

NEXT STEPS

Prior to the start of summer break (May 2026,) I will meet with the principal for final approval of the For the Love of Literacy project. I, too, hope to meet with the librarian and with the current third grade teachers to establish rapport, gain feedback, and present the structure of the program. In addition, details of the program, including the location of the reading sessions and the method by which parents will sign up to volunteer, will be identified. Prior to the start of the 2026-2027 school year, teacher assignments and contact information will also be confirmed, so that For the Love of Literacy can hit the ground running on the first day of school.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family and fierce “Momma Friends” for their endless support and encouragement while I participate in this wonderful opportunity. My utmost gratitude is extended to my greatest blessing and most precious responsibility: my son, Jude: thank you for the opportunity to be your Momma and fiercest advocate. Thank you to my husband, Carl, for providing me the privilege of volunteering and being a part of our son’s day to day educational career. Lastly but most pivotal, I wish to thank principal, Mrs. Dana Kimchi; administration, teachers, staff, students, and families – I pray this program makes an impact and further makes you proud to be a “Jacket.” I am truly grateful for this opportunity.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

For The Love Of
Literacy



THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY/Ohio Statewide
Family Engagement Center

Beth
Galena, OH

INTRODUCTION/NEED ADDRESSED

I am a parent leader in the Olentangy Local School District. As a devoted parent and involved member of our school community, I share the the District's mission "grounded in its pursuit to facilitate maximum learning for every student," and firmly believe that each and every student deserves the opportunity to be successful within the school setting. This responsibility lies with both parents and teachers to foster that development.

It has been identified by the school's principal that family involvement and volunteerism has never "rebounded" since Covid. Also identified is that, around the third grade level, the focus of reading becomes less about enjoyment and more about academics and test scores. The purpose of the For The Love for Literacy project is to increase family engagement/volunteerism while promoting a love for reading, family bonding, and the strengthening of the school to family connection.

GOAL and OBJECTIVES

By the end of November 2026, the school will implement a "reading buddies" program titled "For The Love of Literacy" for third grade students and their volunteering loved ones, hosting a total of at least 10% of the total class, in efforts to increase family engagement and volunteerism within the school community while promoting a love for reading and opportunities for family-school connections.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN DESCRIPTION

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

- +Meet with the principal, the librarian and current third grade teachers to seek proposal feedback and set program details (location of the sessions, the best method to communicate with families, etc.) (May 2026)
- +Confirm the teacher assignments for the 2026-27 school year (beginning of August 2026)
- +School Begins (August 20, 2026)
- +Provide information to the families regarding the "For the Love of Literacy" Program and the means to sign up to volunteer (August 20, 2026 and at the scheduled Curriculum Night)

IMPLEMENTATION

- +Provide "guidance" materials to the family volunteers (September 4, 2026)
- +Obtain book options for the initial and ongoing sessions (September 4, 2026)
- +Start the program (the week of September 7-11th, 2026) and continue with biweekly, 30 minute meetings
- +Provide initial questionnaires to the student and family (at initial session)
- +Ongoing monitoring and support of the project (September through November 2026)
- +End of the pilot session (the week of November 9-13th, 2026)

EVALUATION

- +Provide feedback questionnaires to all participants (at the last session)
- +Seek feedback from school staff (the week of November 16th-20th)

Should the project be successful, apply appropriate feedback/adapt the program to continue through the end of the school year. (November 2026 - May 2027)

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Those to benefit from this project are the participating students and family members as well as the school community at large. The concentration of this project focuses on increasing involvement of families within the school setting – which has shown to have profound effects on all participants involved in addition to the relationships between the supporting adults and school staff.

Ultimate success looks like consistent attendance with at least 10% of the third grade participating during the project period, and positive feedback by participants and staff. Ideally, the ultimate goal is to expand this trial project to the end of this year and beyond including other grade levels, involving possible themed weeks, and adding additional programming such as a Literacy Night and a "Reading Workshop"/seminar for parents.

EXPECTED CHALLENGES

The greatest challenge that For the Love of Literacy faces is initial and sustained participation: participation of the students and parents and the support of staff. Promoting the benefits of gathering during the school day to read together versus "just reading in the comfort of home" will be key. Similarly, the willingness of the teachers to integrate the program into their school day will be imperative.