

Report to the Board  
Kathy O'Malley Children's Department  
January 2023

**Programs:**

All children's programs and story times begin the week of January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Registrations are going well. There are actually quite a few new faces, which is great. It shows that more people are hearing about our programs and are excited to participate.

The sad news is that we lost one of our therapy dogs. Zena passed away at the end of November. We still have two teams to run the Reading Can Be Ruff programs, but Zena will be missed.

The teams have also returned to some of the schools to continue their work with students in the classrooms.

I am making a renewed push to promote our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program. This is an early literacy program designed to encourage reading with newborns, infants and toddlers as well as initiate a parent/child bond while reading together. Formal education typically doesn't start until a child is 4 or 5, so parents and caregivers are actually their child's first teacher.

This program offers a fun way to establish strong early literacy skills and give kids the confidence to become strong readers.

We have offered the program for many years, but it seems to have fallen off. I think re-promoting the program and using Inchy the Book Vending Machine tokens as an incentive will renew interest. I have also purchased some Ready for School backpacks filled with fun school supplies that the kids will receive when they have completed the 1000 book challenge.

We are planning our Writing to Read book contest and adding some new Stem components to the Investigation Stations. We are looking forward to a great new year.