

CITY OF OAKLAND

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CITY OF OAKLAND

Agenda Report

2005 SEP -1 PM 12: 03

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Egerly
FROM: Library Department
DATE: September 13, 2005
RE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 FROM THE TRIO FOUNDATION FOR THE RAISING A READER PILOT PROJECT FOR FY 2005-2006

SUMMARY

Staff recommends that the City Council approve a resolution authorizing the City Administrator to apply for, accept and appropriate grant funds in the amount of \$10,000 from the TRIO Foundation for the Raising a Reader Pilot Project (RAR) for FY 2005-2006.

The grant is being provided by the Foundation to fund bilingual preschool book kits for the Library to use as outreach tools to three Head Start Centers as part of its Early Childhood Outreach Program.

FISCAL IMPACT

The grant from the TRIO Foundation, in the amount of \$10,000, will be appropriated to Organization 61313, Fund 7540 (Oakland Public Library Trust), in a project to be established upon receipt of grant funds. This grant was unanticipated, and thus is not included in the FY 2005-2007 Adopted Policy Budget. The costs of this project are fully covered by the grant and there is no fiscal impact on the General Fund.

BACKGROUND

In 2000, the Oakland Public Library and the Oakland Department of Human Services' Head Start Program began a partnership called Books for Wider Horizons (BWH). This early literacy initiative, funded by Head Start and administered by the Library, recruited, trained and equipped community volunteers to be storyreaders at all of Oakland's Head Start classes.

The overwhelming success of BWH, now fully supported by the Library, led to an expansion of the program to include the creation of Early Literacy Kits, which pull together children's books, puppets, and games to be used by the volunteers to broaden the child's experience.

While considering how important continued exposure to stories and print is to a child's development, the Library began offering early literacy workshops to parents, encouraging them to read to their children and explaining the critical importance of early literacy preparation to success in school. Early literacy parent workshops have been well attended and are now a standard part of the library's Children's Services Program.

The TRIO Foundation, based in Berkeley and formed to promote early childhood learning, is interested in sponsoring more early childhood reading programs in Oakland, and they have made money available to agencies and organizations to try out the Raising a Reader Program. As Raising a Reader combines the early literacy kits, and the parent training that OPL has been supporting, this grant application seemed the logical next step toward refining a literacy outreach program to Oakland's parents of preschool children.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

The Raising a Reader Program goal is to foster healthy brain development, parent-child bonding, and early literacy skills critical for school success by engaging parents in a routine of daily "book cuddling" with their children from birth to age five. The mission addresses a national need for effective early literacy programs. One in three children entering kindergarten lacks basic pre-reading skills, a key factor in determining high-school graduation and life-long success.

As experts in the literacy field, particularly in Oakland, the OPL is aware of all the barriers to reading and school success faced by low income, under and un-educated parents and their preschool children who have not spent the first years of their lives surrounded by books and being read to by caring adults.

With the creation of a new position, Early Literacy Outreach Librarian, the Library is devoting more time to creating awareness and expertise in the Oakland community concerning the important issues of early literacy and reading and school readiness.

The Raising a Reader program is a simple, well-organized initiative that will enable the Library to reach out to Head Start centers and give them books for children to take home to their parents for reading out loud. In addition to providing the materials, the Library will hold training workshops for parents to teach them the best strategies for reading to their children.

The Library is starting small with Raising a Reader and will fully evaluate the success of this pilot program before deciding whether or not to expand their involvement.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Raising A Reader fosters a reading routine by encouraging children to rotate bright red bags filled with high-quality picture books into their homes each week. The books feature stunning artwork, age-appropriate language and multicultural themes. Parents are taught "read aloud" strategies anchored to language development research and story-telling, a skill as old as mankind. The program is having an incredible impact. Head Start children using Raising A Reader tested

at least twice as high as the national Head Start average for book knowledge, print knowledge and reading comprehension. Meanwhile, parents in the program showed a 33% increase in the time spent sharing stories with their children, and Spanish-speaking families increased their use of public library services by 56%.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

The Raising a Reader Program is preparing a foundation for Oakland's children to become more literate and more successful in school. An educated population takes advantage of the following sustainable opportunities:

Economic: Education level translates into increased income. It is education that can lift children out of poverty into a higher and more economically sustainable life at the same time that they are becoming responsible about money and personal and community economics.

Environmental: When children are able to keep up with their schoolwork, and when their reading skills are good, they are more likely to learn concepts of environmental sustainability and how to put those concepts to use in daily life. As with other environmental and health issues, such as cigarette smoking, it is often the children whose education leads them to reform their parents' behavior.

Social Equity: Children who are successful in school are more likely to experience equal opportunity in employment, housing, and further education, thus closing the equity gap. They are more likely to learn concepts of environmental sustainability and how to put those concepts to use in daily life.

Also, by providing training for parents, this initiative is encouraging them to get more actively involved in their children's education, which spurs parents to become more educated themselves and more aware of sustainability issues.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

All Oakland Public Library facilities, programs and services are ADA accessible.

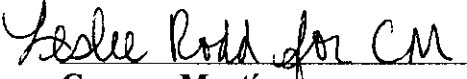
RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIONALE

In recognition of the critical need of Oakland families to prepare their young children for school success, and knowing that reading to children and sharing books and stories vastly increases their chances of success in school, staff recommends that the City Council show its support for the Library's early childhood literacy initiatives, and this collaboration with Head Start.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

That the City Council approve the resolution authorizing the City Administrator to apply for, accept and appropriate a grant in the amount of \$10,000 from the TRIO Foundation to support the Library's Raising a Reader Pilot Program.

Respectfully submitted,


Carmen Martínez
Library Director

Prepared by:
Leslie Rodd, Manager
Grants and Development

APPROVED FOR FORWARDING TO THE
LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE


OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

2005 SEP -1

PM 12:03

RESOLUTION NO. _____

C. M. S.

Margaret Ayer

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR, ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND, TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 FROM THE TRIO FOUNDATION FOR THE RAISING A READER PILOT PROJECT FOR FY 2005-2006

WHEREAS, there is a national need for effective early literacy programs, as one in three children entering kindergarten lacks basic pre-reading skills, a key factor in determining high-school graduation and life-long success; and

WHEREAS, the TRIO Foundation has made funding available to local programs and agencies to set up Raising a Reader pilot projects in FY 2005-2006; and

WHEREAS, the Oakland Public Library seeks to expand its early literacy outreach program to children in Head Start Centers; and

WHEREAS, the Oakland Public Library desires to apply for, accept and appropriate a grant in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) from the TRIO Foundation for fiscal year 2005-2006 to bring the Raising a Reader pilot program to selected Head Start Centers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City Administrator or her designee is hereby authorized and directed to apply for, accept and appropriate a grant from the TRIO Foundation in the amount of ten thousand (\$10,000) for the purpose described above; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City Council hereby appoints the City Administrator or her designee as agent of the City to conduct all negotiations, applications, agreements, payment requests, and related actions which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project in accordance with its basic purpose; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That should additional funds be received, the City Administrator or her designee is hereby authorized to appropriate same for the purposes described above.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____, 2005

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES – BROOKS, BRUNNER, CHANG, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, QUAN, REID, AND PRESIDENT DE LA FUENTE

NOES -

ABSENT -

ASTENTION –

ATTEST: _____
LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
Of the City of Oakland, California