

Beloit's Literacy for Life Initiative Meeting
Monday - June 4, 2018
Beloit Public Library
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Attendance: Aaron Wilson, Jan Knutson, Kathy Pohl, Carol Mishler, Rich Franklin, Bill Lock, Bonnie Wetter, Leeanna Shultz, Laura Anastasi, Lucy Wynard, Mary Ellen Fuentes, Melody Wirgau, Andrea Heckner, Larry Bergen, Rachelle Elliott, Bill Flanagan, Amy Mitchell, Tara Tinder.

Tara Tinder's Report

- Tara Tinder reported that the Beloit Health System has committed support for the Reach Out and Read program, a critically important component of Beloit's Literacy for Life Initiative.
- Twenty-five grants have been submitted to the Stateline Community Foundation for consideration with early childhood literacy as a base.
- The city's leaders—Lori Curtis Luther, Chief Liggett, Chief Zibolski, Sarah Millard, Drew Pennington are looking into signage and initiatives the city can incorporate into their plan to promote early childhood literacy. Drew Pennington reported that a bookcase has been introduced in the lobby area in city hall with books for children.
- Beloit's Rotary club is looking to add early childhood signage on the playground equipment at Armstrong-Eddy Park. This initiative could serve as a model for other organizations.
- Tara thanked Rachelle for all of her efforts to promote and address early childhood literacy during the past year in our community. Tara also thanked Bill Flanagan for his efforts to promote the Beloit's Literacy for Life Initiative, a project supported and endorsed by the Stateline Community Foundation.

Bill Flanagan's Report

- Bill suggested that with summer upon us he, Rachelle and Tara are available to meet with people who may need to be approached for help, support or decision making. Please contact Bill if there is someone in your group or organization you would like us to meet with to advance your goals. Bill's email: flanagan@beloit.edu; phone 608-921-2660.
- United Way will support a 3 year \$150,000 commitment to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and will expand the program to Beloit, Janesville, and Edgerton.
- We now have an electronic presence with a Beloit's Literacy for Life Initiative Facebook page, a similar page on the SCF website and both will have all of our minutes, agendas, materials, resources and updates on the initiative. It is vitally important that we be transparent and communicate what we are doing, why we are doing it and how we are doing it. Rachelle will include access to materials and historical pieces.
- Bill provided information on how our efforts can be evaluated and assessed. He cited that we will use the 4K PALS assessment and the 3rd grade reading scores as two measurements we are targeting for improvement thanks to this initiative.

Rachelle Elliott Report—successes to date!

- The Rose Richard's book drive brought in many books for distribution.

- St. Paul's Soup Luncheon is going well with an average of 80 people from the community participating—story time will be added to their program and will partner with Hackett School.
- Efforts are being developed and analyzed about ways to address organizational strengths to add literacy initiatives to their programming efforts.
- Drew Pennington's book shelf at City Hall was cited as an example of implementing an initiative from our last meeting.
- United Way grant funding the Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Development of our web page on FB---if you "like" the page then you can ask others to join. Jan Knutson asked for a PDF of Literacy for Life logo to use for organizations—Tara Tinder said she would follow-up. Everyone was encouraged to place photos on website. July will be a time when we focus on social media including "Read Aloud 15", 20 days of reading to your child and then print a certificate for successful readers.
- Looking for ideas to incentivize reading to children—suggestion from library—read 15 minutes results in \$1 off library fines.
- "Talking is Teaching" resource is available but you must create a free account—easy to do. Posters and other resources are located on this site. Rachelle offered to help anyone get their account up and running and to get connected with the site.
- Rachelle is looking at putting together a weekly calendar of activities "Daily Fun with Your Little One" which will be available on the webpage.
- Rich from Culver's talked about several Culver's initiatives—including book give away with the police department that will have incentives included; "Fries with Firemen" where firefighters will read to kids hosted by Culver's; Scoopy Super reader where books read will result in awards for sundaes or kid's meal; will establish a Scoopy Library and; Culver's Facebook will also put out announcements. Josh Lock can be a contact for these programs and initiatives.
- Tara Tinder offered to have banners with Beloit's Literacy for Life Initiative logo available to organizations if needed. Bill Flanagan will have them and will make them available when needed.
- When placing signs at city parks make sure city regulations are met.
- It was suggested that we look into placing the Literacy for Life logo on buses and possibly to "wrap" a bus. Tara, Bill and Rachelle will check into cost and options.

What is your Goal Discussion?

- Assessment measurements that underlies efforts will be a positive increase in the results of the PALS test administered to 4K students and then the 3rd grade reading test. Both of these will be indicators of the initiative's progress and critically important for closing the achievement gap.
- Increase children's ability to communicate and use language. Long term goal is a successful citizenry—children who are exposed to literature and language enjoy reading.

Break Out Groups and Recommendations

- Work to create a partnership with the DBA

- Summer school—encourage support of reading program efforts including PR about the partnership between Culver’s and the School District of Beloit.
- Build partnership with the DBA—book drop-off at events coupled with Beloit’s Literacy for Life Initiative information.
- Build LFL into summer school program—including incentives for LFL @ the 4 schools...many students are signed up for the summer.
- Book markers with LFL information from Culver’s; banners and book distribution for 2nd Harvest, Caritas, Salvation Army.
- Stickers for kids with logo and “I read” messages.
- St. Paul’s summer goal—Strengthen the neighborhood coalition. Have Eagle Scout projects include the building of “little, little free libraries.
- Workshops on how to support adults who are not comfortable with reading; how will the information be delivered?
- Include the video about the importance of reading on website—include Spanish resources and information as well.
- How do we ensure we are inclusive and inviting to the entire community to the table? Bill, Tara and Rachelle will reach out to Marc Perry and other groups in the community for advice, suggestions and planning.

Next Meeting

July 9th, 2018

7:30 to 9:00 am

Beloit Public Library