



# THE LAURA BUSH FOUNDATION FOR AMERICA'S LIBRARIES

## N E W S

*“We can contribute to children’s happy learning experiences by making sure they have plenty of books to borrow from their school libraries to read in class and at home.”*

*Laura Bush*

A Fund of the Community  
Foundation for the National  
Capital Region



White House photo

### A MESSAGE FROM LAURA BUSH

*The Laura Bush Foundation for America’s Libraries had a gratifying first year. We were surprised and delighted by the large number of libraries that applied to be the first recipients, and in May 2003, 132 school libraries across America received Foundation grants to expand their collections. These grants, totaling nearly \$640,000, are the first of many that will help ensure that every primary and secondary student in America has access to a well-stocked library. Applications for the 2004 grants have been received, and the recipients will be announced in May.*

*Many of the grant applicants are eager to purchase books for striving readers. I have a special interest in these fourth through twelfth graders who are reading below grade level. They deserve the joy of finding books that they can read easily, that fit their interests, and that also support their curriculum.*

*Generous individuals and foundations have given the funds that help provide books for the nation’s school libraries. I am grateful to these donors who are making dreams come true for students, teachers and school librarians throughout America.*

*I look forward to hearing more success stories, announcing more grants, and, most of all, helping more of America’s schoolchildren discover the pure joy that comes from reading a good book.*

Sincerely,

*Laura Bush*

## Good Stories And Ideas From Our 2003 Grantees

One of the 2003 grantees called the local newspaper and a radio station when all the new books arrived. As a result, the local paper ran a story on the grant, with photographs of students holding some of the new books. The local radio station did an interview with the librarian and selected students. This same librarian held an “Open House” for the community to preview the 226 new books

and 22-volume set of encyclopedias.

Another school got the local newspaper to run a photograph of the librarian and students discarding the very old and out-of-date books to prepare for the new ones.

One librarian started a “Principal’s Reading Club,” which meets once a week with the principal, the librarian and 5th graders.

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[www.LauraBushFoundation.org](http://www.LauraBushFoundation.org)

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## Good Stories *Continued...*

Students discuss fiction books they are reading. The local newspaper covered this “library circle” and, as a result, the students received a letter from a nationally known author.

Many of the schools provided a special display of the new books for students and parents. Others put articles in the parent newsletter about the new books. Many schools had committees of teachers and students who made joint decisions on book purchases.

One grantee school held a contest for the design of a bookplate to be placed in each book purchased with funds from the grants. Now, all of the books purchased

with a Laura Bush Foundation grant announce that fact.

One librarian used the books as a springboard to conduct a parent workshop on literacy and reading. This same school became so excited about getting new books they started a “Birthday Club,” encouraging the donation of a book in honor of a child’s or teacher’s birthday instead of a present.

The counselor of a school that is part of a corrections facility described a young man who was in high school but reading at a 2nd grade level. He made great use of the new high interest/low reading level books and now, combined with good instructional intervention, is reading at a middle school level. 📖

## The Awards For 2003

- ★ Each school received a grant of up to \$5,000.
- ★ Schools in 40 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico received grants.
- ★ 93% of the students benefiting from these grants are from very low-income homes.
- ★ 65 % of the recipient schools are elementary.
- ★ 27 % of the schools are secondary. The remaining schools are K-12.
- ★ 90% of the schools said they did not have sufficient funds to purchase one book per student per year.
- ★ The collections of most schools were an average age of more than 15 years old. Some had books as old as 50 years in their collections.



White House photo

*Mrs. Bush talks with a student about a library book they have read together.*

## WHAT’S NEXT?

The 2004 grants will be announced in May. The application process gives priority to schools that have a very high percentage of students from low-income households. The Foundation’s Advisory Committee, composed of librarians and educators, reviews all submissions and jointly makes decisions on awards. The application process is administered by the Community Foundation for the National Capitol Region. 📖