

Grant Number 749

Overall score 98

### **The Problem (40 Points)**

Do you remember curling up on your living room couch as a kid with a great book? Do you remember becoming so engrossed in the story that you were unable to put the book down? If so, then you know what it feels like to fall in love with characters that seem to become a part of your family and friends for life! Unfortunately, not all children have childhood memories such as this one. Some students are very reluctant to pick up a book and get lost in a story. It's not because they don't like to read, but instead, they haven't discovered the type of books they love yet. Instead, they often say, "I don't like to read" or "reading is boring". That's because they haven't experienced the joy of getting lost in the magical world a story bestows. The purpose of this project is not only to engage students in reading and help them fall in love with books, but also to build a reading culture at our school. Being that we are a Title I school, many of our students lack the resources and support that would expose them to a wide variety of book genres. I am requesting \$2,973.56 to create a monthly book club for our students in grades 2-4. This will provide them the books that they would otherwise be unable to purchase on their own if they joined a book club.

The benefit of starting a book club on our campus will be exposing students to different authors, book series and writing styles. It will give students an opportunity for a "book tasting" in order to discover the style of books they enjoy. Most importantly, it will ultimately improve reading fluency, expand and deepen their vocabulary knowledge and improve reading comprehension and critical thinking skills by engaging in meaningful conversations. Fountas and Pinnell (the literacy program Wylie ISD has adopted for their elementary campuses) says that book clubs "deepen readers' appreciation and understanding of a common text." It "extends students' thinking as they process and interpret the perspectives and opinions of their peers and expands students' ability to express their ideas orally using academic language." In addition, the literacy skills children develop in elementary school will help determine their success throughout their educational years.

My key objective for this project is to ultimately increase student achievement in reading by increasing their independent reading level while building their love of reading. A monthly book club will create an opportunity for students in grades 2-4 to belong to a community of readers. In the article, Conversations Inspiring Community, Nathaniel Petrich expresses that "books have forever been used to bring people together, to build community. The success of communities is dependent on how well people live and learn together: life is more entertaining and enjoyable with others. Communities are built through conversation, which enables a community of contagious learning where the enthusiasm and struggle is shared." Along with reaching their reading goals, students will build friendships with other students and acquire valuable skills such as participating in discussions by taking turns and respecting the opinions of others. Research has shown that students who participate in book clubs with their peers benefit from books by engaging in critical thinking conversations and they gain deeper meaning from text. Besides developing a rich dialogue by participating in discussions, students also learn to connect with their peers and increase their ability to express their ideas and point of views from what they read. (Conversations Inspiring Community)

### **Student Data**

Comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading, so it is crucial students engage in purposeful conversations to construct meaning from text. When assessing a student's reading level, comprehension plays a vital role when determining a student's independent reading level. It is critical that students

construct meaning from text by analyzing what they've read and are able to make connections to the story and its characters. Students must be able to dig deeper into the story by using higher-level thinking skills to analyze what they have read by using cognitive strategies. Conversation and collaboration that is provided in book clubs would support students with a scaffold to accomplish these goals.

BAS (Benchmark Assessment System) assessment data measures a student's independent reading levels. Our 2021-2022 BAS data for students in grades 1-3 (these are the students now in grades 2-4) demonstrates a weakness in reading with 51% of these students falling below grade level expectations. Here is a breakdown of students by grade level:

56% of our First-Grade students did not meet grade level expectations in Reading.  
49% of our Second-Grade students did not meet grade level expectations in Reading.  
47% of our Third-Grade students did not meet grade level expectations in Reading.

Our students are also assessed using MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) three times per year in reading. Our data indicates that 23% of students in grades 1-3 (students who are now in grades 2-4) were below grade level. Here is a breakdown of students by grade level:

32% of our First-Grade students did not meet grade level expectations.  
18% of our Second-Grade students did not meet grade level expectations.  
15% of our Third-grade students did not meet grade level expectations.

Additionally, our third-grade students were also assessed using STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) in May of 2022. Our data indicates that 30% of students in third grade did not meet state grade level expectations. In 2022-2023, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4th grade STAAR test will consist of short answer responses. Given that book clubs are a place to discuss the story and share opinions, students will learn how to ask and answer open-ended questions that will ultimately put our students at an advantage when responding to these short answer questions on the STAAR test. As the data demonstrates, student's independent reading levels are well below grade level and the cause is predominantly due to comprehension. A campus book club that is offered monthly for students to join and participate in would provide them with an environment that allows students to get excited about reading, develop public speaking skills through group conversations, and in turn increase their reading comprehension through invigorating and engaging conversations.

