

60,000 Reasons to Read

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Indigo's Love of Reading Foundation grants money to a handful of schools that demonstrate a need for books every year. This year, Betty Gibson is one of three Manitoba schools to convince the foundation of their need for thousands of dollars worth of new resources.

"We had noticed a dramatic increase in our English as an Additional Language students so that was a big part of it," said Angeline Templeton. As a teacher she saw some big changes to the student body. "We also have a relatively large aboriginal population of students as well so we were really wanting to boost the resources for those students."

Templeton has been teaching at Betty Gibson School for seven years, so she's accustomed to the resourcefulness it takes to be a teacher.

"Often we have teachers going to garage sales, picking up used books, discards from the public library. Our teachers are very resourceful in what they try to do to provide literacy to our students. So anyway we can receive books is great and this is just a huge bonus."

The Indigo grant is worth \$60,000 over the next three years. Last Friday staff began deliberating over how best to spend the funds.

"The cost of books is a huge part of our budget in terms of where teachers feel the we need to spend those resources," said Templeton. "But then we're dealing with things like math and numeracy manipulatives as well, and we're trying to boost those. So you can only spend so many dollars in one particular area."

Many of the students want more chapter books. "There's a lot of very short books," said grade five student, Matthew Burgess. "The deadline when you take the books out--the deadline is really long."

And he had some suggestions for titles: "I kinda like action books. My favourite series is The 39 Clues."

"Stephanie Mayer," said grade six student, Arianna Linski. "She writes Twilight. My favourite movie and book."

This latest announcement of grant recipients brings Indigo's contribution to literacy programs to \$7.5 million. This is the fifth year the Love of Reading Foundation has provided grants to schools in need of funding for their literacy programs.