

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: <Principal's Name> Principal at <School Name> <Phone Number>

<SCHOOL NAME> NEEDS CHILDREN'S LITERATURE BOOKS SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SEEKING "FREE-TO-READ" DONATIONS

<SCHOOL NAME>, <City>, <State>, USA, <Month, Day, Year>—The classrooms at <school name> need children's literature books. <School Name> needs donors. One of the fastest and most cost effective ways of getting books into the classrooms is through the Free-To-Read program. Each donation is given directly to a classroom. The Free-To-Read program is a new book-giving charity orchestrated in cyber space with no overhead costs to donors. In fact, no organization exists on terra firma. There is only a website of instructions, guidelines, and form letters. At the www.FreeToRead.org website, donors are given a standard set of procedures and form letters for quickly and easily finding elementary schools in their local community and donating directly to the classroom of their choice. The kids pick the children's literature books they read and the teachers buy them at local discount warehouse sales. The website gives teachers a set of form letters and expenditure sheets to quickly and easily provide cost-accounting reports to donors and school principals. School systems do not write grants to receive the funds and have no paperwork or administrative duties. Every dollar donated goes directly to a classroom and is used to buy children's literature books.

"The children at <school name> need these books. Through children's literature, kids can safely explore and learn life's lessons. It is a window into the world beyond their immediate community. They learn about and can aspire to lifestyles and careers they would not otherwise experience. It is an essential part of their education and the school just doesn't have the money to buy Children's literature books. The Free-To-Read program is a perfect way for us to work with donors who want to help." Says <principal's name>, Principal of <school name>.

The Free-To-Read website provides guidelines that reduce the potential for abuse. Donors have no direct contact with teachers or students and they do not select the books being purchased. Teachers can use the donations only to purchase children's literature books and they must report expenditures to their Donor and school Principal. School systems are not permitted to charge any overhead fees.

Donors can be individuals, clubs, community charity organizations, or local divisions of corporations. Donations range from \$250 to \$1000. Donations less than \$250 are not time or cost effective for the teachers. Donors can concurrently or sequentially donate as often as they wish. Donors receive the necessary documentation for tax deduction purposes.

Free-To-Read is a registered trademark of Free-To-Read.

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CONTACT: Carrie Perzow Volunteer Free-To-Read spokesperson (408) 358-6400

“FREE-TO-READ” PROJECT DONATES CHILDREN’S LITERATURE BOOKS WITHOUT OVERHEAD COSTS

CYBER SPACE, Silicon Valley, California, USA, March 23, 2004—Free-To-Read is a new book-giving charity orchestrated in cyber space with no overhead costs to donors. In fact, no organization exists on terra firma. There is only a website of instructions, guidelines, and form letters. At the www.FreeToRead.org website, donors are given a standard set of procedures and form letters for quickly and easily finding elementary schools in their community and donating directly to the classroom of their choice. The kids pick the children’s literature books they read and the teachers buy them at discount warehouse sales. The website gives teachers a set of form letters and expenditure reports to quickly and easily provide cost accounting to donors and school principals. School systems do not write grants to receive the funds and have no paperwork or administrative duties. Every dollar donated is used to buy books for kids.

“The whole Free-To-Read thing works automatically and it’s self-monitoring. The form letters at the website make it very easy to donate and I get an expenditure report from the teacher each time they buy books. So, I know exactly where my donation is going. My Uncle Leo and I are donating books to a number of different classrooms. I get Thank You notes from the kids and they are truly heartwarming.” Says current donor and volunteer spokesperson, Carrie Perzow.

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Free-To-Read

Overview

Giving directly to your community's classrooms without overhead costs



You give kids hopes, dreams, and pathways to better lives

Children's literature is a large body of novels and novellas written for kids of all ages and reading levels. Children's literature spans the fascinations, interests, and concerns of kids growing up. It provides a safe pathway for kids to follow in their quest for understanding the world and life's many facets. The "Free-To-Read" program puts children's literature into the hands of kids at schools that have no money to buy these books.

You donate directly to classrooms of your choosing in your community

Donors are connected directly to the teacher whose classroom they will help, teachers report the purchase and costs of books directly to Donors, and school Principals hold the donated monies while teachers purchase the books. There are no overhead or indirect costs because the process of donating and purchasing books and the associated checks and balances are distributed among those directly involved. The only centralized element in the Free-To-Read program is its website, which was created and is maintained as a donation by educators, researchers, and technologists in California's Silicon Valley.

You donate only small amounts to one classroom at a time

Donors make small gift of between \$250 and \$1000 for the express purpose of buying children's literature books for a specific classroom in a specific school in their local area. Donors can be individuals, charitable organizations, community-based businesses, or local divisions of large corporations. The important thing is that Donors should donate within their local area where they are most familiar with the communities and know where donations will do the most good.

All of your donation goes directly to purchasing books

You may find this idea of no overhead costs and the approach used to achieve it unfamiliar, but, you will also find the logic of this system compelling. Donors enjoy the fact that the entire gift goes directly to the purchase of books. Schools and Principals enjoy the fact that there is virtually no paperwork associated with receiving the donations. Teachers enjoy the fact that they have a new and easy-to-use source of funds for buying books for their kids. Lastly, the kids who would not otherwise have access to children's literature books are given an entire world of books to explore: A world that has helped each new generation to first imagine and then to achieve lives beyond their immediate circumstances.

