



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: February 15, 2017
FROM: Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Kelly Aramaki, Executive Director of Schools,
kearamaki@seattleschools.org, (206) 252-0150; Dr. Michael Starosky, Chief of Schools,
mpstarosky@seattleschools.org, (206) 252-0150.

1. TITLE

Elementary Feeder School Grant (Year 2) from the Satterberg Foundation

For Introduction: March 15, 2017
For Action: April 5, 2017

2. PURPOSE

This Board Action Report details the grant to be received from the Satterberg Foundation in the amount of \$700,000 for the 2017-18 school year. This is a planned expansion of the grant received this past year from the Satterberg Foundation in the amount of \$300,000.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the Board authorize the Superintendent to accept the Elementary Feeder School grant funds from the Satterberg Foundation, in the amount of \$700,000.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Background

The Nesholm Foundation reached out to the Satterberg Foundation this year to share the widely recognized gap-closing successes from their “Kids in the Middle” investment at the three highest poverty middle schools in Seattle: Aki Kurose MS, Denny International MS, and Mercer International MS. As a result, the Satterberg Foundation then met with district and school personnel to discuss opportunities to partner together to expand that work.

The principals of the three middle schools identified one critical area of need that would greatly enhance the success of our students, particularly as it aligns to our district-wide focus on elevating the academics of our African American Males and other students of color: intervene earlier by focusing on the highest need feeder elementary schools. Although these three middle schools are doing some of the state’s most successful gap closing work, too many students of color are starting 6th grade at these middle schools far below standard in literacy and math. By intervening at our highest needs elementary schools, we should be able to close the gap even further.

In alignment with the theory of action for the Nesholm Foundation, the Feeder Elementary Grant would focus on: developing teachers’ knowledge, skills and practices in reading and writing instruction; maintaining high professional standards; applying research tested instructional practice; developing school leader skills in leading this instructional transformation.

The following are the feeder elementary schools that would most likely receive grant support:

1. Aki Feeder Schools: Dunlap, Emerson, Graham Hill, Martin Luther King Jr.
2. Denny Feeder Schools: Concord, Highland Park, Roxhill, West Seattle Elementary
3. Mercer Feeder Schools: Hawthorne, Van Asselt

In year 1, each of the 10 schools would receive literacy coaching support from an assistant principal on special assignment for focused literacy instruction to assess current literacy instruction in each building, chart a strategic plan for improving instruction and learning over the next 3-5 years, and begin making strategic and aligned improvements to instructional practices, formative assessment use, and Tier 2 interventions. The “literacy assistant principal” model parallels the Nesholm strategy of hiring assistant principals focused solely on literacy instructional leadership. The schools would also receive funds for leadership development, teacher professional development and books/materials.

In year 2 and beyond, a literacy coach would be assigned to each feeder pattern (for a total of three literacy coaches) in order to lead literacy instructional support and professional development for their schools. The grant would continue to support an assistant principal on special assignment to oversee the literacy coaches. The grant would also continue to support leadership development, teacher professional development and books/materials. Use of the monies would be earmarked for: an additional Assistant Principal to focus on literacy instruction; substitute teachers and professional development time; supplies, travel and other expenses approved by the Satterberg Foundation; and books and materials.

Background on the Satterberg Foundation: Their mission is to “strengthen our communities by promoting a just society and a sustainable environment.” Their vision includes a “world in balance with vibrant communities in which all people enjoy the opportunity to grow and thrive.” Included in that vision is access to education.

Alternatives

The main alternative to receiving this grant to enhance supports and resources for teachers and leaders around literacy instruction would be to rely on funds and professional development available through the Curriculum Assessment and Instruction department and through Title 1. Although this is the default option, this is not the preferred option due to limited resources within CAI and Title 1 (particularly given the current budget climate) and the amplified needs at high poverty schools for high quality professional development, materials, books, etc. given the higher number of novice teachers.

Research

Background on the Nesholm Foundation Kids in the Middle Grant: Since 2002-03, the Nesholm Family Foundation has provided \$6.1M in total to the District, averaging \$475,000 per year, in support of the *Kids in the Middle* grant. This grant, awarded each year to the three highest poverty middle schools, Aki Kurose, Denny International, and Mercer, focuses on literacy improvements as the key to student learning and achievement. To this end, the *Kids in the Middle* initiative works to develop teachers’ knowledge, skills and practices in reading and writing instruction; maintain high professional standards; and apply research tested instructional practice. By giving teachers the support they need to develop crucial skills to narrowing the achievement gap in reading and writing, *Kids in the Middle* enables teachers to better serve

students in becoming readers who experience both the pleasure and power of being independent, college and career ready readers.

Each of the three schools receives funds to increase reading and writing achievement. Use of the monies is earmarked for: an additional Assistant Principal to focus on literacy instruction and teacher evaluation; substitute teachers and professional development time; supplies, travel and other expenses approved by the Nesholm Foundation; and textual materials. Additionally, Mercer middle school receives a .2 FTE teacher.

In addition to the grant awarded to the middle schools, the Nesholm Family Foundation provides professional development and instructional coaching for all three of the middle schools through an independent contract with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Network. The Nesholm Family Foundation also contracts with Sound Mental Health to provide a mental health professional in each school as a means of addressing the socio-emotional challenges students experience that interfere with learning. As highlighted in the data below, we are making great progress in math in all three schools compared to other schools across the state. We know that with English Language Arts, we can exceed these results with a strategic investment into our feeder elementary schools.

