

REA³D Grant Award Amounts to Increase

“We raise money to give those dollars away,” responded President Sherm Carlson to a question posed numerous times as to what REA³D is all about. Yes, there are guidelines, a rubric, existence of past support, capped dollar amounts, etc. that weigh into the discussion of approving grant requests. Grants are awarded based on the available interest on REA³D holdings AND the applicants’ demonstration that their request aligns with the REA³D mission, “dedicated to supporting lifelong learning within the Proctor school district communities.” As the REA³D fund has grown, the average amount of grants awarded has slowly increased too. Since the first REA³D grant award of \$300 in 2007, over 200 more REA³D grants have been funded with our top award at \$16,500 (see page 7). Recently, based on our annual accounting of dollars raised from the REA³D by Candlelight event, sponsorships, memorials, and direct mail contributions, the REA³D finance committee moved to increase the recommended average amount that grant applicants can apply for. Go to rea3d.org for more details on REA³D’s grant application process. *(REA³D funds are held by Ameriprise Financial and the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.)*



REA³D Grant Expands Instrumental Experiences for Pike Lake Students



In her efforts to get elementary students excited about music education, music teacher Ryli Murray saw that her students really loved to play musical instruments. Murray realized that at Pike Lake elementary, the classroom instrument situation was in a sorry state. There were only about ten instruments available for classes of 20+ students, and many that were available had suffered from wear and tear over many years of use. The ideal situation is for all the students in the class to be able to play on instruments together at the same time, instead of taking turns with the instruments, which left some students feeling left out. Murray applied for and was awarded a REA³D grant of \$1,000 to assure that every student in her classrooms had an instrument to play. With this award, Murray bought cowbells, bongos, tambourines, a Buffalo drum and a hand drum set. Her students were thrilled. Having a full set of instruments allowed every student in the class to have a chance to play at the same time. They also learned care and cleaning of the instruments. Getting kids inspired to play music at a early age can definitely lead to its life-long enjoyment, which fits right in with REA³D’s mission to support life-long learning.

Snowshoes Help Students Appreciate the Wonders of Winter

Teachers at Pike Lake elementary also applied for a REA³D grant of \$1,000 to outfit 145 pre-K to age 7 students with snowshoes and other winter wear so that they could involve their students in more outdoor education. The school had snowshoe sets in the past but many had broken down over time. Teachers say the children love to wear them and can really take advantage of their school forest environment when all the kids are suitably equipped. Twenty-three sets of snowshoes and 24 pairs of waterproof mittens were purchased with the grant.



REA³D BY CANDLELIGHT 2025

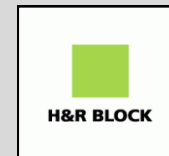
A big thank you to the businesses, school staff, students and community members who generously contributed to our highly successful 2025 REA³D by Candlelight On-Line Auction and Dinner Event, which raised nearly \$30,000. Please support our generous business partners and let them know you appreciate their sponsorship of REA³D efforts.



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Grandma's Marathon			Zen House

* denotes Silver Sponsorship

REA³D Event Features Inspiring Presence of '09 Grad and His 'Journey to the Dream'

Spellbinding would be an appropriate description of this year's REA³D by Candlelight speaker. Chais Eliason delivered an inspirational message to the audience members – the central theme focused on his gratitude for his upbringing, his drive to achieve, and his desire to give back to his community. He graciously credited his family, his teachers, and his community for helping him reach his goal of working in the professional racing field.

Even though racing season would be full speed ahead during the Candlelight event, when the REA³D board contacted Chais to be the featured speaker, he said, "Let me check my calendar and get back to you." Within minutes, he contacted the REA³D board member and enthusiastically accepted the invitation.

