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# Board of Supervisors Memorandum

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February 5, 2013

## Literacy Connects – Contingency Funding for Fiscal Year 2013/14

### Background

Attached is a fact sheet regarding Literacy Infusion, which is a reading tutoring and mentoring program for elementary school age children. Literacy Connects has developed this pilot program for literacy and reading skill improvement, measuring outcomes for children in Kindergarten to Third Grade and measuring skill improvements in both mentored and non-mentored children.

Literacy Connects is requesting \$167,000 in funding from Pima County for full literacy infusion at Mission Manor Elementary School, continued evaluation of the program, and to provide initial funding to attract other investments to improve overall literacy of elementary school age children. This would be a one-time Contingency Fund allocation in Fiscal Year 2013/14.

Based on our desire to improve overall literacy and reading within our community and to significantly impact children in their early learning capacity, I recommend the Board of Supervisors approve this one-time funding based on appropriate contract with Literacy Connects, including very detailed evaluation of the outcomes associated with this investment regarding literacy improvements among elementary school age children.

### Recommendation

I recommend the Board of Supervisors approve notification of Literacy Connects of a \$167,000 literacy infusion allocation for Mission Manor Elementary School beginning in Fiscal Year 2013/14, provided all contractual requirements are completed relative to Pima County monitoring and evaluation of this public investment.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. Huckelberry".

C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

CHH/mjk – January 25, 2013

Attachment

## Literacy Infusion

Literacy is the bedrock on which individuals build their lives and communities build their resources. Significant improvements in literacy rates can be achieved with an integrated project that:

- 1) impacts infants, children, adults and families and
- 2) utilizes schools as the heart of community-based interventions.

The Literacy Infusion will increase the following outcomes:

- kindergarten readiness
- 3rd grade reading achievement
- percentage of adults achieving educational and job-related goals
- percentage of parents involved in their children's education and literacy
- percentage of parents involved with the school

The status quo does not work. There is major pressure on the public education system and little support for its critical efforts. Literacy providers are often grouped in silos around ages served or type of programming. The community is minimally involved.

**The Literacy Infusion works!** Literacy Connects and the Literacy Connects Coalition began focusing a sample of services for a moderate number of Mission Manor Elementary children and parents in 2010. AIMS reading scores at Mission Manor increased 7% and math scores increased 5% over the next two years. Two nearby elementary schools that did not receive services, Drexel and Liberty, had AIMS reading scores reduced by 4% and 3% and math scores reduced by 1% and 14% respectively over the same period.

With a commitment from Pima County, a full complement of programs can be implemented at Mission Manor. Robust evaluation methods will be included and will undoubtedly illustrate even greater gains.

Pima County can be a founding partner in a literacy project that is scalable and replicable within our community and beyond. Literacy Connects is approaching a state-wide funder with a request to support additional Literacy Infusion sites for years two through four.

Literacy Connects is a dedicated group of literacy providers with a proven track record of collaboration and community involvement. Last year, Literacy Connects served 48,000 individuals with a staff of just 20 FTE employees and 1,800 highly trained volunteers. Programs of the Literacy Connects include:

- **Literacy Volunteers of Tucson** transforms lives and enriches the community by teaching adults to read, write and speak English.
- **Reading Seed** recruits and trains volunteer reading coaches throughout Pima County to assist children reading below grade level in grades one through three.
- **Reach Out and Read Southern Arizona** prepares children to succeed in school by partnering with doctors to prescribe books and encourage families to read together.
- **Stories that Soar!** gives voice to original words and creative ideas of children and youth through curricula that combine literacy and the arts.

