

10 Years Stories



Education Foundation projects make a lasting difference: Book Clubs spread across Humble ISD

Adversity and opportunity sometimes come hand in hand. Elm Grove Elementary School faced adversity in 1999 when a fire damaged their school. The destruction was so great that classes could not be held during the reconstruction. A temporary campus was established for a year in Humble while the \$3 million restoration occurred. The situation was difficult, but led to opportunity.

Elm Grove Elementary School Librarian Tonya-Hinojosa May decided to establish a campus book club to celebrate the re-opening of the library in 2000. "We wanted something fun that would make kids excited to be back into the library," Hinojosa-May said, "a spark that would make the library a special place."

Everyone loved book club so much that the concept quickly spread to other campuses. More than nine Humble ISD elementary schools have since established clubs of their own. Over 1,000 Humble ISD students participate in books clubs annually.

Grants from the Humble ISD Education Foundation allowed schools to purchase 25 to 30 copies of books to make a set. Book sets are shared among schools. Grant funding also allowed the librarians to incorporate creative hands-on activities into the club meetings such as making costumes, creating art, and engaging in fun games - all related to the books' themes. For example, third and fourth graders read *So You Want to Be President* and then researched various presidents. They then made "Who am I?" photo stories based on their research and quizzed their friends at that club meeting.

"Book club makes students lifelong readers as they realize how many different types of books there are," Hinojosa-May said. "We read poetry, non-fiction, folk tales and fairy tales. We try to read as many different genres as possible."

Book clubs also inspire librarians. Finding a potential theme or title for a book club meeting gets creativity flowing. "I immediately begin to think, 'How can I make it more interesting and real? How can I tie that in?'" Hinojosa-May said.

The Humble ISD Education Foundation, during its ten years of existence, has awarded more than \$3.1 million to Humble ISD educators to support innovative classroom enrichment projects. For more information, please visit www.humbleisd.foundation.org



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