

Laura Bush Grant 2009-2010

**PART I**

Willow Crest Elementary  
Anchorage School District  
1004 W. Tudor Rd  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Pre-school, Kindergarten and Elementary

Public

FRL: 100%

Amount requested: \$5800

No, grant received prior

This grant would help promote the love of reading as well as support the language arts curriculum. Our school uses language arts curriculum that gives a short excerpt from a book as part of the daily reading. Often that short reading entices students to then search for the book in our school library. However currently, Willow Crest library possesses less than half of the described titles. Ideally, the library collection should have one copy for each grade level classroom during the lesson and more copies for the students to check out. Secondly, the grant money would be used to enhance our fiction collection. The average age of Willow Crest's fiction collection is 1986. The budget does not allow the library collection to stay up to date with the most current titles. Many of the popular and early chapter books series are incomplete. Therefore once students are hooked, the library is not able to feed their quest for more. The most recent titles added are often checked out continually for several weeks if not months. The collection would benefit by obtain two copies of those "must" reads. In addition to current print fiction collection, this grant would allow the Playaway audio-book collection of eight titles to expand. Playaway books give the students the opportunity to listen to books and/or read along with no other equipment needed other than an earbud. For our students, this technology allows them to read and enjoy print materials above their reading level. (6 characters left)

## PART II

Mans  
Cindy  
Willow Crest Teacher-Librarian  
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[mans\\_cindy@asdk12.org](mailto:mans_cindy@asdk12.org)  
Yes  
Yes

Hoffbauer  
Diane

907-742-1000  
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### 19. Demographic Profile:

Willow Crest Elementary was built in 1959, the same year which Alaska achieved statehood. Both are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is the oldest school in the urban neighborhood known as Spenard. Willow Crest Elementary is an urban, Title I Preschool-6<sup>th</sup> grade school that serves nearly 380 students. Multi-generations have called Willow Crest home since its opening and those residents continue to support the school community to this day. Concurrently, the school has a 40% transient rate. Two-thirds of the students are bilingual, with 18 first languages spoken. Willow Crest's ethnic population includes approximately equal numbers of Alaska Natives, Asian, Hispanic and Multiethnic students. However, Willow Crest supports one of the largest Alaska Native student populations in Anchorage. As of this school year, all students are provided a free daily breakfast, snack and hot lunch. With our immigrant and transient population, many students do not have the privilege to own books. And since many of our families lack the resources for transportation, the school library is the only place that those children will have any library access. In addition, nearly 48 students are connected to the Children In Transition program that provides support during times of homelessness. The Willow Crest community and its Spenard neighborhood have a median per capita income of \$20,626, the lowest per capita income neighborhood for Anchorage, excluding the military bases. (16 character left)

NCES ID Information:  
NCES School ID: 020018000123

PART III

Yes  
Master's  
Full-Time

No

No help

Budget:

Year	Total Book	Total Serial	Other	# of Students	
07-08	2020	460	450	390	5.18
08-09	1970	480	475	381	5.17
09-10	1985	470	525	385	5.16

23. 15,500 books

A. The Anchorage School District as well as Willow Crest's principal is very supportive of the library and my efforts to create the optimal library for our students. Each principal has the discretion to determine their school's library budget. The budget has remained constant during her tenure at Willow Crest. When possible, she has been able to provide modest increases to our book collection with Title 1 monies.

B. During my tenure, I have been grateful for the money I can use to purchase books. However with only approximately \$2000 per year, that translates to \$5 per student. With our high transient rate of nearly 40%, that value is even lower. Another issue is the number of books that are not returned. Last year, our school suffered the loss of \$1000 of missing books. Nearly 20% of the lost books incurred with our Children In Transition students. Half of the books not returned were from students who moved away. Unfortunately, the Anchorage school district does not provide funding for replacements for either situation. While economically disadvantaged students are given the opportunity to "work off" their lost book fines, this does little for the \$260 worth of books no longer available to the school community. As staff, we are continually working on strategies to improve this situation. However, it is often the reality we are faced with when working these families that are in flux and instability. These are exactly the children who need as many opportunities as possible to have books available to them.

D. Currently, the greatest need of the library is improving the fiction collection. Willow Crest students are looking for the most current titles and with a library budget that needs to fill curriculum gaps first, fiction acquisitions

often take a secondary priority. In addition, the collection needs to replace “well-loved” copies of beginning chapter books with newer editions and build a more appealing introduction chapter book collection to entice those emergent readers. Thirdly to help older readers improve their skills and discover the joy of reading, the library needs to expand its collection of Playaway audiobooks. Research has shown that student’s reading comprehension functions at a higher level than their decoding skills until 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Audiobooks can provide the bridge between their interest and abilities while still making reading fun and more accessible.