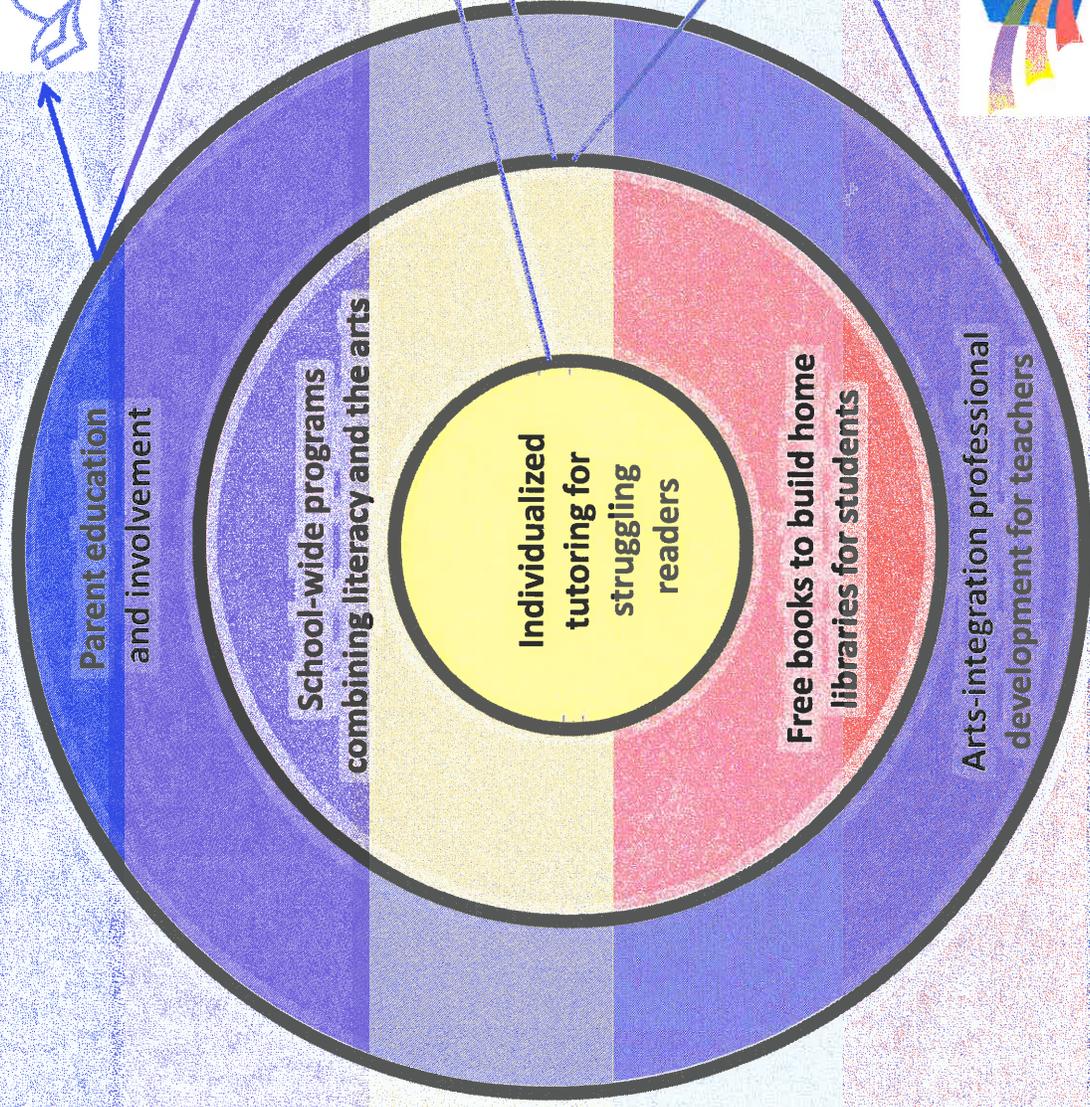
An investment of \$167,000 from Pima County will implement the full Literacy Infusion project at Mission Manor Elementary for the 2013-2014 school year. Literacy Connects will use evaluation from year one to secure future funding at Mission Manor and to add new sites.

Improve reading scores AND infuse your school with the love of reading, writing and the arts!

# Give your school a **Literacy Infusion**

## **A concept that works:**

- Integration of three effective literacy programs that connect to common core standards and your curriculum
- Student-centered instruction for adults and children
- Community engagement through volunteers
- A built-in mentorship model that lasts





## Literacy Infusion Budget

### Personnel

Project Manager (.25 FTE)	15,000
Site Coordinator salary (.5 FTE)	15,600
Volunteer Coordination/supervision (1.33 FTE)	37,296
Teaching artist (est 20 classes) (.33 FTE)	9,300
Volunteer training (.33 FTE)	10,989
ERE (20% of above)	14,637
Child care	320
Stipend for parent class	750

### Program Expense

Volunteer/Tutor Expense	1,300
Contract Services	5,000
Prf Services (evaluator)	8,500
Telecommunications	420
Office expense	80
Program materials & supplies	2,300
Computer software & supplies	1,000
Postage	500
Printing	1,200
Copying	460
Mileage	1,350
Security/Fingerprinting	900
Marketing/PR	1,050
Meals & Entertainment	550

Total program budget	128,502
Indirect	38,551
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>167,053</b>

An investment of \$167,053 will provide the full Literacy Infusion initiative at one elementary school. Unduplicated numbers served per site are estimated to be 620 children and 100 adults for a total of 720 people. Average cost per year is approximately \$232 per person.