#### Campus Improvement Plan

Our Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) states that 90% of our students in grades K-4 will perform on grade level or higher in Reading and Math (Goal 2; Performance Objective 9). In order to show mastery of these skills, students must be proficient in comprehension. They need to be able to derive deeper meaning through critical thinking and deeper engagement from text. As students participate in discussions by means of book clubs they will increase their comprehension skills while nurturing a love of reading. Book clubs will offer a heightened focus and ultimately improve students' independent reading levels. It will prepare students to answer higher level questions when it comes to reading comprehension on the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) assessment, BAS (Benchmark Assessment System), and ultimately the state assessment, STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness).

District Goals Our district Mission Statement and Board goals is to "Ensure academic achievement for all students". This means that all students, regardless of being economically disadvantaged, should be given the ability to achieve academic success. As teachers of students at a Title I school, we must develop engaging opportunities for students to be excited about their learning by offering activities to

grow academically and feel successful. Wylie ISD's mission is to "Prepare students for a successful life beyond High School". The impact of book clubs will provide students with long-term success beyond Grade School and High School. Expanding students' critical thinking skills through meaningful and engaging discussions will level the playing field. Deeper levels of learning and literary analysis that will be acquired by participating in a book club will contribute to conversational skills that they will use in High School and beyond. They will gain valuable skills that will allow them to communicate effectively when collaborating in the workforce. Wylie ISD is called a "Destination District" and has an outstanding reputation and a graduation rate of 98.8% With the recent addition of Collin College to the City of Wylie, the opportunity for economically disadvantaged students to attend college has increased. Creating and utilizing book clubs to broaden and deepen reading practices while increasing communication skills will help students better prepare for the rigor of college courses in an effort to be "successful beyond High School".

#### Other

In the past few years, Wylie ISD has devoted time, effort, and resources with a focus on Social Emotional Learning (SEL). SEL is defined as "the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions." (Casel: Fundamentals of SEL) As a pilot of a Restorative Campus model we have implemented and integrated restorative circles in all grade level classrooms that focus on Social Emotional Learning. "A restorative circle is a technique that builds and restores relationships through equal opportunity sharing and listening." (The Write of Your Life) These circles build skills in students by giving each child an opportunity to speak and be heard. The goal of circles is to create an environment of trust and meaningful relationships that create a safe and healthy environment in flourishing schools. Adding book clubs will supplement the techniques and skills being taught through Restorative Circles. Book clubs will not only promote academic literacy, it will also enhance the skills of social emotional learning.

#### Review Comments

Hit all the required points. A little long, but well written.

#### Review Comments

Perfect

#### Review Comments

My child LOVES book clubs. Very well articulated need and supporting data.

## Program Outcomes/Evaluation (45 Points)

Objective	Starting Point (Baseline)	Methods used to arrive at improved endpoint	How will you evaluate the process of implementation	Quantitative and/or qualitative data to be used to evaluate (Specific measurable data)	Expected Outcomes based on data
Objective one is to increase student's ability to be critical thinkers by making connections and partaking in meaningful conversations in order to increase their comprehension and independent reading level all while building a love of reading.	49% of our students met or exceeded grade level expectations on their end of the year BAS (Benchmark Assessment System) reading assessment in 2021-2022.	Monthly book clubs will be used to engage students in a variety of literature and genres while increasing comprehension through critical thinking conversations as they gain deeper meaning from text. Students will use the skills acquired during book clubs in class discussions on grade level curriculum to demonstrate understanding, therefore increasing their independent reading level by mastery of grade level skills.	We will observe students' understanding of text through book club discussions.	We will use BAS (Benchmark Assessment System) reading assessment to monitor growth of student's independent reading levels. BAS is given three times per year and measures competencies in reading and reading comprehension.	With very intentional use of grade level text and genres and topics targeted at students' interest, book clubs will support our goal in increasing students' independent reading level by 20%. By the end of the 2022-2023 school year 70% of students in grades 2-4 will meet or exceed the grade level expectation in reading comprehension.
Objective two is to utilize book clubs as a way to broaden and deepen reading practices to increase student's Rasch Unit (RIU) score on the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessment.	77% of our students performed on grade level expectations or higher on the Reading MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessment.	Monthly book clubs will be used to build comprehension strategies and increase reading fluency which is measured by MAP.	We will observe the strategies students use during formal and informal class assessments to check if students are transferring the skills and strategies acquired during book club meetings.	We will use the Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) test to watch student growth three times a year in the area of their independent reading comprehension of literary and nonfiction text.	With intentional planning of quality questions during book club discussions we will raise our student's overall meets score by 10%. By the end of the 2022-2023 school year, 87% of our students in grades 2-4 will meet grade level expectation on the Reading MAP assessment.
Objective three is to utilize book clubs to gain background knowledge to support reading comprehension on state assessments.	70% of our students performed on grade level expectations or higher on the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) assessment.	Monthly book clubs will be used to practice asking and answering open-ended questions as is assessed on the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) assessment.	We will utilize book clubs to prepare students to respond to short answer questions on STAAR through open-ended discussion questions.	We will use the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) assessment to evaluate students' reading comprehension.	With intentional planning of open ended questions, students can respond to questions in a reader's response journal to prepare for STAAR. Using book clubs, we will raise our student's overall meets score by 10%. By the end of the 2022-2023 school year, 80% of our students in grades 3-4 will meet grade level expectation on the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) assessment.