For the first time in Candlelight history, Chais' inspirational message brought attendees to their feet at the close of his presentation. He talked about being a young man looking through a glass window at his heroes in racing. He knew then that he wanted to overcome that seemingly daunting dream of being part of that community. Through his limitless determination and hard work, he achieved his dream job and continues to be a force in the racing industry as a primary race engineer. Now on the other side of the glass window, he inspires others to never stop believing in their dreams. He further challenged the audience to be generous with one's talents and give back when able.



Chais Eliason with former teacher, Lynn Peterson, who also serves as a REA³D board member.

REA³D BY CANDLELIGHT 2025





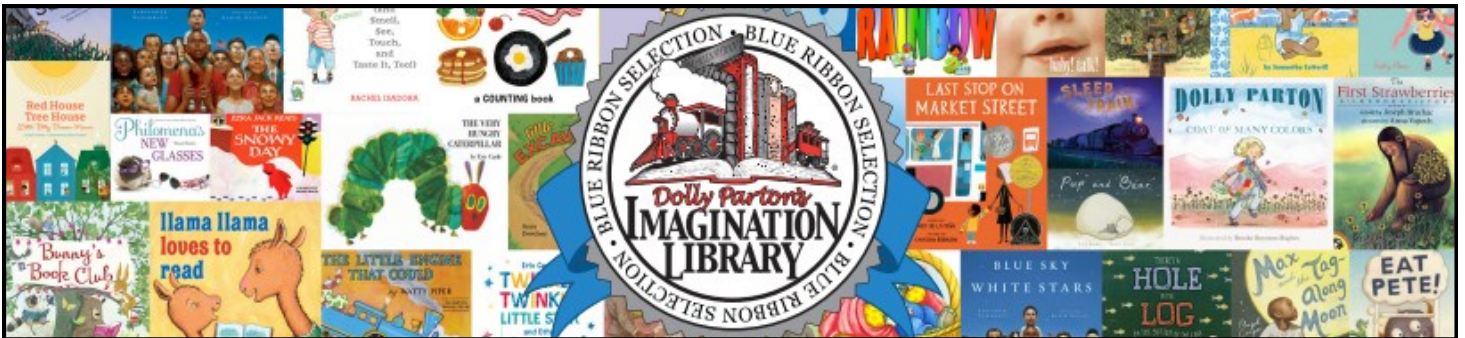
Bay View and Pike Lake Elementary Students Experience Duluth Children's Museum Workshops

This spring, REA³D supported Proctor elementary student participation in three Duluth Children's Museum workshops. Drew Jensen applied for REA³D funding to engage 240 elementary students in three of these out-of-school time activities titled, *Rocket Science*, *Forces of Flight*, and *Future Innovators*.

In *Rocket Science*, students explored the outer reaches of our solar system and the mechanics behind how rockets work. Students imagined and created models of their own planets and then participated in creating stomp rockets, which were launched using DCM (Duluth Children's Museum) launchers.

In *Forces of Flight*, students discovered the four important forces of flight that keep our airplanes in the air—Lift! Drag! Thrust! and Gravity! Students created paper airplanes and gliders and tested them out through various exciting flight challenges.

In *Future Innovators*, students were guided through the engineering design process and participated in hands-on engineering challenges using household materials. Inspired by engineer Rosie Revere, this workshop encouraged students to think outside the box, and use familiar things to create new and exiting inventions.



REA³D continues to give major support to the operation of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for pre-school children within the Proctor school district communities, coordinated by Russell Habermann. Russell says, "In 2024, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library distributed 1,736 high quality children's books to 185 Proctor pre-school children, which is 29.9% of all children under five years old in the Proctor School District! Since launching in 2022, the program has delivered a total of 3,852 books to 256 pre-school children. Learn more at rea3d.org/imaginationlibrary

Sign your pre-schooler up for FREE children's books!



