



Friday, September 25, 2020
Virtual Meeting: 9-10 a.m.

Present: Bill Flanagan, Tara Tinder, Rachelle Elliott, Laura Anastasi, Will Anderson, Katharine Clark, Erin Conway, Debbie Fischer, Andrea Heckner, Sarah Millard, Drew Pennington, Andre Sayles, Sue Stein, Robin Stuht, Cindy Weber, Shirley Williams, and Melody Wirgau.

1) Welcome and Announcements from Tara Tinder, Executive Director, SCF

Tara shared that we are continuously accepting applications for COVID Emergency Relief Grants as there are ongoing needs in the community. Additionally, a spread of the Foundation's funds, shared statements of gratitude and 2020 grantees was recently printed in the Beloit Daily News. See the positive impact [HERE](#), totaling \$17 million awarded in grants and scholarships to the Stateline Area!

2) Business Partnerships: Bill Flanagan, BLFLI Chair

Bill is enthusiastic about adding the business community as the next pillar for the success of our literacy initiative. He cited David McCoy, President and CEO of First National Bank and whose daughter is an educator, as a local driving force envisioning employee volunteerism as a pathway to move this initiative forward. Bill also spoke of the Family Services Virtual Fundraiser and Forum: "Build Resilience" which highlights several prominent speakers, including Dr. Carolyn Heinrich, an expert on early childhood education and literacy. Her presentation, among others, can be viewed [HERE](#). Lastly, it is of no surprise that there is momentum and a shift in how our community is perceiving and approaching early literacy. Thanks to all partners at the table who are invested and contributing towards its success!

3) Fall Literacy Plans: Rachelle Elliott, Director of Early Literacy, SDB

Rachelle reported there are listening sessions offered by DPI touting the [Ready4K](#) program, which will soon be available to all districts throughout the entire state. However, the Beloit School District has since upgraded to [Ready Rosie](#). She presented a [video sample](#) showcasing their strategies. This effective program can support a classroom of 30 students for \$300 and although enrollment is currently low, she is hopeful that more families will be aware of its benefit and value. It is available in both English and Spanish!

To follow Bill's lead on working with David McCoy to coordinate volunteers in the business community to read "LIVE" via Zoom to local classes, she reminded us that book selection is key for our target age. Something personal is best. Volunteers could also come to the book vault at the Foundation office to select an age appropriate book that is student age +1 in terms of minutes for reading time for maximum attention span. Details are forthcoming.

Partner Reports:

- **Melody Wirgau / Andrea Heckner (Principals, Todd Elementary, SDB)** Bags of supplies are being created for families without online access. Participation rate is 75-80% this fall, a marked increase of engagement from the onset of virtual learning last spring. They are also impressed by generosity of individuals who are helping to pay wifi for families (AT&T offering \$10/month) or sharing their personal passwords.
- **Robin Stuht (Homeless Liaison, SDB)** The current school age homeless population is over 200 students, some in hotels with vouchers. Those options, along with affordable housing, are running out and are far and few between. Some are living in their cars! Robin and support staff are attempting to deliver supplies as able.
- **Erin Conway (UW-Extension)** Nutrition education and physical activity online options are provided on their [Facebook page](#). For older youth, focus is on [diversity programming and voting](#). Another statewide virtual initiative with Latinx youth and families is a six-session program called [JUNTOS](#) that builds comfort and relationships in families to encourage and achieve postsecondary goals.
- **Cindy Weber (Reading Specialist at Hackett Elementary, SDB)** Mirroring the same issues/support as Todd, the school is receiving increased numbers of parents seeking daily help. Books are flying off their shelves to support literacy and student learning.
- **Drew Pennington (Director of Planning and Building, City of Beloit)** No books are being distributed since City Hall doors are still closed to the public. There is ongoing, urban planning for early childhood education with incentives and childcare options.
- **Andre Sayles (Captain, City of Beloit Police Dept.)** Happy to join the conversation and provide continued public support in terms of efforts to assist families at this difficult time.
- **Katharine Clark (Beloit Public Library)** Internet is available and students are coming for virtual instruction. Storytime is limited for younger children, so a second session is being added. Successful partnering with the Welty Center and School District of Beloit is ongoing. Click [here](#) for info on getting a library card and accessing library resources. A free online tutoring service "[Brainfuse](#)" (also in Spanish) is available with your card!
- **Sarah Millard (Director of Strategic Communications, City of Beloit)** No programs are being run at the current time.
- **Shirley Williams (Community Advocate)** The NAACP is doing literacy/voter outreach. Lisa Tollefson (County Clerk) has provided information for distribution at meal sites.
- **Debbie Fischer (Youth2Youth 4 Change)** The youth volunteers have provided book readings on their Facebook page, are helping to distribute used books to the local Little Free Libraries, podcasts on substance abuse and positive life choices are ongoing. As a result of the pandemic, there has been the advantage of flexible time for their training.
- **Laura Anastasi / Will Anderson (RSVP)** With many schools being closed to in-person instruction, their volunteers are staying extremely active!
- **Sue Stein (Nutrition & Health Associates, Inc.)** Parents are struggling with the technology for their families. Nearly 300 clients are seeking opportunities for assistance, but the office is limited to how many can be served in-person. Just as many books have been distributed in the last 3 months with increasing outreach to Hispanic families who are feeling lost. In terms of making food go farther for the limited resources available, she recommended "[Eating Smart, Being Active](#)" - free 9 lesson virtual series on healthy eating, getting active, making food budgets.

4) Calendar: Next virtual meeting date is Friday, October 30th. RSVP required!