Free-To-Read

FAQ's

Giving directly to your community's classrooms without overhead costs



Why donate through the Free-To-Read website, why not just donate directly to the school?

The Free-To-Read website provides necessary structure including checks and balances that a non-profit organization would provide but without the indirect costs of hiring staff and renting physical office space. The website also makes it very fast and easy for everyone involved, because it provides all of the necessary form letters that the donors and schools use to communicate with each other.

Why is children's literature important?

Children's literature provides a safe and effective way for kids to explore and gain some understanding of the world around them. It is a window to environments and life styles beyond their immediate community. It provides a road map to careers and life styles that would otherwise be beyond their reach. It provides them with insight and psychological support in matters of home, family, love, and friendship.

Do kids really want to read literature books when they aren't being forced to?

Yes. In fact you might say kids are drawn to children's literature through their natural curiosity about the world they live in. Children's literature provides answers to questions they already have and want answered. Kids and children's literature is a very natural fit.

What kind of stories do the kids like to read?

There some very popular books that most kids want to read. But, beyond that, the interests vary based on the individual kid's life experiences and interests. Some want to read about home and family issues. Some want to read about adventure in foreign lands. Some want to read about science and discovery. In general terms, they read to explore and gain insight.

Why do you want your students to read children's literature books?

As teachers we are all interested in giving kids the skills they need to succeed in life. Reading is perhaps the most essential skill. For kids, learning to read is a long and difficult task. Using their reading skills to enrich and improve their lives provides the much needed reward and motivation to continue this difficult learning process. When kids read literature books they experience the value and personal reward for learning to read. Reading becomes relevant to their personal lives. Reading becomes part of their success in life.

Free-To-Read

Mechanics

Giving directly to your community's classrooms with no overhead costs



How Free-To-Read works

The Free-To-Read website provides an entire structure, complete with essential checks and balances, to protect the integrity of the system and its participants. Thus, if you participate in the Free-To-Read program, you are required to follow the policies and procedures provided at the website.

Step 1: Creating Public Awareness

Teachers and Principals create public interest in the Free-To-Read program. They do this at the community level by making in-person presentations to clubs, organizations, or businesses. They also create interest by contacting local newspapers, radio, and television reporters and sending them the press releases provided at the website. The local media report the school's need for donors for the Free-To-Read program. These news stories direct prospective donors to the Free-To-Read website, where they simply print out and mail already made form letters, to complete the donation process.

Step 2: Making It Easy for Donors to Find a Teacher and Classroom

Using the *Inquiry Form Letter*, found in the Donor's Section of this website, the Donor contacts the Principal at the school to which they want to donate. In this form letter, Donors request that the Principal provide them with the name of a teacher who will most benefit from a Free-To-Read donation. Using the *Response Form Letter*, found in the Principal's Section of the website, the Principal responds to the Donor with the name of a teacher. If the Donor already has a teacher and classroom in mind, the Donor skips Step 2 and goes directly to Step 3.

Step 3: Making It Easy for the Donor to Give

Using *Donation Form Letter* provided in the Donor's Section, the Donor contacts the teacher and encloses a donation check for between \$250 and \$1000, made out in the school's name. The teacher hand carries the check to their Principal's office for deposit. Using the *Receipt Form Letter* found in the Teacher's Section of the website, the teacher informs the Donor that the check has been received and the funds are ready for use.

Step 4: Keeping the Donor Informed

The Teacher purchases children's literature books for his/her classroom, typically at book distributors' warehouse sales. Each time a purchase is made the Teacher provides his or her Principal and Donor with a copy of the sales receipt and an updated copy of the *Money Monitoring Sheet*, provided in the Teacher's Section of this website. The *Money Monitoring Sheet* provides the Principal and the Donor with a summary of the amount of money spent and the amount of money remaining. Once the entire donation is spent, the process ends.

Free-To-Read

Donation Letter

Giving directly to your community's classrooms with no overhead costs



Teacher's Name: _____

Name of School: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Date: _____

Dear Teacher:

The enclosed check is my donation of \$_____, to be used by you for the Free-To-Read program. A detailed set of guidelines and all the necessary procedures and forms for accepting and using donations are provided at the internet web site: www.FreeToRead.org

After you read the Teacher's Section at the Free-To-Read website, you will be ready to use the donation to purchase children's literature books for your classroom. Remember these funds can be used only to purchase children's literature books and I would like to emphasize the importance of allowing your kids to choose the books you purchase with this donation. Even though their reading interests may not be what you might hope for, the fact is that they are choosing to read books. And, in the fullness of time, it is likely that they will come to you for help in finding new topics to explore in their reading.

As detailed at the Free-To-Read website, please mail you progress reports to the following address. Good luck to you in your book-buying efforts and I look forward to receiving your first report.

Sincerely,

My name is: _____

My mailing address: _____

My City, State, Zip code: _____