organization Letter of Agreement

- Signed by an authorized representative
- Must confirm:
 - Acceptance of the RTS project in full
 - Approval of the literacy programming plan
 - Approval of bench placement
 - Verification that **no union, contractual, or organizational conflicts** exist
 - Ownership of the property where the bench will be installed

4. Bench Site & Specifications

- The final site must include a cleared 6 ft x 6 ft concrete slab or sidewalk
- The bench will be permanently bolted to the ground for safety
- Bench specifications:
 - Welded steel construction
 - Colored powder-coat finish
 - Dimensions: 52” tall x 22” deep x 90” wide

V. APPLICATION & APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Step 1: Submission

Applicants must submit:

- Completed RTS Application Form
- Project narrative (separate attachment)
- Required letters (See IV subsection 3 above)
- Application fee and deposit

Step 2: Initial Compliance Review

RTS Committee reviews for:

- Completeness
 - Fee submission
 - Required documentation
- Incomplete applications will not advance to scoring.

Step 3: Evaluation & Scoring

Complete applications are evaluated using the RTS Approval Rubric (Section VIII).

Step 4: Determination

Applications receive one of the following outcomes:

- **Approved** – Project advances to contract phase
- **Conditionally Approved** – Revisions required before final approval
- **Not Approved** – Feedback provided for resubmission in a future window

Step 5: Contract Phase

- Final project costs are determined
- Contract issued
- Remaining balance due upon execution of the contract

VI. APPLICATION FEE & REFUND POLICY

- **Total due with application: \$1,200**
 - \$200 non-refundable application fee
 - \$1,000 project deposit

Refund Policy

- If an application is not approved, the \$1,000 deposit may be refunded minus the \$200 application fee
- No refunds will be issued after:
 - Project approval
 - Contract execution
 - Full payment submission

The estimated total project cost is approximately $\pm$ \$8,000, subject to change based on materials, delivery, and market conditions.

VII. APPLICATION GUIDELINES (WHAT STRONG APPLICATIONS DEMONSTRATE)

Strong RTS applications clearly demonstrate:

- Alignment to RTS literacy goals
- Connection to the school or organization's strategic plan
- Intentional focus on closing literacy and opportunity gaps
- Sustainability beyond the dedication event
- Clear roles, timelines, and accountability
- Active involvement of Alpha Phi Alpha members

VIII. RTS PROJECT APPROVAL RUBRIC

Each application is evaluated on a **100-point scale**:

Criteria	Description	Points
Alignment to RTS Mission	Clear connection to literacy, youth engagement, and community impact	20
Strategic Use of Reading Bench	Bench integrated into school/community literacy efforts	15
Long-Term Literacy Programming	Sustainable, ongoing programming beyond one-time events	20
School/Community Partnership	Strength and clarity of partner commitment	15
Implementation Readiness	Feasible timeline, roles, and logistics	15
Sustainability & Impact	Evidence of lasting benefit and scalability	15
Total Possible Points		100

Scoring Outcomes

- **85–100:** Approved
- **70–84:** Conditional Approval (revisions required)
- **Below 70:** Not Approved (feedback provided)

IX. APPLICATION FORM (To Be Printed and Completed)

Alpha Phi Alpha Midwestern Region Read To Succeed Initiative Application

This document is the formal application for the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Midwestern Region Read to Succeed (RTS) Initiative.

Project Checklist

Each proposed project should include:

- A reading bench dedication ceremony.
- A long-term plan for youth-focused literacy programming (e.g., adults reading to school-aged youth, book donations, greeting programs, or English as a Second Language initiatives).
- A letter signed by the proposed school/organization which will receive the RTS project accepting the full details of the proposed RTS project, including reading programs and bench dedication. The receiver must also verify in this letter that no union or other conflicts exist with the RTS project or bench placement at the facility which must be owned by them.
- Each project which includes a bench dedication must display an appropriate final site for the bench to include a **cleared 6ft x 6ft concrete slab** or sidewalk to allow a bench to be permanently bolted to the ground (**All benches will be permanently bolted to the ground for safety**).
- Application Fee
- Deposit

APPLICATION FORM

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name(s) _____

Chapter/District (if applicable) _____

Contact Phone Number _____

Contact Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Application Window (select one) **January 1-15** ☐ **May 1-15** ☐ **September 1-15** ☐

Dedication Name as it is to appear on Bench(s) Must Be Correct!!! _____

School/District/ Organization Representative name _____

School/District/ Organization Representative phone number _____

School/District/ Organization Representative e-mail address _____

Project Manager Phone Number _____

Project Manager Email Address _____

Project Manager Mailing Address _____

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please attach a separate, blank page providing a full description of your individual, chapter, or district Read to Succeed program. This description should detail how your project aligns with the base Read to Succeed goals and specifically detail the required components: the reading bench dedication and your long-term literacy programming plan. See **“Project Criteria”** on this form to assure all points are addressed. Include required letters with the application form.

3. FEE SUBMISSION

Please submit the \$200 non-refundable application fee and the \$1,000 deposit via [Check payable to MWR Alpha Phi Alpha] along with application (Total \$1,200). The total project cost will be determined and shared with applicants during the “contract phase” of the project approval process. Remaining balances will be due in full upon signing of the contract once projects are approved. Total cost for the RTS Project should be anticipated to be plus or minus **\$8,000** in total. (This amount is no guarantee and maybe higher or lower depending upon delivery charges, etc.)

4. AGREEMENT & SIGNATURES

By signing below, the applicants affirm that all information submitted is accurate and that they agree to comply with all RTS Initiative requirements and procedures.

Signature	Name (Print & Sign)	Date
Applicant Signature	_____	_____
School/Organization Representative	_____	_____
MWR President / Representative	_____	_____
RTS Committee Chair/ Representative	_____	_____