



Reading Education Foundation

Investing in our students, our schools, and the future

Reading Education Foundation Grant Application

Applicants: Completed applications must be sent to your building principal for approval. Applicants may not send applications directly to REF. Building principals are responsible for submitting applications to REF. Any application received directly from an applicant will not be accepted for consideration.

Principals: After review and approval of the application please save a .pdf copy of the completed application as follows: Project director's last name, school, REF GrantApp 2012-13 (e.g. Smith RMHS REF GrantApp 2012-13). Forward all approved applications to grantcommittee@readingef.org. Deadline for applications to REF is on or before 5:00 PM on December 1, 2012. Grants received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Alison Elmer

Project Manager/Primary Contact

alison.elmer@reading.k12.ma.us

Email

Director of Student Services

Position/Title

781-942-9129

Telephone

Joshua Eaton

School

Student Services

Grade or Subject

Professional Development in Lindamood-Bell "Seeing Stars" Program to teach Symbol Imagery skills impacting reading, spelling and other curriculum areas

Project Title

Reading, Spelling (primary);
Math, Science, Social Studies,
Music (secondary)

Curriculum Area (s)

All elementary and middle schools

School(s) where project will occur

K-8

Grade Level(s)

\$6,270.15 to send 5 teachers (1 teacher option \$1,321.93)

Total Funding Requested

E. Erin Gesmundo

Co-applicant Name(s)

gesmundo4@verizon.net

Email

Parent

Position or Title, Grade or Subject

Joshua Eaton

School

Additional Co-applicant Name(s)

Email

Position or Title, Grade or Subject

RMHS

School

Project Manager's Signature *(on behalf of all applicants listed)*

Date:

Principal's Signature

Date:

THE REF MISSION

REF supports innovation and excellence in the Reading Public Schools by providing funds for projects that both deepen and expand the scope of traditional classroom learning to strengthen the whole child development of each and every student.

Required Proposal Format

To ensure an equitable review of all applications, please answer the following questions. Successful applications will reflect thoughtful planning, help reviewers clearly understand the content and context of the project, and assure appropriate use of Foundation funds. Grant requests should address a high-priority issue for the Reading Public Schools and align with the mission of REF (above). Incomplete proposals cannot be considered for funding.

Project Description – Please provide a brief (50 word) narrative that summarizes the project (suitable for press release.)

This project seeks to train teachers in “Symbol Imagery,” which is the ability to visualize sounds and letters in words for both phonological and orthographic processing. These skills strengthen student reading, spelling and fluency with potential benefits in other curriculum areas by expanding the tools for learning through imagery-language connections.

Description of Need – What specific need in the existing curriculum are you trying to address? Please specify whether you see this need as a certain population, grade, school, or district level issue. From your experience, please describe at the student and classroom level what is lacking in the current approach. Please provide any available data and/or statistics to back up your assertion. Please link the need to an issue identified as of high-priority for the Reading Public School District. This project seeks to build teacher and ultimately student skills in symbol imagery to improve reading, spelling and fluency. In research sponsored by the Lindamood Bell Center, the Nancibell® Seeing Stars® (SI™) program, which develops symbol imagery, has resulted in large standard score changes for children who have a weakness in decoding (see attachment 1 Lindamood-Bell research page). The Nancibell® Seeing Stars®: Symbol Imagery for Phonemic Awareness, Sight Words and Spelling Program develops symbol imagery and directly applies that sensory-cognitive function to sight word development, contextual fluency, spelling and increasing the speed and stability of phonemic awareness. The program begins by visualizing the identity, number, and sequence of letters for the sounds within words, and extends into multi-syllable and contextual reading and spelling. According to Lindamood-Bell, this new program may be a missing link in literacy development. Developing symbol imagery directly stimulates dual-coding (the integration of imagery and language) for the reading and spelling task. Long overlooked, this important function can now be assessed and developed.

In the current Reading Schools approach, students in grades K-2 receive Wilson Foundations Instruction for decoding skill development. If a student shows a weakness in decoding or fluency they receive regular education support and may be moved to the regular Wilson program. If a student has difficulty learning sight words, meeting DIBELS fluency benchmarks or meeting reading "level" benchmarks they may receive learning center support or if on an IEP, individualized instruction, but primarily using Wilson materials. If they continue to fall below benchmarks in grades 3-6 they may continue to receive Wilson instruction. The Seeing Stars program offers additional skills which may either enhance the Wilson program by using Symbol Imagery skills to approach sight words, spelling and reading fluency or could also be used as an alternative program for learning decoding skills.