## **Background and Purpose of Evaluation**

The purpose of this data analysis was to evaluate what impact the Reading Seed Coaching Program has on the rate of learning for TUSD students in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade who work one-on-one with a volunteer Reading Seed Coach.

Reading Seed was provided with DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) outcome data for 413 students in TUSD elementary schools who worked with a Reading Seed Coach during the 2011-2012 school year. Also provided was the DIBELS outcome data for 13,464 TUSD elementary students who did not receive regular reading support from a Reading Seed Coach.

DIBELS are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade. They are comprised of seven measures to function as indicators of phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. They help educators identify students who may need additional literacy instruction in order to become proficient readers.

In analyzing the DIBELS data set that was provided from TUSD, the evaluator compared the average percent change (improvement) for Reading Seed Students to the average percent change for Non-Reading Seed Students.

**Note:** Zero and Null were used interchangeably in the data set making it difficult to assess true score. All zeroes were calculated as null.

## **Measures**

### **Initial Sounds Fluency**

The Initial Sounds Fluency measure assesses a student's ability to recognize and produce the initial sound in an orally presented word. Initial Sounds Fluency is a measure that assesses phonemic awareness skills.

### **Phoneme Segmentation Fluency**

The Phoneme Segmentation Fluency measure assesses a student's ability to segment three- and four-phoneme words into their individual phonemes fluently. The PSF measure has been found to be a good predictor of later reading achievement.

### **Nonsense Word Fluency**

The Nonsense Word Fluency measure assesses a student's alphabetic principle skills, the ability to associate sounds with letters and use these sounds to form words.

### **Oral Reading Fluency – Words Correct & Accuracy**

The Oral Reading Fluency measure assesses a student's accuracy and fluency with a text, the ability to effortlessly translate letters-to-sounds-to-words. In general, oral reading fluency provides one of the best measures of reading competence, including comprehension, for children in first through third grades. The fluent reader is one whose decoding processes are automatic, requiring no conscious attention. Such capacity then enables readers to allocate their attention to the comprehension and meaning of the text.

### Oral Reading Fluency – Retell

The Retell Fluency measure assesses a student’s comprehension, the ability to extract meaning from text. Preliminary evidence indicates for students to be on track with comprehension, they should meet both of the following criteria: 1) meet the oral reading fluency benchmark goal, and 2) have a retell score of at least 25% of their oral reading fluency score.

### Comprehension (DAZE)

A new DIBELS measure, DAZE, measures the reasoning processes that constitute comprehension. It assesses a student’s ability to construct meaning from text.

## Outcomes

### Kindergarten

	Reading Seed	Non-Reading Seed
Change in Initial Sounds Fluency - 2 to 3	123.3% (n=24)	88.3% (n=3,581)
Change in Phoneme Seg Fluency - 2 to 3	359.5% (n=19)	159.8% (n=3,390)
Change in Nonsense Word Fluency - 1 to 2	198.4% (n=12)	141.0% (n=3,365)

### First Grade

	Reading Seed	Non-Reading Seed
Change in Nonsense Word Fluency- 1 to 3	253.4% (n=107)	195.2% (n=3,132)
Change in Oral Reading Fluency WC - 1 to 2	124.3% (n=110)	110.8% (n=2,748)
Change in Oral Reading Fluency A - 1 to 2	29.1 % (n=114)	24.3% (n=3,190)
Change in Oral Reading Fluency R - 1 to 2	113.7% (n=69)	94.5% (n=2,074)

### Second Grade

	Reading Seed	Non-Reading Seed
Change in Oral Reading Fluency WC- 1 to 3	144.9% (n=153)	98.9% (n=2,939)
Change in Oral Reading Fluency A - 1 to 3	27.4% (n=164)	15.4% (n=3,359)
Change in Oral Reading Fluency R - 1 to 3	154.3% (n=125)	107.4% (n=2,976)

### Third Grade

	Reading Seed	Non-Reading Seed
Change in Oral Reading Fluency WC - 1 to 3	70.9% (n=109)	55.3% (n=2,829)
Change in Oral Reading Fluency A - 1 to 3	11.3% (n=111)	7.2% (n=3,230)
Change in Oral Reading Fluency R - 1 to 3	63.9% (n=99)	61.5% (n=3,049)
Change in Comprehension (DAZE) - 1 to 3	271.4% (n=91)	200.3% (n=2,928)