

# C.E.S. FOUNDATION

## 2010-2011 Mini-grants for C.E.S. Programs

### **Project Title: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Listening Centers**

Please respond with brief, typed paragraphs. Limit your responses to no more than three pages.

#### **1. Describe the project.**

This is a multi-age/grade level project to create 21<sup>st</sup> Century Listening Centers in our three kindergarten classrooms. Students in grades three and four who are currently receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 literacy intervention will have the opportunity to improve their oral reading fluency by reading and practicing a selection of stories. After meeting the expectations and criteria for an optimal reading, students will record the story which will then be put onto Ipods. Upon the completion of a recorded story, the student who recorded a story will have the opportunity to visit the kindergarten and present that story to the classroom. The student will read the book aloud to the class and then present them with the book to add to their listening center. Kindergarten students will be able to listen to the recorded stories using an Ipod that has multiple headsets. This will allow more than one student to share the same story at the listening center. In addition, a copy of the story will be provided at the listening center so that students may read along in the book as they listen to the story.

#### **2. Describe the need for the project in your program.**

There are a number of Tier 2 and Tier 3 third and fourth graders who struggle with fluency. For many of these students, fluency (the ability to read text accurately, smoothly and with meaning or expression) is a main factor in their inability to progress to higher reading levels. Students need to be able to read fluently in order to construct meaning from text. The goal for all students receiving literacy intervention is to achieve grade level reading expectations. There is a direct correlation between the ability of students reading at grade level to not only perform most efficiently across their grade level curriculum, but to also perform more successfully on the Connecticut Mastery Test. This would be a way to not only motivate struggling readers to improve their fluency, but also provide them with the opportunity to serve as mentors and literacy role models to younger students in their school. Kindergarten students will benefit from these listening centers as well. Listening centers serve as multi-sensory activities that not only encourage the pleasure and enjoyment of reading, but also develop many essential literacy skills for beginning readers. Students are able to focus on how sounds and words on a page can be brought to life in fluid, expressive language. Listening to stories also helps beginning readers to develop narrative structure and increases new vocabulary. In addition, the ability for students to listen to favorite stories over and over with their peers provides endless opportunities for the extension of response to text in the forms of creative and dramatic play.

#### **3. Describe the nature of the student population to be served by the project.**

Students receiving Tier 3 literacy intervention are currently reading two or more reading levels below September grade level expectations. Students receiving Tier 2 literacy intervention are currently reading one to two reading levels below September grade level expectations. Fourth grade students have also been identified as performing at basic or below basic proficiency on the 2010 CMT in reading.

#### **4. List the major student learning objectives of the project.**

- Tier 2 and Tier 3 third and fourth grade students will increase reading rate, improve accuracy and develop skills for reading with expression.
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 third and fourth grade students will strengthen comprehension of text through improved fluency and accuracy which will enable them to achieve higher reading levels.
- Kindergarten students will learn how sounds and words come to life through literature.
- Kindergarten students will develop narrative story structure and learn new vocabulary.

- Kindergarten students will use 21<sup>st</sup> century technology.
- Students will cultivate and foster relationships between older and younger students which will contribute to a positive school environment.

**5. Describe the instructional strategies to be used and the related student activities.**

Intervention teachers will instruct students in fluency strategies such as phrasing, expression and oral reading rate. Students will apply these strategies as they practice reading picture books. The assessment of students' oral reading rate and accuracy will be based on a rubric which establishes criteria for an optimal reading of the text. When the criteria for an optimal reading have been met, the student will record the story onto a computer which will then be downloaded onto an IPOD. Students who have recorded a story will then read their story to the kindergarten class and present them with their own copy of the book so students can listen on the Ipod during literacy center time. Kindergarten teachers will facilitate the listening centers in the classrooms.

**6. Outline the timeline for the project.** (The project must be completed within one year. Projects completed in the spring will be presented to the Board of Directors in the fall. Projects completed in the fall will be presented to the board of Directors in the spring.)

Direct fluency instruction is already in progress for those students receiving Tier 2 and 3 literacy intervention. Students who will be recording stories will begin a three-week instructional period during which they will continue to receive direct instruction in fluency and phrasing as well as opportunities to practice reading the selected text with appropriate expression. The goal is for students to meet criteria for an optimal reading by the close of the third week and record the story at that time. Our goal for the period from January 2011-May 2011 would be for each student receiving Tier 2 and 3 literacy intervention for fluency to record and present one story to the kindergarten classes with a presentation to the Board of Directors in the fall of 2011.

**7. Describe what you believe the long-term benefits of this project will be for your students.**

Long term benefits for students receiving Tier 2 and 3 literacy intervention will include: the ability to read with greater fluency which will allow them to achieve higher reading levels as they strive to reach grade level reading expectations, an improvement in reading comprehension, a greater sense of confidence in their ability to read and understand text, an increased ability to apply skills to the reading portion of the CMT which will lead to higher levels of proficiency, and an increase in technology skills. Long-term benefits to kindergarten students will include: exposure to literature, language and technology. Another important long-term benefit of this project will be the positive collaboration between older and younger students which will enhance the overall climate of our school.

**8. Describe the method of evaluation you will use to determine the success of the project.**

Evaluation of the success of this project will be conducted on two different levels. Students who will be receiving fluency instruction will need to meet established criteria on a multidimensional fluency rubric for an optimal reading in order to record a story. Frequent assessments for fluency and rate will be administered. In addition, data from reading assessments such as the DRA and Benchmark assessment will be taken as indication of movement of reading levels. Evaluation will also be made from observation and feedback from kindergarten students and teachers as to the effectiveness of the listening centers.

**9. Budget** **Amount requested**     \$750.00

**Please detail your budget request. The budget may not exceed the maximum amount available for each grant award.**

**List all known or estimated expenditures for materials/equipment/services.**

<b>Nature of expenditure</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
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(3) Apple Ipod Nano 8 GB	\$432.00 (3 x \$144.00)
(3) Belkin RockStar 3.5mm 5-Way Headphone Splitter	\$27.00 (3 x \$9.00)
(9) Califone First Stereo Headphone	\$153.00 (9 x \$17.00)
(12) Picture Books (Titles to be determined)	\$138.00

**Total** **\$750.00**

10. **Has this proposal previously received funding?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**If yes, please explain how this proposal expands the project previously submitted.**