The following anecdotal report is from the family co-sponsoring this grant request. The family sent two of their children to the Lindamood-Bell Center in Arlington for intensive Seeing Stars instruction. Both children are on IEPs for language based learning disabilities and the children have failed to come up to grade level reading standards using the Wilson Reading Program. The results of the children's recent progress is as follows:

Current 2nd grader -she made up about 6 months in 6 week intense 40 hours per week summer program
Fontas and Pinnell Results:

June 2012: Instructional Level D (beginning first grade) and September 2012 after Lindamood Bell Seeing Stars: Instructional Level G (Feb-March 1st Grade)

DIBELS Results:

DORF (DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency) June 2012: 8 words per minute (below benchmark for all of 1st grade) and September 2012 after Lindamood Bell Seeing Stars: 28 words per minute (At benchmark for middle of first grade).

Current 6th grader - made up about 1 year over the 6 week intense summer program and first time ever in 6 years at benchmark for fluency.

Fontas and Pinnell Results:

June 2012: Instructional Level R/Independent Q (mid-fourth grade) and September 2012 after Lindamood Bell Seeing Stars and Lindamood-Bell Visualizing and Verbalizing: Instructional Level U/Independent T (mid-fifth).

DIBELS Results:

DORF (DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency) June 2012: 114 using the 5th grade benchmark assessment (beginning 5th-grade level) and September 2012 after Lindamood Bell Seeing Stars and Lindamood-Bell Visualizing and Verbalizing: 117 words per minute using the 6th grade benchmark assessment (At benchmark for beginning 6th grade).

The parent has noted a realization in how her children learn in all subject areas because of the family's new awareness of the importance of symbol imagery. For example in math facts, she realizes that showing just the equation (e.g. $2 + 2$) on a flash card without the answer does not allow a child to create the mental image of the answer. So in math fact practice showing $2 + 2 = 4$ is very important at the start. In music, her son is having difficulty learning the names of notes on a staff. When studying the symbol "A" on the music staff it is best learned by presenting the whole first - the symbol of the note on the staff with the letter representation. Traditional flash cards with the note on one side of the card and the letter name on the other are not as beneficial. A shift in thinking about symbol imagery can change the approach to learning across the curriculum.

Project Goal – Please provide a specific, well-defined goal(s) for your project. If there are short-term and long-term goals associated with your project, please specify. Please also include the key objectives you have identified that will help you achieve the goal(s) listed. (For those new to grant applications, the goal is “what” you will accomplish; the objectives answer “how” you will accomplish it).

Train 5-15 teachers across the district in The Nancibell® Seeing Stars®: Symbol Imagery for Phonemic Awareness, Sight Words and Spelling Program and provide each teacher with a kit and the option of materials for up to 6 students and decide if training should be pursued district-wide.

Objectives:

1. Identify teachers for training
2. Teachers attend a 2 Day Seeing Stars training session
3. Teachers who have received training will meet in September, share experiences together, decide on specific implementation steps, students to target and design a testing plan using measures such as Fountas and Pinnell, DIBELS benchmarks, sight word mastery and observation. Teachers will evaluate targeted students or classes in January and June and will reconvene with peers to discuss results.
4. In June 2014 based on results, decide if training should be pursued district-wide with further implementation needed.

Activities/Timetable – Provide a timetable for your project, including starting and completion dates, specific key activities, and events if applicable.

1. EARLY 2013 - Select teachers to be trained based on funding approved. Priority given to teachers who observed the Lindamood-Bell program in Arlington over the summer of 2012. Interested Teachers: Ann-Marie Downing* (Special Education - Joshua Eaton), Jody Carregal* (General Education - Joshua Eaton), Krista

Erickson* (Language Based Classroom - Joshua Eaton), Julie Merrill* (Language Based Classroom - Parker Middle School), Andrew Norton (Band Teacher - Parker Middle School). With additional funding this could have broader impact across the district with several teachers attending from each school. When funding approved, notification will go out to all teachers in grades K-8 and teachers will request a training spot through Alison Elmer. (Teachers with * did observe at Lindamood-Bell over the summer).