Review Comments

Excellent

Review Comments

Very complete

Review Comments

The expected outcome on the first objective states a 20% improvement but the targeted # is actually about a 43% increase - 20% seems achievable. 43% feels aggressive. Have you done books clubs before with similar results?

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## Sustainability (15 Points)

We will organize and establish a monthly book club on our campus. The book club would be offered monthly, and books would be introduced in advance. Students would be able to join each month as they wish according to their interest. We will meet one day each week after school to discuss the chapters, share our opinions, and bring unanswered questions. In addition, special activities would be planned each week to inspire students and promote engagement. With successful implementation, we could continue the book club for many years since the books can be used again and read by other children each school year. In addition, this grant would make it possible to purchase enough books for our campus to use for several years in the future, while offering our students choice among a wide variety of genres.

Furthermore, we would share our results and success with other teachers in the district, offer training sessions, and help them implement the program on their campuses. With any project, there are issues that may arise that may hinder success of future students using the items being purchased with this grant. Students may lose the books, or the books may get destroyed. One way of preventing such things from happening is creating a contract for the members of the book club. They must promise to take care

of the books and be responsible for the items. Another issue that may arise is that too many students will want to join the book club and there won't be enough books for each student. This is not so much a bad thing, but if we don't have enough books, we would have to do a drawing as a way to choose the members of the book club for that month. In the future, we could purchase more books with Title I funds to allow more students to join each month. Expansion of this project could open to first grade students in the second semester of the school year. As they become independent readers, book clubs would be beneficial to establish a love of reading early on in a child's education. They can begin building background knowledge early and become critical thinkers. The project could also be expanded through the summer and will help students maintain learning while school is out for summer. It will teach students the importance of lifelong learning and prevent the "summer slide", where students, especially those from low-income families, lose some of the academic gains made during the previous year.

Review Comments

Wonderful

Review Comments

Great!

## Budget

	Budget Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Supplier	Budget Amount
	The Last Kids on Earth #NTS803048	30	5.21	Scholastic	156.3
	Crenshaw #NTS666697	30	5.99	Scholastic	179.7
	Magic Tree House: #1 Dinosaurs Before Dark #NTS822428	30	4.46	Scholastic	133.8
	Frindle #NTS960727	30	5.96	Scholastic	178.8
	I Survived the Japanese Tsunami, 2011 #NTS545937	30	4.49	Scholastic	134.7
	Hachiko Waits #NTS507182	30	5.21	Scholastic	156.3
	A Dog's Purpose Puppy Tale: Toby's Story #NTS861158	30	5.24	Scholastic	157.2
	Clementine #NTS503466	30	4.46	Scholastic	133.8
	The World According to Humphrey #NTS580134	30	5.21	Scholastic	156.3
	The Hero Two Doors Down 6-pack set #NTS821161	5	26.95	Scholastic	134.75
	Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone #NTS35342	30	8.24	Scholastic	247.2
	Kristy's Great Idea #NTS864220	30	5.24	Scholastic	157.2
	I Survived the Sinking of the Titanic, 1912 #NTS520694	30	3.74	Scholastic	112.2
	Escape From the Great Earthquake #NTS590983	30	4.49	Scholastic	134.7
	Charlotte's Web 6-pack set #NTS525462	5	30.95	Scholastic	154.75
	Flat Stanley #NTS958863	30	3.71	Scholastic	111.3
	The Littles #NTS46225	30	3.74	Scholastic	112.2
	Little House in the Big Woods #NTS48817	30	5.96	Scholastic	178.8
	Shipping & Handling	1	243.56	Scholastic	243.56

BUDGET TOTAL (will calculate after page is saved): 2,973.56

Total Dollar amount requested: 2974  
 Total Dollars Requested and Budget Totals must equal.  
 Make changes as necessary.