26. The school library collection is heavily used in the areas of history, folktales, biographies and science. Staff members check out materials for theme studies as well as require their students to complete research projects. In the primary grades, teachers check out materials to support their literature and mathematics themes. As stated previously, our language arts curriculum provides only selected portions of books in their daily reading. Our library collection currently has approximately half of the titles from their language arts curriculum. The focus during my tenure has been to purchase general reference and nonfiction materials to support intermediate science and social studies curriculum. The collection in those areas needed to be updated to include current science findings and more age-appropriate history materials that directly relate to the current social studies curriculum. Therefore any fiction purchases made, are in small increments and usually for the most popular titles.

27. The four areas of concentration for improvement will be:  
Fiction - the most current and popular titles with an emphasis on series completion;  
Playaway audiobooks - expansion with matching print titles;  
Beginning chapter books - replacement of worn copies and expand the collection to include a wider range of interests with an emphasis on series completion;  
Language arts curriculum titles - completion of collection from the anthology.

I have already developed selection lists for each of the four categories. The selection lists were formulated by comparing current collection holdings with the language arts curriculum. I have identified the most popular series within the Willow Crest library and compiled a list of which titles are needed to complete the series. I have spoken with other district librarians and teachers to identify which series have made significant impacts with emergent readers and which titles would match well with Playaways. Finally once the monies are secure, I would like to include students in the selection process by having them suggest possible purchases.

29.

Completion of Language arts curriculum literature: \$1000 (75 books)  
Expansion of current fiction and series completion: \$2000 (100 books)  
Expansion of Playaways collection: \$1050 (30 playaways)  
Expansion of early chapter book fiction collection: \$1750 (120 books)

30. The materials purchased with this grant money impact the entire student body. First from the emergent readers embarking into their first chapter books to older students still trying to define themselves as readers. With a completed early chapter book collection, young readers can build their skills and gain confidence that promotes a love of reading. Already proficient readers will be able to fuel their love of reading by having the opportunity and therefore the satisfaction of finishing a book series. Playaways and corresponding print materials will support reluctant and struggling readers and give them the tools necessary to become more fluent readers. Special emphasis will be placed on identifying those titles that appeal to boys reluctant to read.
31. I collaborated with teachers to identify the current language holdings and the benefits of completing the collection. I have also developed a list of special requests by staff members for future purchase acquisitions.
32. I will provide copies of the language arts literature to the teachers as the corresponding themes are taught. I will provide each emergent reader a list of suggested reads as well as utilize the forum of book talks to introduce different series and authors to all levels of students. I will have a "greet and meet" with the staff to display and demonstrate the collection expansion as well as with parents during the family literacy night every October. I would encourage students to create book reviews to share with their peers and have older students read early chapter books to their "book buddies." Much of my energy will continue to be directed towards matching the "right" book to the "right" child.

33.

It is a priority for the library to have a collaborative relationship with all staff members. Since the teacher's planning time occurs when I am working with students, I continually look for impromptu opportunities to identify how as a teacher-librarian I can help them do their job more effectively. As the collegial relationships have strengthened during my tenure, more staff members request my assistance and I am able to find more opportunities to support their teaching endeavors and enhance our students' learning experiences. Our school continues to follow a blend of fixed and flexible library scheduling. Each class has a 30-minute library block, but can be rescheduled

as necessary so all students have a guaranteed library time. There is also enough flexibility in the schedule to allow for expanded research opportunities in the library or computer lab. A unique community partnership we have is with our local Costco store. On a weekly basis, Costco pays its employees during their lunch break to come and read with our second graders. Each second grader is paired with a Costco employee and the student reads to the adult for ten-fifteen minutes per week. For some of our students, that is the only time an adult outside of the school hears them read. As with other school districts, we will be facing budget cuts. Alaska usually follows behind national trends by two to three years. We have been told to expect a reduction of our budget for next school year.

34.

Our school is truly a blend of the diversity that describes the real Anchorage. The diversity is most apparent economically and ethnically. Willow Crest sits at the edge of a well-established older middle class neighborhood, but also is home to some of the most economically vulnerable populations. These families are truly living on the brink of poverty and often the adults work two or more jobs. Evening events are usually well attended especially since dinner is provided. It is not uncommon for students to pack home extra food from school provided breakfasts, lunches and snacks. Appropriate winter clothing is a constant need. As a staff, we find ourselves extending beyond our educational responsibilities. As a result, the staff is extremely cohesive. We are fortunate to have a small core of parents who do amazing fundraising and host special events for the school community. However even with the best of intentions, their ability to meet all the varied needs is impossible. (4 characters left).