2. EARLY 2013 - decide location for teacher training. At this time On-Site Training to staff is not available in Reading. This is due primarily because of Lindamood-Bell Resources and proximity to frequent training courses. There are no other authorized teacher centers to quote. Commonwealth Learning Institute does not offer Seeing Stars Training. The most cost effective location is Billerica (June 17-18) which is just 16.1 miles from Reading. Additional courses are available in Portland, Maine (August 20-21) which is 85.2 miles away and would require an overnight stay and in Hartford Connecticut (January 28-29 and July 15-16) at 108 miles away and also requiring an overnight stay.

3. EARLY 2013 - Register teachers for training. The cost of the two day program is \$679 per person. We would receive a 5% discount for sending 5 or more teachers and an additional 5% discount for registering 4 weeks in advance.

4. Order Seeing Stars Kit for Teachers (see Gander Publishing quote).

5. Teachers attend training course.

6. August 2013-September 2013 - All teachers attending training meet with Alison Elmer to share experiences together, decide on specific implementation steps for their classroom situation and population and a testing plan to evaluate at the end of the school year.

7. September 2013, January 2014, June 2014 - use standard DIBELS, Fountas and Pinnell, Sight Word Mastery results as well as other curriculum evaluation and observation to evaluate and compare student performance and/or evaluate and compare classroom performance.

8. June 2014 - Meeting of teachers with Alison Elmer to discuss experience, results, best practices to share and decide if program should be pursued district-wide with further implementation.

Participants – Who will play key roles in this project? What are their qualifications for these roles? Note: If you plan to engage outside services such as consultants/speakers please attach resume(s) or include a link to their website.

Alison Elmer - Director of Student Services will serve as the Project Manager.

5-15 Teachers in the district with priority given to those teachers who have already observed the program and expressed an interest in training.

Outputs – Approximately how many teachers will participate in and how many students will benefit from this project? Indicate how the project can be shared with colleagues and across classrooms, grade levels, and schools.

5-15 teachers will participate with all of their students benefiting at some level from improved teaching practices to address different learning styles. Potentially anywhere from 30-300 students across the district could benefit from this project in the first year through improved reading, spelling, fluency and as in the case of music, improved ability to acquire music skills and access the music curriculum through improved teacher techniques. A successful program through teacher input and collaboration could be shared with colleagues and across classrooms, grade levels, and schools and an additional phase for more training could be developed.

Outcomes – Beyond just the number of teachers involved and students impacted (your outputs), please identify your expected outcomes (i.e., actual changes made in the students and/or teachers as a result of the project). How do you plan to measure this change (i.e., student tests, teacher/student/parent surveys, teacher observation etc)?

As a result of this training and project, changes could be made in the way teachers teach at many levels, from helping children learn visualization techniques to improve sight word mastery with possible carry-over to math facts and music literacy, to helping children improve reading fluency and learning across the curriculum. These changes could be measured through the test scores of individual students and classes of students who are working with teachers trained in Seeing Stars vs. their counterparts and through teacher survey and observation. If the results are dramatic and additional funding is acquired this could have a lasting impact on literacy and learning for the district and give our students additional skills to develop the appropriate skills,

strategies, creativity and knowledge necessary to be productive informed independent citizens in a global society.

Sustainability – Will the project sustain itself beyond the current grant cycle? If so, please explain how. Please describe the potential for replication of your project to other classrooms or schools.

If teacher and student results indicate improvement in teaching and learning this project would extend beyond the current grant cycle because the district would want to continue funding teacher training in the area of symbol imagery. A parent training session could also potentially be developed and after-school programs developed through PTOs could be designed to further support students who benefit from additional support and fun games to improve literacy skills through symbol imagery. Through use of our excellence in teaching and our strong community resources, Reading could become a true leader in the latest research to improve literacy for all learners.

Have you requested funding for this project elsewhere? REF partners with PTO's, other fundraising organizations and community groups as much as possible in order to fund as many deserving grants as possible. Is there funding available from any such group for your grant? If so, please list the source, the amount requested, and liaison information. Currently no other sources have been pursued, however PTOs for each school are a potential source of partnership. There is a slim possibility for teacher grants which could be pursued by individual teachers through the NEA Foundation at <https://www.neafoundation.org/pages/educators/grant-programs/grant-application/>. It is possible that the district may be able to cover the substitute teacher costs of the project.