PHS Student Government Officer Secures REA³D Grant for new Rowdy Rails Mascot



According to Laykn Lyons, vice-president of Proctor High School student government, “Our mascot, Rowdy, has been in use for over a decade. The student government, Mr. Rohweder, and I have been working on a new exciting mascot for our school. With a new mascot we want it to be more involved, sort of like how the Minnesota's gopher makes an appearance at all school sponsored activities. Our school mascot brings Proctor pride to many community events in our district including pep rallies, sports games, concerts, Hog-head parades, community picnics, and any other event where it is appropriate to have a fun mascot in attendance. At Proctor we Educate, Engage, and Inspire. A huge part of our school is the community that drives the train forward. Having an exciting character that makes appearances in a student and community setting provides the community with pride and an appreciation for our history.” The total cost of the mascot was \$6,000; students raised 2/3 of this and a REA³D grant of \$2,000 helped complete the purchase.



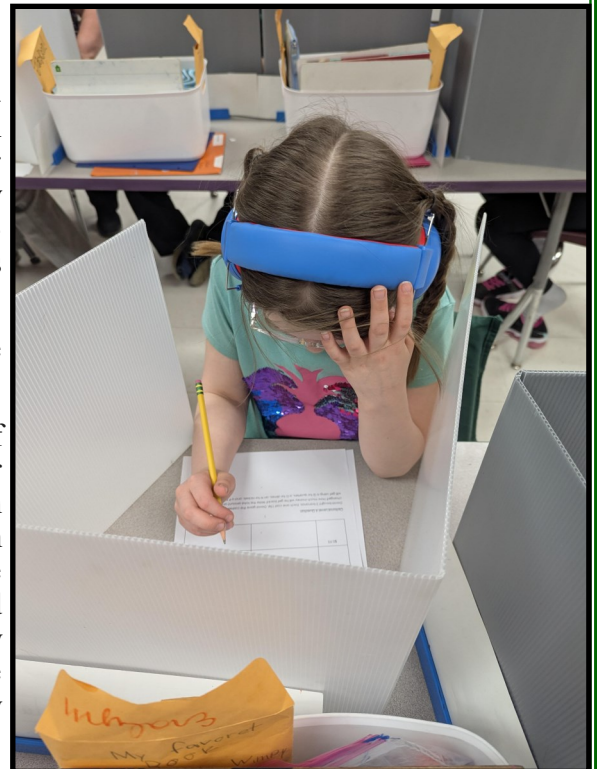
Noise Cancelling Headphones Help Minimize Distractions

For some students, the clamor of fire drills, assemblies and construction sounds causes real disruptions in their concentration and learning. Realizing that there were a number of students in her building whose learning suffered during such noise, Mindy DeLacy applied to REA³D for a grant to purchase two “noise cancelling” headphones to be used in any K-5 classroom. Teachers are thrilled with the result:

Erika Felbaum says, “My kiddos LOVE THESE! We would use MORE if we could!!!” And Kris Hagemeyer says,



“My students have used them if they are silent reading and other kids are working on something with partners. They have also used them for indoor recess, so they don't have to listen to all of the chaos around them and can focus on what they are doing. Another time they have used them is for Xtra Math, so they can focus.”



REA³D Awards \$20,693 in Fall 2024 and Winter 2025 Grant Rounds

Amount	Name of Project	Contact Person	Population Served
\$475	PHS Business Program Printer	Brittany Schubitzke	150 14-17 year olds
\$800	Noise canceling Headphones	Mindy DeLacy	100-200 K-5 students
\$750	Duluth Children's Museum Admissions	Drew Jenson	240 K-5 Bay View and Pike Lake students
\$10,000	REA ³ D Renovated Library	John Awsumb	600+ youth and community
\$2,000	Rowdy Mascot	Laykn Lyons	Community
\$2,368	Proctor FC Youth Soccer Shed	Karl Kaldor	400 Pre-K to grade 12 Soccer players
\$3,300	Big Bat League	Brad Brzezinski	25-30 4-10 year olds
\$1,000	Portable Electronic Scoreboard	Dave McNamee	500 wrestlers and spectators

