



CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM
#8-2021

DATE: March 22, 2021

TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

FROM: Heather Geyer, City Manager 
Rupa Venkatesh, Assistant to the City Manager 

SUBJECT: CR-15 – Dolly Parton Imagination Library Funding Request

PURPOSE

To consider CR-15, a resolution approving a letter of agreement with the Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club to contribute funding to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program.

BACKGROUND

On Jan. 4, 2021, Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club member Roger Gudenkauf presented to Council a request to contribute funding to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The goal of the program is to improve kindergarten readiness in children ages 0 to 5. Free, high-quality books are mailed to children from birth until they begin school (or age 5), no matter their family's income.

Per Council's direction at the Jan. 4 meeting, staff discussed the opportunity with the Rocky Mountain Partnership (RMP). RMP is a member of the StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network. StriveTogether is a national movement with a clear purpose: helping every child succeed in school and life from cradle to career, regardless of race, zip code or circumstance. A copy of their recommendations is included as Attachment 1.

In order to measure this outcome, RMP recommends measuring outputs in the following areas:

- Richer home literacy environments
- Improving attitudes and literacy skills

This can be accomplished through pre and post surveys of individuals that participate in the program. The Rotary Club already sends out post surveys but will start sending out pre surveys to all new clients and survey existing clients yearly.

Staff explored a partnership with the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) to administer the survey; however, the data that the Rotary Club receives cannot be easily shared with outside entities. Since Rotary Club has agreed to administer the pre and post surveys to collect the data RMP recommends, staff will reassess the need for additional partnerships next year.

The Rotary Club has indicated Adams 12 Five Star School District, Mapleton School District, Westminster School District, and the cities of Westminster and Federal Heights have all contributed funds. The cities of Brighton and Commerce City and their respective school districts are still considering the request.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS

If CR-15 is approved, \$5,000 from the General Fund will be allocated. Staff will work with RMP and the Rotary Club to track outcomes of this program. In addition, staff will market this opportunity via the monthly Connection newsletter, social media, and other avenues. This is a pilot program and additional funding requests will be considered next year.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff does not recommend that Council restrict the \$5,000 solely to Northglenn residents. This would make the number of Northglenn children who could participate in the program dependent on how much the City provides. The Dolly Parton Imagination Library program costs \$25 per year per child, so only 200 Northglenn children could join this program. However, by increasing the funding available, the number of Northglenn children would not be restricted and they could benefit from funds being provided by all the participating entities.

Without any contribution from the City, the Rotary Club already serves 105 Northglenn children through the program.

Staff recommends approval of CR-15, a resolution that, if approved, would authorize the City Manager to execute the letter of agreement on behalf of the City.

STAFF REFERENCE

If Council members have any questions, please contact Heather Geyer, City Manager, at hgeyer@northglenn.org or 303.450.8706.

ATTACHMENT

1. RMP recommendations

CR-15 – Dolly Parton Imagination Library Funding Request
Letter of Agreement

Dolly Parton Imagination Library Outcome Recommendations

February, 2021

Evidence of Impact

Impact That Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) is Reporting

Output: Positive Perceptions [of Program]

- Participating family members were overwhelmingly positive about the program and its impact on their children when asked in questionnaires, interviews and focus groups.
- Community members, including Imagination Library partners and preschool and kindergarten teachers, also had positive views of the program and its impact on book ownership and literacy practices in homes.
- The positive views of the program and its impacts were present regardless of the demographic characteristics of the community or its participants, and longer program participation often resulted in more positive outcomes.

