



**Synopsis:** The Foundation seeks additional funds to replenish highly demanded Spanish 1000 Books Before Kindergarten (1,000BBK) materials and expand the multilingual Nursery Rhyme Booklets to other languages. Reading to preschool-age children is the single most effective way to help them become proficient readers. It builds vocabulary, language skills, and helps prepare them with the skills they need for Kindergarten. Children's reading success in school starts with positive language and literacy experiences beginning at birth. 1,000BBK provides youth with the early literacy skills they need to work towards better futures that all children deserve.

### **Why is this program needed?**

Of the 21,125 children under the age of 5 living in Weld County, 17.9% will not graduate high school and 12.1% will live at the poverty level. (Kids Count! 2018). The social impact of early literacy initiatives cannot be understated: If children do not read by third grade, they are less likely to graduate high school and more likely to remain in a cycle of poverty. The Foundation prioritizes early literacy skills with the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten (1,000BBK) program, and provides Weld County youth the foundation they need to work towards better futures.

### **How does the program work?**

1,000BBK is HPLD's primary early literacy program. The program aims to promote reading to newborns, infants, and toddlers so they are prepared to learn to read by the time they reach Kindergarten. 1,000BBK strives to increase the number of parents that read to their children in our community, reinforce parents' role as their child's first and best teacher, and provide caregivers with early literacy information and library resources. The goal is to instill a lifelong love of reading in young children in Northern Colorado. 1,000BBK is targeted at all Pre-K children in Weld County and their caregivers. The program currently has 2,570 registrants, 211 have completed the program while 266 have reached the midpoint (500 books).

HPLD's Nursery Rhyme booklet was originally created to be a part of the 1,000BBK packet that we gave to parents upon signing up their children. The original booklet was English only it was later developed as a Spanish Language booklet. The popularity of both booklets led to difficulty keeping them stocked. that we had trouble keeping it stocked. The booklets have since been removed this from the 1,000BBK packet, and is a standalone early literacy resource.

High Plains Library District's Outreach team and Foundation are currently exploring the relaunch and expansion of multilingual Nursery Rhyme Pamphlets. The team would like to expand the booklets to include traditional nursery rhymes side-by-side in numerous languages including English, Spanish, Somali, Swahili, French, Burmese, Rohingya, and Korin to support parents of a wide-range of backgrounds and the multilingual population of our community.

### **What are the results?**

1,000BBK addresses our community's distinct early literacy needs through a unique, simple, and practical approach to programing that results in immediate and far-reaching benefits. Of those who have completed the 1,000BBK program: 58% reported an increased amount of time spent reading, 61% increased their level of reading enjoyment, 74% of

participants increased their library usage, while 82% found the parent information to be helpful. The program is simple and straightforward, easily accessible to families, manageable by library staff, and achieves its desired outcome of increased family reading time, a best practice in early literacy which prepares children for future life success.

### **Why do we need the multilingual expansion?**

In 2018, HPLD experienced an exponential increase in requests for Spanish 1,000BBK materials. Within Weld County's diverse community, 29.1% residents identify as Hispanic or Latino (US Census 2016). The Spanish language booklet has been in heavy demand in our community. With the success of the Spanish language program our next step is to create booklets in other languages. With the large influx of immigrants and refugees, we have many communities in need of early literacy resources in their own languages.

Creating these books would require funding as well as offer volunteer opportunities to accomplish the following:

- Reaching out to these communities and gathering nursery rhymes, fingerplays, and songs in their own languages;
- Creating the booklet;
- Illustrating it;
- Printing it;
- Recording community members performing the nursery rhymes, fingerplays, and songs;
- Editing the recordings into one disk'
- And making copies of the disks to be inserted into the books.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers can be utilized in many ways during the creation of these books. In particular, they can help in the following ways:

- Formatting the booklet;
- Working with community members to edit the booklet;
- Working with library staff to record community members performing the nursery rhymes, fingerplays, and songs;
- Editing the recordings into one disk;
- Making copies of the disks;
- And inserting them into the printed books.
- Recoding the entire journey, from start to finish, documenting this innovative project.