

School stocks up on books

Published Saturday May 17th, 2008

Elsipogtog School awarded \$77,000 Love of Reading grant

A3 By Aloma Jardine
Times & Transcript Staff

Students at Elsipogtog School will soon see a big difference in their library.

The school is the only one in New Brunswick to receive a grant through the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation this year.

The grant will provide the school with \$77,000 over three years to stock its library and classrooms with books.

"They submitted a very strong application that highlighted a strong commitment and mandate to literacy," says Indigo spokeswoman Lisa Huie. "And they outlined a very smart plan for putting the funds to good use to help impact replenishment plans for both the school library as well as classroom libraries."

Huie says the grant recipients really need to show they will create an environment where literacy is a top priority.

"We really want to see a commitment to enhancing literacy so we know this investment will really help make a difference," she says.

Huie says part of the grant is given as credit at an Indigo, Chapters, or Coles store or to purchase books through the company's website.

The remainder is awarded as cash to go towards any literacy program or materials the school wishes to purchase.

The program is only in its fourth year, so Huie says this is the first year they've had "alumni" schools.

"We're really starting to see some of the tangible results of libraries that are current and flowing with relevant materials for the student bodies," she says. "We're seeing reading levels improve through all the elementary schools."

Many school libraries have become woefully out of date or understocked. In 1970 public schools in Canada received about three new books per child per year. Now they received less than the equivalent of one-third of a book per child.

Huie says Elsipogtog School was currently spending less than \$8 per student per year on new books and literacy materials.

The grant will give them \$100 per student per year for the next three years.

"Literacy is so integral to future success," she says. "There has been a lot of chatter over recent years about books falling out of favour (with children) but that is really just not the case. Children love books, they love stories, and it makes such a difference in their ability to thrive."

The foundation offers \$1.5 million each year in order to provide books to high-needs elementary

schools.

This year, 20 schools across the country were selected to receive grants.

New Brunswick schools that have received the grant in past years include Forest Glen School in Moncton, South Devon Elementary School in Fredericton, and Burnt Church School.