Richer Home Literacy Environments

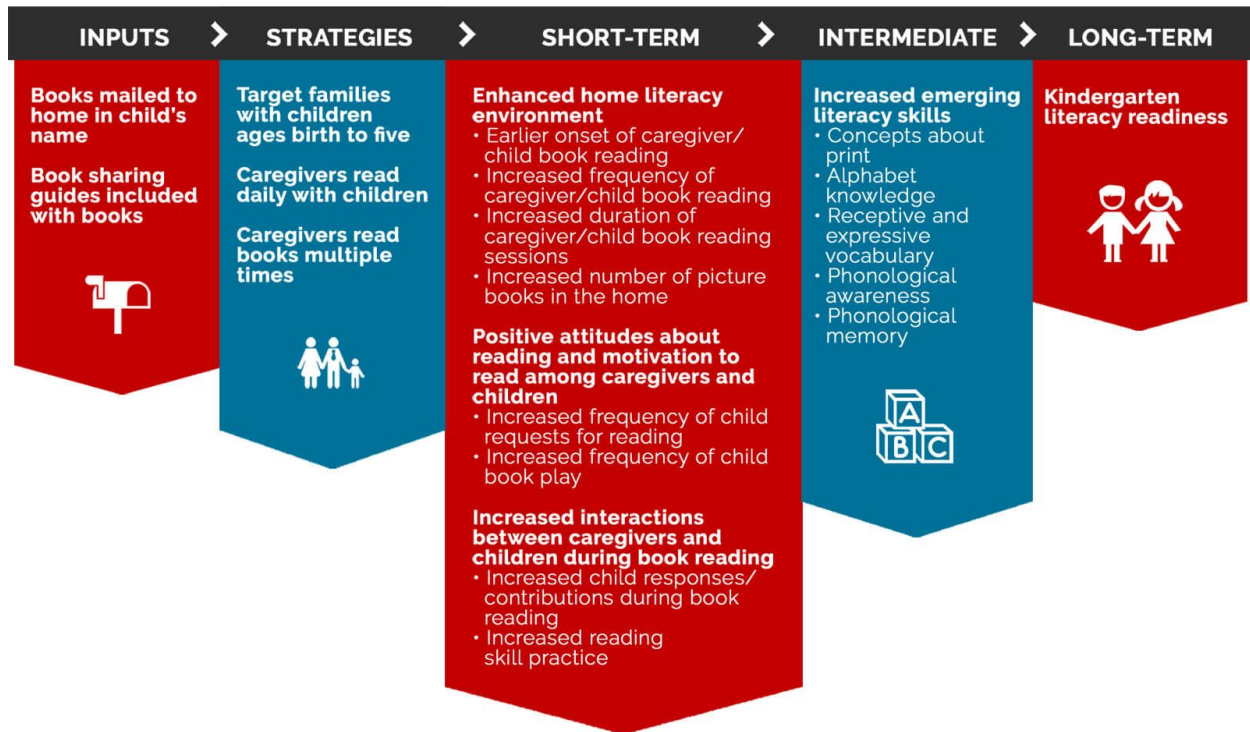
- Parents read aloud more to their children and were more comfortable reading as a result of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.
- Parents reported their children owned more books as a result of participating in the program.

Improving Attitudes and Literacy Skills

- Parents believed their children were more interested in reading due to receiving the books each month.
- Participating children were excited when their Imagination Library books arrived in the mail monthly, addressed specifically to the child.
- Some studies found Dolly Parton's Imagination Library had promise with respect to developing children's early literacy skills, as participants had more advanced skills than their classmates who did not participate in the program.

Logic Model

Based on Imagination Library Research Findings and Literature Review



Additional Information on Research can be found [HERE](#)

Recommendations

Potential Impact for City of Northglenn: Kindergarten Literacy Readiness

Measuring Outputs Towards Kindergarten Literacy Readiness

- Measure the following areas in order to ensure that kids ages 0-5 are more likely to be ready for kindergarten:
 - Richer Home Literacy Environments
 - Improving Attitudes and Literacy Skills
- The best way to determine the impact of the program would be to conduct pre and post surveys of individuals who take part in the program, in order to determine effectiveness.
 - Many other [communities have conducted such studies](#), and could serve as models.

Maximizing Impact

Partnering with entities such as [Bright By Three](#) (Formerly Colorado Bright Beginnings) which provides resources such as toolkits to families to promote the healthy development of children through the most pivotal stages of growth during the earliest years of life would support the City to impact literacy as well as healthy child development.

Considerations

It would be difficult to contribute impact from this program through Kindergarten Readiness data because there are so many other factors that could contribute to kindergarten readiness, including external factors such as poverty, family composition, education of parents, etc., that would be out of the control of the program. Also, data for Kindergarten Readiness is available by County and not specific to the literacy domain. We would not be able to put a number to the outcome of Kindergarten readiness specifically for Northglenn in the literacy domain.

The Role of the Rocky Mountain Partnership Backbone

As an investing member of the Rocky Mountain Partnership, the Backbone Team will provide coaching to the City of Northglenn to put the infrastructure in place internally to measure towards impact.

