

Dear Esteemed Members of the Education Foundation,

It is with great excitement and passion that I submit my letter of idea for grant funding which will be used to touch the hearts and minds of the littlest “Little Indians” at Vero Beach Elementary.

- **The Little Indian Library for Emergent Readers**

- The library will have an emergent reader collection for beginning readers that will develop their independent reading selection skills and facilitate the discovery of their reader identity.

When a student develops their reader identity, he/she is figuring out what types of books and topics they enjoy reading. ***Most importantly, the child begins to see him/herself as a reader.***

Providing emergent reader texts will allow him/her to select books at their “independent reading level”. Students practice reading skills and sight words previously taught in the classroom and build reading confidence through practice and engagement with text on their favorite topics.

In the article “Cultivating Wild Readers” Donalyn Miller states, “Wild readers are confident when selecting books to read, and they have the experience and skills to successfully choose books that meet their interests, needs, and reading abilities.” Providing access to appropriate level books is essential to developing a reader identity.

- Vero Beach Elementary has the four components of “Balanced Literacy” infused throughout all areas of the curriculum, modeled reading, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading. Providing beginning readers, a collection of independent level readers ensures that *all* readers at VBE an opportunity to become a “wild reader”.
- Total Project Cost: \$9,810.00
- The target population are all students at Vero Beach Elementary that are developing their reading skills through independent reading practice at their independent reading level.
- All students developing the skills necessary to become a fluent reader will benefit from the F&P collection. The book collections have text that range from the level A through K. These levels target pre-A, emergent, early and transitional readers.
- Succinct Summary
 - *The Issue:* Providing students independent reading level text for beginning readers is a challenge because the texts that are purchased for libraries are too difficult for students read independently. Beginning readers can access *above* level books and have them read-a-loud but this will not target the independent reading component of the balanced literacy approach, which is the paramount to developing a student’s reader identity.
 - *The Change:* As a result of the grant, I expect to see the youngest of readers developing their reading identities and a love of literacy. The “Little Indians “will be interacting with texts independently, sharing stories with friends through book talks and reflections. The readers will demonstrate an increase in reading fluency, comprehension and vocabulary.
 - *The Action:* The VBE library will create a designated area for F&P book collection that is easily accessible to young students. Individual class time in the library will be used to support the balanced literacy framework through read-a-louds and independent book selection for *independent reading* time. Media specialist and teachers will assist students with discovery of text on a weekly schedule.

- Grant Oversight: The established literacy focus at VBE ensures that the program is sustainable, all classes visit the library as part of the balanced literacy program. There is a full-time media specialist at VBE that supports the students with literacy. All teachers provide guided reading instruction to their students and are deeply involved in developing the reading identities of each individual student. Students are assessed twice a year using the F&P Benchmark Assessment Systems or Running Records to identify the instructional and independent reading levels of all students and documents progress. These assessments ensure that teachers will accurately assist students with independent reading selection.
- Volunteers: Vero Beach Elementary loves volunteers. The Lawyers Auxiliary, Pillar Community Church and United Methodist Church are just a few of the organizations that regularly read to our students. Volunteers can establish relationships with specific classroom for regular visits, share a read-a- loud on a scheduled day or contribute to a literacy focused event at VBE.
- Budget:
 - F&P Select Kindergarten Collection 1-4 (Levels A-E) - 6 Set- \$3050.00
 - F&P Select Grade 1 Collection 1-4 (Levels A/B-K) 6 Sets- \$6760.00

Total: \$9,810