

Literacy Fellowship Expansion

By The Leaders Readers Network



The Leaders Readers Network cultivates a network of leaders who provide books, supplies and projects to support early literacy in underfunded schools.

Critical Need in our Community and Population to Be Served by the Project:

San Antonio continues to face significant early literacy challenges, particularly in Title I elementary schools where many Pre-K through Grade 3 students enter school below grade level in language and literacy development. Limited access to books, insufficient literacy coaching, and lack of evidence-based professional learning for teachers are compounded by the impacts of poverty. Research shows children with limited access to books at home experience lower reading achievement, while students with access to 100 or more books significantly outperform peers with fewer than 10 books.

These barriers disproportionately affect economically disadvantaged students, and students requiring targeted literacy intervention. Books often cost \$12-\$30, placing them out of reach for many families and underfunded schools. TLRN's Literacy Fellowship addresses these inequities by increasing access to high-quality books, strengthening educator capacity through coaching and professional development, and expanding literacy engagement opportunities for students and families.

The program will serve elementary campuses across San Antonio, including Northside ISD, SAISD, Southwest ISD, East Central ISD, Edgewood ISD, and Medina Valley ISD, where many campuses report third-grade reading proficiency rates between 16% and 47%. Demand for the program continues to grow, with San Antonio representing one of TLRN's largest applicant regions during the most recent fellowship cycle.

TLRN serves Title I elementary schools in the San Antonio region through classroom book distributions, read-aloud programs, lessons, professional development, and community events. In the last two years, TLRN supported 584 educators and impacted 29,250 students across Northside ISD, San Antonio ISD, Southwest ISD, East Central ISD, Edgewood ISD, Medina Valley ISD, and Pre-k 4 SA through literacy and service projects.

Partner schools primarily serve historically underserved student populations, with 60%-97% of students identified as economically disadvantaged. Across participating campuses, only 16-55% of students are reading at grade level in 3rd grade, highlighting a significant need for early literacy intervention.

For the 2026-2027 school year, TLRN will expand its focus on Pre-K through Grade 3 students in Title I schools to focus improving literacy outcomes. The project expansion will support 150 educators and directly impact 12,000 students throughout the San Antonio region.

Description of Project and Proposed Use of Impact SA Funds:

TLRN's Literacy Fellowship addresses early literacy challenges by partnering with district and campus leaders to identify high-need schools and provide targeted literacy support for Pre-K through 3rd grade teachers and classrooms. The program equips educators with Science of Reading-aligned professional learning, instructional coaching, literacy implementation support, mentorship, and high-quality classroom resources that strengthen reading instruction and improve student reading outcomes. TLRN also expands book access, engaging literacy experiences, family literacy events, and student-led initiatives that foster a culture of reading. The existing and proposed expansion will further strengthen partnership with educators and classrooms to provide support across pre-k through 3rd grade classrooms across San Antonio. This will help provide literacy support tailored to improve reading outcomes.

Funding from Impact SA will increase literacy support for Pre-K through Grade 3 students across San Antonio-area school districts. Expansion efforts will prioritize campuses with established multi-year partnerships in Northside ISD, Medina Valley ISD, San Antonio ISD, Edgewood ISD, East Central ISD, Southwest ISD, and Pre-K 4 SA, serving students in historically underserved communities. TLRN will work with campus leaders to establish support for prek-through 3rd grade at Mead Elementary, Colby Glass Elementary, Silos Elementary, Valley Hi, Charles Ball, and other partner schools.

Funding will expand access to books, literacy resources, educator coaching, and family engagement opportunities that strengthen literacy outcomes and create equitable learning opportunities for students. The expansion will support

approximately 150 educators and directly impact 12,000 students, helping young learners build strong reading skills, increase academic achievement, and become confident readers.

Impact on People to Be Served - Measurable Outcomes (Described in "S.M.A.R.T." terms):

Specific: The project will improve early literacy outcomes by increasing kindergarten readiness and Grade 3 reading proficiency across participating districts. Through Science of Reading-aligned professional learning, literacy coaching, and implementation support, educators will strengthen evidence-based instructional practices in Pre-K through Grade 3 classrooms. The project aims to improve student reading achievement, expand access to high-quality literacy resources, and build sustainable district capacity for long-term literacy success.

Measurable: By June 2027, participating campuses will increase TX-KEA kindergarten readiness and Grade 3 reading proficiency by at least 4 percentage points, with an additional 3-point increase by June 2028. At least 80% of participating teachers will demonstrate improved Science of Reading-aligned instructional practices through coaching observations and coaching cycle participation, increasing to 85% by Year 2. Progress will be measured using TX-KEA data, district reading assessments, Grade 3 STAAR results, coaching tools, educator surveys, and student progress monitoring data.

Achievable: TLRN has more than 14 years of experience supporting educators and students in underserved communities through literacy initiatives, educator leadership development, and access to high-quality books and instructional resources. During the past two years, TLRN has supported 584 educators and 29,250 students while distributing more than 49,000 books. Fellowship participants have also earned Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) designations for student academic growth. This expansion builds on a proven model, strong district partnerships, and demonstrated demand from educators and school leaders.

Relevant: These outcomes directly support TLRN's mission to build confident readers by strengthening literacy support across Pre-K through Grade 3 classrooms. Expanding the Literacy Fellowship helps improve kindergarten readiness, third-grade reading proficiency, and teacher retention by providing educators with coaching, professional learning, and high-quality literacy resources. This proven model strengthens district partnerships, supports long-term student success, and advances TLRN's goal of becoming the literacy partner and charity of choice for schools and communities across San Antonio.

Time-Bound: By July 2027, TLRN will conduct a midpoint evaluation to assess educator participation, implementation fidelity, kindergarten readiness indicators, and early literacy outcomes across participating campuses. By August 2028, TLRN will complete a comprehensive evaluation of the Literacy Fellowship's impact on kindergarten readiness, third-grade reading growth, educator engagement, and teacher retention. Progress will be measured through district assessment data, educator participation and retention data, and feedback from teachers, school leaders, and district partners.

Project Budget:

Funding Source	Amount	Narrative
Foundations/Corporations	\$200,000.00	TLRN received a grant from the Moody Foundation \$82,898. Pending requests: San Antonio Area Foundation (\$15,000), Najim Foundation (\$20,000), HEB (\$25,000), Ware Foundation (\$15,000), and Greehey Family Foundation (\$10,000).
Individuals	\$65,000.00	Big Give SA campaign and individual donors throughout the year
United Way (and similar)	\$35,000.00	Pending grant application for the Safety Net RFP
Total Other Revenue	\$300,000.00	

TLRN will continue to pursue additional grant opportunities to support program expansion and sustainability. Moody Foundation grant supported collaboration and planning efforts with TNTP to secure district partners such as Medina Valley ISD's Silos Elementary.

Expense Category	ISA Exp	ISA Narrative	Other Exp	Other Exp Narrative
Indirect Costs	\$10,000.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Agency Personnel (Salaries, Wages, Benefits)	\$0.00	NA	\$75,000.00	salary for part-time staff
Consultant and Professional Fees	\$0.00	NA	\$25,000.00	Professional services for professional development and coaching
Program Supplies and Expenses	\$90,000.00	Books, curriculum, materials, program travel, professional development, postage, conference materials and supplies	\$200,000.00	Books, curriculum, materials, program travel, professional development, postage, conference materials and supplies
Total Expenses	\$100,000.00		\$300,000.00	