

## **Indigo Love of Reading Foundation Announces \$1.5 Million in New Grants to 25 High-Needs Schools, Bringing Total Grants Given to Date to \$18 Million Since 2004**

---

**MAY 11, 2016, TORONTO** – The Indigo Love of Reading Foundation is thrilled to announce the recipients of its 2016 Love of Reading Literacy Grant.<sup>i</sup> Twenty-five high-needs elementary schools across Canada will benefit from the Foundation’s \$1.5 million annual grant commitment. These grants offer deserving school libraries the means to break the cycle of dwindling bookshelves caused by inadequate funding.

Since its inception in 2004, the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation has donated more than \$23 million to more than 2,600 schools, benefiting more than 750,000 Canadian children through its grants and other programs. This year, the Foundation is proud to continue its legacy of transforming school libraries by adding 25 new schools to its list of grant recipients.

“We love to know that these grants are nurturing a passion for reading and help Canadian children develop essential skills to become richly literate,” says Heather Reisman, President, Indigo Love of Reading Foundation. “Indigo is proud to help schools create a truly positive experience so every child can enjoy the wonders of reading.”

Exposure to books at an early age can spark creativity and critical thinking among youth, but without proper access, kids are less inspired to read. As resources in high-needs elementary school libraries become increasingly scarce, efforts to bolster literacy and a lifelong love of reading at a young age are more crucial than ever. Here are the shocking realities of today’s literacy crisis in Canada:

- The average age of a library book in high-needs Canadian elementary schools is 16 years old or older<sup>ii</sup>
- 42 per cent of Canadian adults have low literacy skills<sup>iii</sup>
- On average, schools that apply for Literacy Grants have annual budgets of less than \$8 per student – far below the minimum spend to ensure a healthy school library<sup>iv</sup>
- If reading is not mastered by grade 3, this may lead to failed grades and early drop outs<sup>v</sup>
- Early childhood literacy is one of the greatest indicators of success later in life<sup>vi</sup>

The Indigo Love of Reading Foundation believes every child should have access to books so they can reach their full potential. As a result of this year’s literacy grants, 8200 students across the country will have funds to purchase more than 200,000 books over the next three years.

### **The 2016 Indigo Love of Reading Foundation Literacy Fund Grant Recipients (by province):**

- Annie Foote School, Calgary, Alberta
- Cardston Elementary School, Cardston, Alberta
- Evansdale School, Edmonton, Alberta
- Fairview Community School, Nanaimo, British Columbia
- Khowhemun Elementary School, Duncan, British Columbia
- Terry Fox Elementary School, Abbotsford, British Columbia
- Strathcona Community School, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- St. George School, Winnipeg, Manitoba

- École W.-F.-Boisvert, Rogersville, New Brunswick
- St. Matthew's School, St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador
- West Colchester Consolidated School, Bass River, Nova Scotia
- Kugaardjuq School, Kugaaruk, Nunavut
- David Maxwell Public School, Windsor, Ontario
- Daystrom Public School, Toronto, Ontario
- Elia Middle School, Toronto, Ontario
- Oakridge Junior Public School, Toronto, Ontario
- Queen Victoria Elementary School, Hamilton, Ontario
- St. Angela Catholic School, Toronto, Ontario
- St. Dunstan Catholic School, Scarborough, Ontario
- Stilecroft Public School, North York, Ontario
- Summerside Intermediate School, Summerside, Prince Edward Island
- École Du Trait-D'Union, Ste-Thérèse, Quebec
- Gaspé Elementary School, Gaspé, Quebec
- Imperial Community School, Regina, Saskatchewan
- Queen Mary Public School, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

#### **Indigo Love of Reading Foundation & First Book Grant Day Partnership**

In addition to the 2016 Literacy Fund grants, Love of Reading has once again partnered with First Book Canada, which provides new books to children in need addressing one of the most important factors affecting literacy – access to books. As part of this partnership, Love of Reading and First Book Canada will provide more than 1,200 new books to each of the 20 runner-up schools that applied for the Literacy Fund Grant, a donation of more than 30,000 books in total. This year books will be generously donated from Disney Worldwide Publishing, Marvel Press, Disney Press, Lucasfilm Press, and Hyperion Press.

Schools interested in applying for the 2017 Indigo Love of Reading Foundation Literacy Fund Grant can download an application at [www.loveofreading.org](http://www.loveofreading.org)

To learn more about the Foundation, please visit [www.loveofreading.org](http://www.loveofreading.org)

#### **About the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation**

Indigo Books & Music Inc. founded the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation in 2004 to address the underfunding of public elementary school libraries. To date it has committed over \$23 million to more than 2,600 schools through its signature programs. This year, the Foundation is granting \$1.5 million to 25 high-needs elementary schools so they can transform their libraries with the purchase of new books and education resources. To date the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation's Literacy Fund has committed \$18 million to more than 215 schools nationally. The Foundation's annual grassroots Adopt a School program unites employees, customers, schools and their communities to raise funds and put even more books into the hands of children. Over the past seven years the program has raised over \$3.7 million so 600,000 children have a book to call their own. To learn more about the Foundation, visit [www.loveofreading.org](http://www.loveofreading.org)

#### **About First Book Canada**

First Book Canada provides new books to children in need, addressing one of the most important factors affecting literacy - access to books. By making new, high quality books available on an ongoing basis, First Book Canada is transforming the lives of children and elevating the quality of education in the country. Since 2009, First Book Canada distributed over 4,500,000 brand new books to children in need across Canada. All funds raised in Canada go to programs serving children from low-income families. For more information, or to register with First Book Canada, visit us at [www.firstbookcanada.org](http://www.firstbookcanada.org) and follow our latest news on Twitter and Facebook.



**For media requests please contact:**

[Kate Gregory](#)

Indigo Books & Music Inc.

O: 416-364-4499 Ext. 6659

[Marni Zaretsky](#)

MSLGROUP Canada

O: 416-847-1300

---

<sup>i</sup> Grant applications are reviewed through six rounds of judging. Grant recipient schools are selected based on their application's ability to demonstrate the school's commitment to literacy programs, as well as other factors including their socioeconomic status, library status and need, and future plans for the grant.

<sup>ii</sup> Source: Love of Reading literacy grant applications.

<sup>iii</sup> Canadian Literacy and Learning Network. All About Literacy in Canada.

<http://www.literacy.ca/literacy/literacy-sub/>

<sup>iv</sup> Source: Canadian Books in School Libraries: Raising the Profile. A Research Report for the Association of Canadian Publishers, October 2004. Page 11

<sup>v</sup> Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, Department of Community Pediatrics. Literacy Promotion. Technical Assistance.

<sup>vi</sup> Source: <http://www.economist.com/news/books-and-arts/21696494-lifelong-learning>