



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**TO:** Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent  
District 97 Board of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Amy Warke, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer  
Dr. Helen Wei, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

**RE:** **K-5 Classroom Libraries Update**

**DATE:** June 13, 2017

**Type of Report:** Informational

**Purpose of the Report:** The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Education with an update on the K-5 Classroom Libraries.

## Introduction

Our District vision is to **create a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive, and focused on the whole child**. The purchase of the Reading Units of Study and K-5 Classroom Libraries will assist the district with fulfilling the mission by helping us address the following universal goals:

- Students and staff feel empowered, valued, and respected.
- Every student is challenged and engaged.
- Each student is known for who they are and their unique needs are met.
- Students lead their own learning and become lifelong learners
- All students have access to programs and supports to prepare them for success in high school.
- We support every student to be a critical thinker, ready to contribute to their community.
- Students feel safe and a sense of belonging.
- Caring adult-student relationships

## Classroom Library Needs

During the planning of the classroom library inventory, we discovered from teachers and principals that classroom libraries in their schools largely consisted of teachers' own personal books or books inherited from teachers who had retired or left the district. District 97 had not supported classroom libraries in recent memory. The last large recorded purchase of authentic books for classrooms was around fifteen years ago, which provided books per grade level at each school, as well as for small group and whole class novel studies in the intermediate grades. While these books include titles that are still relevant to our students, these books have been dispersed, and we would like to provide more culturally relevant books for our classrooms and students.

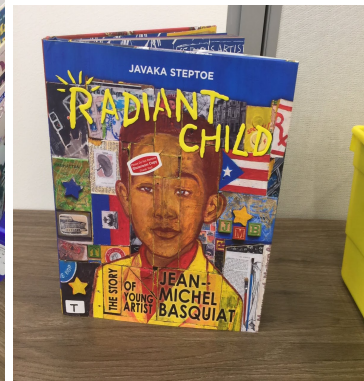
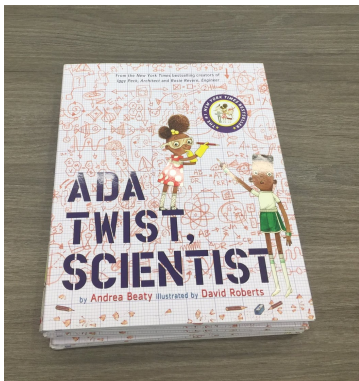
After learning this information and discussing it with our building principals, it was decided that the priority was to provide a baseline library of 600 books for each classroom, in order to truly support the implementation of the Reading Units of Study. Booklists for each grade level are currently being developed by Steps to Literacy, keeping in mind the following criteria:

- **Diverse** - books in which students can see themselves, as well as provide students with a window to learn about others
- **Supportive of our reading and writing units** - books that support the themes of our units, as well as any mentor texts that are used for demonstration purposes, read aloud, and shared reading in the *Units of Study* that were not included with our WUOS and RUOS kits
- **Leveled** - books that support our students in their guided reading levels, and allow for student choice

- **High interest** - books that highly interest and engage students
- **Aligned** - books that are aligned to the *Reading Units of Study* and *Writing Units of Study* and the K-5 ELA Written Curriculum

Grace Education Resources, the representative for Steps to Literacy, has consulted teachers, Chicago Literacy Group, Naomi Priddy (OPPL Multicultural Collection Learning Librarian), *Kids Like Us* co-founder Jane Fleming, as well as our external coach reading and writing coaches, Lisa Vahey, Clare Donovan-Scane, and Rachel Dahl.

On June 5th, all K-5 teachers were invited to attend a Preview Party Open House, during which they were able to preview sample of the classroom libraries for each grade level. We had around forty teachers attend the event, and we received a lot of positive feedback as well as a number of questions. We will respond to the questions through a shared FAQ document over the summer.



The classroom libraries will be delivered to the elementary schools during the week of August 7th. The books will be boxed for quick and easy unpacking--they will be packed within their bins, organized by unit, and labeled by guided reading level. This was decided with input from the building level.

With a more accurate count of sections within each grade level, we anticipate the cost of all K-5 Classroom Libraries to be approximately \$800,000, which is over \$100,000 in savings from what was originally quoted.

### **Professional Learning to Support Classroom Libraries**

Over the summer, we will release a video orienting teachers to their new classroom libraries. We will also collect questions from teachers and address them through an FAQ or video. During our summer professional learning sessions for K-2 teachers, *Getting Started with Reading Units of Study*, we provide an overview of how the classroom libraries will be used. We will more detailed and specific professional learning sessions to teachers on our October 6th Institute Day, to further support the use of their classroom libraries and the implementation of *Reading Units of Study* and *Writing Units of Study*.