

# **Wandering Thoughts From a Grateful Librarian**

A message to the Grand Rapids Area Library Foundation from Tracy Kampa

1. Thanks for being so wonderfully Foundational!
2. Gratitude to the Foundation and Mr. Ehalt. His gift has already changed our Children's Library, and will continue to do so.
3. Biggest Decision of the Year, or maybe the decade, or possibly a half-century:
  - a. The Children's Library has gone screen-free
    - i. We are trying to offer more manipulatives, for all ages.
    - ii. The Foundation had purchased a Duplo table and Duplos, Magna-Tiles, Keva Planks, an additional rack for discovery kits, and new, sturdy, tall tables.
    - iii. We also are getting two new soft pieces of sturdy furniture to mask the space where the iPads used to be, they have been ordered
4. School Year programs are done:
  - a. Lego Club and Afterschool with Miss Amy were both well received, and were a great way to get back into regular programming
  - b. We will continue our online presence with Artastic and Online Storytime throughout the year
5. Summer Programming! (Eeep!)
  - a. We are looking at several Summer programs including Summer Storytime, Mid-Day Movies, Book Club(s), Lego Club and are still planning for another program or two.
    - i. When we contract with a community member for a program, they are paid \$75 for the program, their prep time, their set up time and their clean-up time. In addition, we provide them with \$50 for materials fees. This hasn't changed in many years. We might want to up the ante a bit? Or not?
    - ii. We use the Foundation Children's fund for all children's in-person programming for which we contract

- b. Through the Arrowhead Library System, we already have several programs booked, including Story Time with Chione, the Climb Theater, and Bubble Wonders. In addition, I have booked the Traveling Lantern theater, for which we will pay (with the Foundation Children's fund) \$395.
  - c. We will also use the Children's Fund for our Summer Artastic series. During the school year, the funds for this program are split between a Children's First! grant and the Friends of the Library. In the summer, I need to rely on the Foundation. We are still passing out 150 kits each month!
  - d. For Summer celebration this year, I will also need to rely on the Foundation account, as we will not have the \$750 Arrowhead Library System reimbursement this year. We do have a \$300 Children First grant, but that will only cover about 2 or 3 of the 8 planned activities. In addition, we may need to use the Children's Fund money for Kona Ice. (BTW, last year's summer celebration saw more than 500 folks here, and people are already asking about this year!)
    - i. Zoomobile has cancelled, money went to the Wonderbook fund
6. Book Time:
- a. Blandin Foundation has pulled funding for Invest Early, this may have an impact on Book Time. I have no knowledge of changes yet, but, I wouldn't be surprised if they requested a conversation with the Library. Their long-time head, Karen Haatvedt, has announced her retirement, so it may take new people a bit to get caught up. Stay tuned! They may also pull funding for Children First!, which is where we get money for Artastic throughout the year. Again, I have heard nothing concrete, just an FYI.