Next Steps

- Backbone will pull K-readiness data for Adams County to show need (disaggregated through equity lens as much as possible) by 2/12/21
 - Information on the way that Kindergarten Readiness is measured in Colorado
- Backbone will confirm that Roger is able to pull the Northglenn residents (in order to build participant database so that surveys can be administered)
- Rupa will reach out to Backbone for any support needed in preparing for Council Retreat (by 2/19)
- Backbone will connect with ECPAC around this opportunity and potential for alignment

Kindergarten Readiness Information and Data

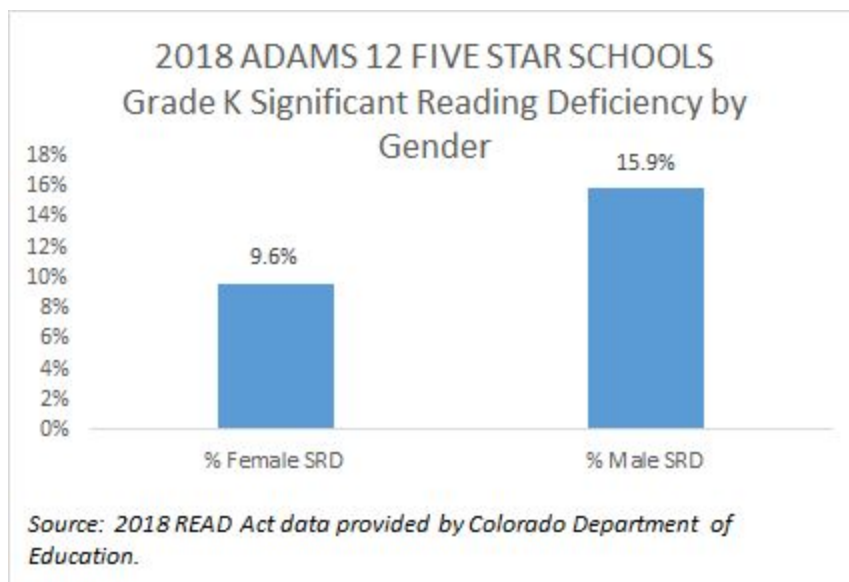
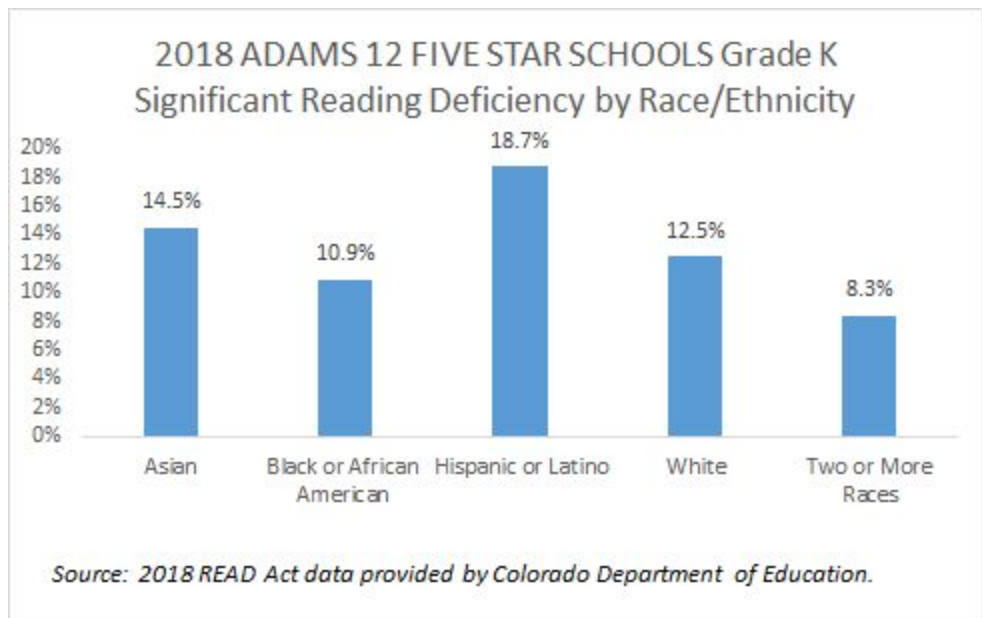
A few things about school readiness:

- The State Board of Education is tasked with defining it. Colorado's definition of school readiness is:
 - School readiness describes both the preparedness of a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences, and the ability of a school to meet the needs of all students enrolled in publicly funded preschool or kindergarten. School readiness is enhanced when schools, families, and community service providers work collaboratively to ensure that every child is ready for higher levels of learning in academic content.
- Colorado's definition of school readiness promotes the notion of Ready Child and Ready School. School readiness describes the status and ongoing progress a child makes within the domains of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge. By monitoring each child's progress across multiple domains, teachers, families, schools, and caregivers can provide needed support to promote each child's success in school.
- Colorado does not promote a "ready or not" approach to school readiness. The purpose of this initiative is to give parents and teachers a sense of how children are doing compared with commonly held expectations of child development in order to support them, not deny them access to school or say they are not ready