Memorials Honor Past, Present and Future Visions

Mary Murphy was a driving force in Minnesota politics for decades, and she spent her life constantly promoting education and literacy. She was one of those individuals who appeared to be timeless, so when she recently passed, everyone was saddened by the tremendous loss. As per her wishes, Mary Murphy explicitly stated she wanted donors to support REA³D, and so they did. Soon after her passing, checks and cash donations poured into REA³D to support its mission of providing grants for lifelong learning in the greater Proctor community. In addition to her legacy support, Mary attended nearly all of REA³D's past 23 Candlelight Dinner events, and participated not only as a guest but as a top competitor for high value silent and live auction items. Through her donations and steadfast support of REA³D, Mary's legacy will live on.



BIG IDEAS—BIG GRANTS

As REA³D's fund grows, its capacity to award larger grants expands as well. Here are the largest REA³D grants awarded to date:



Amount Awarded	Project
\$16,500	Playground for EveryBODY, 2022
\$10,000	Scorer's Table, 2024
\$10,000	REA ³ D Memorial Library Resources, 2024
\$7,800	Learning Support for K-2 Children of Essential Employees (COVID), 2020
\$3,300	Big Bat League Startup, 2025
\$2,368	Futbol Shed, 2025
\$2,000	Books for Elementary Vending Machines, 2022
\$2,000	Rowdy Mascot Support, 2025
\$1,500	Rails TV Staff Jackets, 2022



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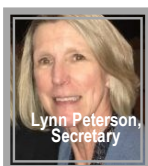
REA³D BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

REA³D invites YOU to consider membership in this important and growing community institution! All are welcome to apply—the only requirement is interest in supporting lifelong learning within the Proctor school district communities. Any of the following might also be helpful:

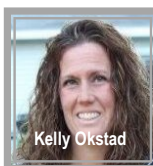
- Desire to expand REA³D's presence in the community
- Ability to reach out to Proctor alumni and community for support and involvement
- Experience with non-profit management, board membership
- Willingness to seriously and fairly consider grant applications
- Experience with social media, on-line communications
- Experience in business, education, accounting, marketing and/or promotion
- Interest in writing for publications
- Willingness to promote REA³D through promotion of annual fundraising events

Please email rea3d@proctor.k12.mn.us for an application, or download from our website at rea3d.org.

REA³D Board of Directors, 2024-25



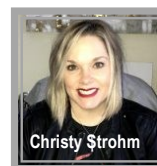
Lynn Peterson,
Secretary



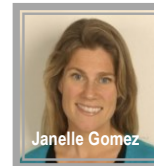
Kelly Okstad



Sherm Carlson,
President



Christy Stroh



Janelle Gomez

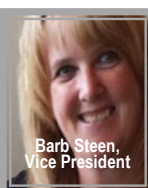


Shelly Vanneste

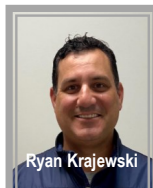
Have a question about REA³D? Chances are you know one or more of our REA³D Board of Director Members, pictured here. Feel free to reach out to any of them if you have questions about events, have ideas for REA³D grants or want to become more involved!



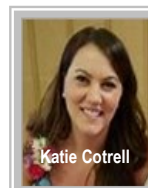
Connie Olson Stanley



Barb Steen,
Vice President



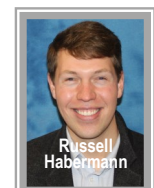
Ryan Krajewski



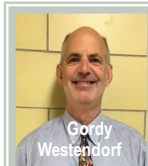
Katie Cotrell



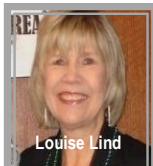
Rory Johnson



Russell
Habermann



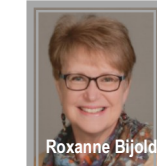
Gordy
Westendorf



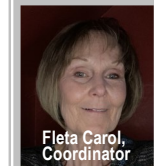
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