Black Student Proficiency Rates (SBA 2015, Grades 6-8)
For 20 Middle Schools in WA State with Largest # of Black Students Tested ¹
Mathematics **English Language Arts**

School	# Tested	% Proficient
Denny (Seattle)	196	45.4%
Mercer (Seattle)	245	35.9%
Aki Kurose (Seattle)	232	29.3%
Giaudrone (Tacoma)	183	29.0%
South Shore (Seattle)	113	28.3%
Chinook (Highline)	97	27.8%
Nelsen (Renton)	170	27.6%
Meridian (Kent)	97	24.7%
Truman (Tacoma)	130	24.6%
First Creek (Tacoma)	174	24.1%
Washington (Seattle)	311	23.2%
Stewart (Tacoma)	102	22.5%
Gray (Tacoma)	149	21.5%
Showalter (Tukwila)	129	20.2%
Baker (Tacoma)	115	18.3%
Meeker (Kent)	130	17.7%
Dimmitt (Renton)	260	17.3%
Mill Creek (Kent)	168	16.7%
Jason Lee (Tacoma)	159	15.7%
Lakota (Federal Way)	101	11.9%

School	# Tested	% Proficient
Mercer (Seattle)	245	44.5%
Nelsen (Renton)	170	35.9%
Showalter (Tukwila)	129	35.7%
Meridian (Kent)	96	35.4%
Denny (Seattle)	201	35.3%
Truman (Tacoma)	129	34.9%
Stewart (Tacoma)	102	34.3%
Dimmitt (Renton)	261	34.1%
Gray (Tacoma)	151	32.5%
Giaudrone (Tacoma)	184	32.1%
Meeker (Kent)	130	30.8%
Aki Kurose (Seattle)	233	28.8%
Baker (Tacoma)	116	28.4%
Lakota (Federal Way)	101	27.7%
Washington (Seattle)	305	26.9%
Jason Lee (Tacoma)	162	26.5%
Mill Creek (Kent)	168	26.2%
Chinook (Highline)	95	25.3%
First Creek (Tacoma)	175	25.1%
South Shore (Seattle)	113	17.7%

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

¹ Results only include students who participated in SBA testing and for whom a score was reported. Students who did not participate may be counted by the state agency for federal accountability and reporting purposes.

Fiscal impact to this action will be an acceptance of funds in the amount of \$700,000. Funds are in direct support to elementary schools.

The revenue source for this motion is the Satterberg Foundation.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

We have engaged principals and teachers in Tier 1 and Tier 2 community engagement in developing the grant proposal. Tier 3 community engagement with families and staff is an expectation as we implement the grant and improve teaching and learning in the area of literacy at the 10 elementary schools. Through parent literacy nights and student conferences, parents will learn strategies to support the strengthening of their children’s reading and writing skills.

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

The purpose of this grant is to promote educational equity in our highest poverty, most diverse schools by providing the resources needed (professional development, materials, books and coaching) to ensure high quality teaching and learning in every classroom and academic success for each and every student. Equitable outcomes desired from this grant are the closing of opportunity and achievement gaps in our schools, where students regardless of race, Socio-Economic Status (SES), gender are achieving at the highest levels in literacy. We will be accountable for results to our students and families and will work with Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (REA) to monitor and evaluate our efforts.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

As a result of these grant funds, students in the 10 identified schools will be given increased opportunities to experience high quality literacy instruction in every classroom. Students will experience more alignment of high quality instruction and pedagogy as well as assurances that they will be given access to high quality, standards-based core curriculum and intervention programs.

Accountability and Evaluation of Benefit for Students

As a part of this grant, we are committed to measuring progress in implementation and outcomes for students. In connection with the Curriculum Assessment and Instruction evaluation plan for the K-5 Literacy Curriculum Adoption and the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support implementation metrics, we will measure progress within the following categories twice a year (February/June) for the duration of the grant:

- Fidelity of implementation of core curriculum, tier 2 interventions and balanced literacy pedagogy in every classroom (as measured by observation)
- Student progress monitoring mid-year and end-of-year using agreed upon assessments, such as (1) Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, (2) Scholastic Reading Inventory, (3) SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words), and (4) Smarter Balanced Assessment
- Implementation of data analysis and progress monitoring systems in all 10 schools as part of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support initiative
- Improvements in Staff Climate Survey using items such as (1) Staff share a common understanding of instructional best practices; (2) I have access to strategies and materials to support all learners in my classes; (3) The school has a consistent process for identifying students who struggle academically; (4) The school implements a clear plan of action when a student struggles academically

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy No. _____, [TITLE], provides the Board shall approve this item
- Other: _____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

Per Board Policy No. 6114, *Gifts, Grants, Donations and Fundraising Proceeds*, Board action is necessary to accept a grant that exceeds \$250,000 per school year.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the Executive Committee meeting on March 2, 2017 and the C&I Committee meeting on March 13, 2017. The Executive Committee reviewed the motion and moved it forward to the full Board with a recommendation for consideration.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the District will move forward with setting up the grant funds, as outlined on the attached letter of commitment.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Letter of commitment from the Satterberg Foundation