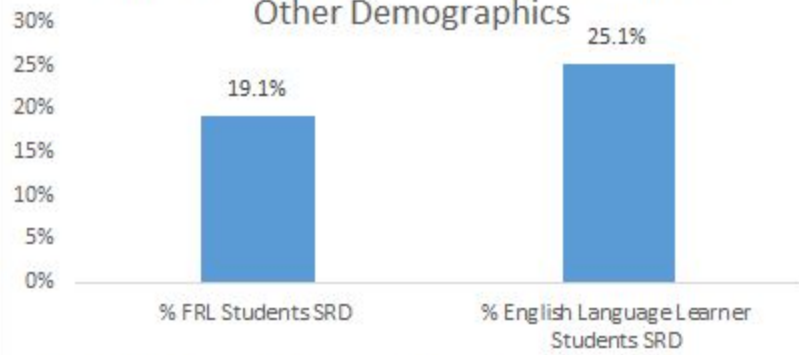
Data:

- As required by Colorado law, in March 2016 the State Board of Education voted to adopt a system for reporting school readiness data. The system calls for districts to submit only aggregate readiness information not by domain but by number of domains in which students demonstrate readiness. (Fact Sheet: [Kindergarten School Readiness Data Reporting \(state.co.us\)](#))
- Each approved kindergarten school readiness assessment provides information on whether a kindergartner is meeting age expectations in each of the required **school readiness domains** at the beginning of the school year:
 - Physical well-being and motor development
 - Social and emotional development
 - Language and comprehension development
 - Cognition
 - General knowledge (Mathematics and Literacy)
- Access a spreadsheet with suppressed Kindergarten Readiness data HERE: [Adams 12 Five Star Schools 2018 Kindergarten Readiness Domains Data.xlsx - Google Sheets](#)
- The Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act) focus on early literacy development for all students

- Access the interactive data tool to explore READ Act assessment results: [READ Act Data Dashboard | CDE \(state.co.us\)](#)
 - *NOTE: This CDE interactive dashboard goes up to 2017. This is the most recent data available without needing to go through another formal data request with CDE.*
 - **12.8% (332)** of Grade K students in Adams 12 Five Star Schools have a significant reading deficiency
 - The following graphs depict READ act (SRD=Significant Reading Deficiency) data from 2018 by race/ethnicity, gender, English Learners, and Free and Reduced Lunch status:



2018 ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS
Grade K Significant Reading Deficiency by
Other Demographics



Source: 2018 READ Act data provided by Colorado Department of Education.

SPONSORED BY: MAYOR LEIGHTY

COUNCILMAN'S RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO.

No. CR-15
Series of 2021

Series of 2021

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE WESTMINSTER 7:10 ROTARY CLUB REGARDING THE DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY PROGRAM

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTHGLENN, COLORADO, THAT:

Section 1. The City Manager is hereby authorized to execute the Letter of Agreement between the City of Northglenn and the Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club, attached hereto as Exhibit 1, and funding in the amount of \$5,000.00 shall be allocated from the 2021 General Fund budget for the City's contribution to the Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program.

DATED at Northglenn, Colorado, this ____ day of _____, 2021.

MEREDITH LEIGHTY
Mayor

ATTEST:

JOHANNA SMALL, CMC
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

COREY Y. HOFFMANN
City Attorney



Heather Geyer
City Manager
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March 22, 2021

Roger Gudenkauf
Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club
P.O. Box 350141
Westminster, CO 80035-0141

RE: Letter of Agreement

Dear Mr. Gudenkauf:

The City of Northglenn understands it will fund the Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club's request to participate in a regional partnership to support the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Program subject to annual appropriation of the City Budget. This program is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth until they begin school (or age 5), no matter their family's income.

City Council made the decision on March 22, 2021 to allocate \$5,000 in 2021 to the Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club from the City's General Fund. The Rotary will invoice the City with the understanding the Rotary Club commits to use the funds to provide the following:

- The Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club will be responsible for administration, enrollment and distribution of books. Administration will also include sending pre and post surveys to the families enrolled.
- The City will promote the program through various City communication channels.
- The Rotary will send status reports sent throughout the year indicating the number of available enrollments and provide any additional data that could be useful to measuring the reach and success of the program locally to include:
 - Not less than annually, reports showing the number of enrolled children in U.S. Postal Service zip codes within the City of Northglenn.
 - Not less than annually, reports showing any State of Colorado matching funds under SB 20-185 (Colorado Revised Statute §24-90-120).

The City of Northglenn and the Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions of this Agreement. Any future requests will be evaluated on an annual basis by City Council. Thank you to the Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club for this opportunity for a new partnership to serve residents of Northglenn. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Heather Geyer
City Manager

Acknowledged and agreed to this _____ day of _____ 2021.

Westminster 7:10 Rotary Club

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____