

May 27,2022

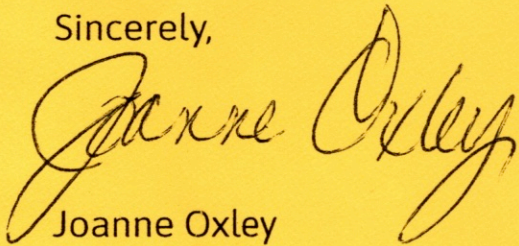
To :The Wonderful Benefactors at StoryBook Ottawa,

Please find enclosed thank you notes from the students of my grade 4-5-6 class at Cambridge St Community Public School. The thrill of receiving brand new books chosen by the students themselves was only matched by their enthusiasm to read ! I cannot thank you enough for this generous initiative and commend you for expanding the program to include our school. The choice of books at every level was outstanding, everyone found something that spoke to them!

Instilling a love of reading is one of the most important aspects of my job as a teacher and so I again thank you for this excellent opportunity to encourage and promote reading.

Thank you for your kindness, it is a truly meaningful gesture in a world that certainly can use every ounce these days,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanne Oxley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Joanne Oxley

Grade 4-5-6

Cambridge St CPS

joanne.oxley@ocdsb.ca



St. Anthony School
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Monday, March 8, 2021

Dear Canada Revenue Agency,

It all started 10 years ago with Sean and Sue Hopkins approaching the Principal of St. Anthony School to make a donation of books to students. They explained that the choice of school was based on the fact that they had recently moved into the area. As well, Sue's grandmother had attended the school 75 years prior and she felt connected to the school. The Hopkins had a love of reading and wanted to share it with the children in their new community.

Every year, they have put great effort into finding out what children are interested in reading by creating lists for them to choose a favourite and then shop for the books. The books are always delivered to the school prior to the Christmas holidays, beautifully presented in gift bags, each with a sticker inside the cover where students can sign their names.

This has always been a very exciting time for our students. They felt special being shown this kindness and it helped them to cherish their books. They have been encouraged by the teachers to care for them and to share with friends. There are many children who have graduated from St. Anthony School with a collection of Hopkins' books starting from kindergarten.

Below are some comments from some of our current Grade 5 and 6 students who have been receiving books each year:

“My first book, *I'll Never Let You Go*, my mom read it to me and she cried.” - **Jacques, Grade 5.**

“My most favourite book, *I Am Malala*, was the best book I have ever read!” - **Esther, Grade 5.**

“I got so excited that I could choose the book I was interested in – it made me happy!” -
Lois, Grade 6

“I read the whole book in a day!” - **Vireak, Grade 6.**

The Hopkins have truly made a difference in the lives of our students at St. Anthony School. They have been instrumental in supporting our focus on literacy and have helped create a positive culture of reading. It would make sense that this well coordinated good will be applied to other schools so that many more students could benefit.

Sincerely,

Cindy Aldrich-Braddon
Principal
St. Anthony School



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To whom it may concern:

As a recently retired educator with the Ottawa Catholic School board, I would like to share my experience working with Shaun and Sue Hopkins on building literacy at a small inner-city school.

Literacy has always been a professional passion, and while working at St. Anthony school my focus was building literacy skills in a population of students who came from mostly newcomer families with another language spoken in the home.

Approximately a decade ago, I was ecstatic to learn that the Hopkins family wished to share their love of reading with the students at St. Anthony school through a donation of a book to each child for Christmas. This helped to foster the excitement of stories that leads to frequent reading, which is necessary for building literacy skills such as fluency and comprehension.

Each year students were given the opportunity to choose a book that matched their interest, another key indicator of reading success, and were encouraged to share the stories with the class. They learned to treat books with care, writing their names on a sticker inside the front cover provided by the Hopkins. Children were taught to collect their gifts each year of their educational career at St. Anthony and read to siblings at home. This was significant in that it helped with the essential literacy development component of at-home reading in households where parents did not have English skills.

Finally, we encouraged the children to show their gratitude by creating cards, videos and writing letters to the Hopkins family as a character building activity. The yearly donations helped to mold responsible citizens with a love of books. This was apparent in the relatively strong EQAO literacy skills in grades 3 and 6 for a school with its demographics.

I highly endorse that the Hopkins' book donations to schools in need be granted charity status as I have seen the impact it can have in the lives of children and their future academic success.

Sabina Ekich,
Masters in Education (Literacy)

To Whom It May Concern,

Reading is one of the most important skills in helping to build a foundation of a child's education. By learning essential literacy skills, students can have greater access to opportunities. This is a skill that must begin when children are in their early years of learning in order to be built upon over the coming years. Fostering a love of reading is crucial in young children, as this will set the course in which they will be learning and developing their comprehension and critical thinking skills.

The gift of a new book can be a life changing experience for a child; receiving and reading your very own, new book can be the spark that inspires a child to fall in love with reading, and thus can create a new lifelong learner. However, this opportunity is out of reach for many children from low-income families and neighbourhoods.

As a teacher, I have seen many students who have never developed their literacy skills, or even an interest in reading. It is heartbreaking to see children who lack essential skills, fall short of their potential, and who lose an interest in their education, all because of their struggles with reading.

It is for this reason that I am getting involved in this initiative. The goal of filling children's hands with a new book, whom without this organization would not otherwise have the chance to own a brand-new book, is one that I can see as having a tangible benefit on their literacy skills, and furthermore, their education.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Kyle Wallace
Teacher
Notre Dame High School
Ottawa, ON

Le 12 décembre 2022

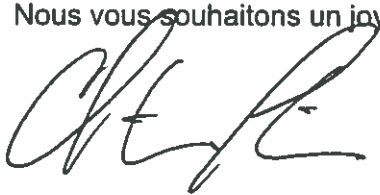
**Mme Josée Baril
M. Marc Lepage
Livre de contes Ottawa
805-330 Loretta Ave. S.
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1S 4E8**

Chers Mme Baril et M. Lepage,

Nous tenons à vous remercier du dons de livres à nos élèves.

La distribution de ceux-ci a été faite ce matin et sera vraiment appréciée par nos familles.
Le monde est meilleur grâce à la bonté de gens comme vous.

Nous vous souhaitons un joyeux temps de fêtes avec votre famille et vos proches,



Christian Lortie
Directeur d'école