Could you achieve these results with materials/supplies currently provided by the District? No.

Estimated Budget

Detail your project budget requests. If an exact cost is unknown, please give an estimate and note that it is an estimate. Group budget items by category (e.g. consultant fees, equipment, honorariums, registration fees, consumable materials, textbooks/reference, etc.).

Note: All equipment purchased for the project will remain the property of the Reading Public Schools at the completion of the project.

Budget Item	Supplier/Provider	Quantity	Cost	Total Cost
Option A: Nancibell® Seeing Stars® (SI™) program training for teachers - Train 5 teachers in Billerica, MA, June 17-18, 2013 at Courtyard by Marriott Boston Billerica/Bedford 270 Concord Rd. Billerica, MA 01821	Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes: the cost is \$679 per person. With a group of 5 or more, there is a 5% discount for all registrations, and if we register more than 4 weeks in advance there is another 5% discount. Registration through 800-233-1819. Each additional teacher added after 5 is \$611.11. See Attachment 2.	5	\$3395.00 less discount of \$339.50	\$3,055.50
Option A: Seeing Stars Kit for each of 5 teachers trained + estimated freight of \$29.03 for each kit and workbooks	Gander Publishing, PO Box 780, Avila Beach, CA 93424. Phone 805-541-5523. Fax 805-782-0488. See Attachment 3.	5	\$439.95 + \$29.03 estimated freight = \$468.98	\$2,344.90
Option A: Decoding Workbooks Set for 6 students as resource for each teacher trained	Gander Publishing, PO Box 780, Avila Beach, CA 93424. Phone 805-541-5523. Fax 805-782-0488. See Attachment 3.	5	\$43.95	\$219.75
Option A: Substitute Teacher Coverage	District to arrange hiring of substitute teachers to cover two days of the Seeing Stars Training at \$65 per day or \$130 for both days per teacher	5	\$130.00	\$650.00
Option A: Total Cost for 5 Teachers		5 teachers		\$6,270.15
Option B: Add additional teachers after 5 - cost is for each additional teacher and includes Seeing Stars 2 day training, Seeing Stars Kit and estimated freight, 6 decoding workbooks and travel compensation ** NOTE: IF ONLY FUNDING FOR ONE TEACHER COST WOULD BE \$1,321.93 (no group discount)		1 additional teacher after 5		\$1,254.04
Option C: Train 15 Teachers		15		\$18,810.52

with Seeing Stars 2 day training, Seeing Stars Kit, 6 decoding workbooks and travel compensation		teachers		
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If this grant involves the purchase of technology please review the following with the instructional technology staff:

The technology requested will work within the existing infrastructure of RPS. Y N

The school can provide technical support for items purchased. Y N

If the items require on-going fiscal support, is it likely that the school/district will be able to provide that support? Y N

Ordering and Quote Information

If your proposal is accepted you will be required to submit a completed **Requisition Request Form** for each vendor you plan to use for purchasing materials to the District office within 30 days of award notification. The Requisition Request Form is available in the District Share Folder. When selecting a vendor, please choose one who will accept a purchase order and is known to be reliable. Please be prepared to include the following:

- Name and all contact information (address, phone, fax, email, website).
- A valid quote from the vendor. Please note we cannot purchase from Amazon.com.
- When requesting a quote please ask to include shipping costs and any other charges associated with the purchase. Reading Public Schools (RPS) is tax exempt; therefore, we do not have to pay any taxes on purchases.
- If we do not have the business you would like to purchase from as one of our current vendors, we can set-up them as a new vendor. All we need is a W-9 form for their business and to know they will accept a purchase order from RPS.

Reduction of Budget - Sometimes funds are not available to fully fund a proposal. However, REF may be able to fund part of a proposal with the hope that the shortfall can be found elsewhere, or the scope of the project can be limited to the available budget. If this is the case in this proposal, please indicate the minimum amount needed for you to continue and briefly describe how you would reduce the scope of the proposal to accommodate the minimum amount.

\$ _____