**NEWS RELEASE** For Immediate Release: Month xx, 2018

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**Xxxx School Receives Grant Funds for Its School Library**

**CITY, Idaho** -- The Xxx School library received $x,xxx in grant funding from the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) for the 2018 - 2019 school year.

The funds will be used for the purchase of quality, age-appropriate fiction and nonfiction books for pre-K, kindergarten, and first-grade students. The funding also ensures that the kindergarten and first-grade students are allowed to check out at least two books per week.

The goal of the ICfL’s Supporting Beginning Readers Mini-Grants are: to increase the amount of reading done in the home; to increase access to age-appropriate, quality, fiction and nonfiction titles in elementary school libraries; and to increase the number of children reading on grade level.

ICfL Youth Services Consultant Staci Shaw said, “Research verifies that children who are not reading on grade level by the end of first grade only have a one in eight chance of ever catching up without costly direct intervention.”

Scores from the 2017 Idaho Reading Indicator\* show that 49 percent of incoming kindergarteners recognized fewer than 11 letters of the alphabet, and of low-income children, that number rose to 63 percent.

The availability of reading material in the home, whether owned or borrowed from the library, is directly associated with children’s achievement in reading comprehension.\*\*

Xxxx School Librarian Firstname Lastname said, “Because of this grant, we will have enough books for our littlest, and often most underserved, students to be able to take at least two books home per week to read with their adults.” Lastname added, “If our students only check out one book per week during the 36 weeks of the school year, that is not nearly enough for them to develop reading fluency or interest.”

The 2012 “Idaho Public Elementary School Library Study: Children’s Access to Books,” conducted by Boise State University literary expert Dr. Roger Stewart, determined that just over a quarter of Idaho public elementary school libraries received $100 or less from their school to purchase new books for the entire 2011 - 2012 school year.

ICfL School Library Consultant Jeannie Standal said, “The majority of Idaho’s public school libraries do not have the funding to provide enough fiction and nonfiction books to meet the needs of Idaho’s students.”

State Librarian Ann Joslin said, “A child’s educational foundation is established early, and the amount of reading done in the home is the single most important factor in the development of a child’s literacy skills.” Joslin added, “With this grant funding, which was appropriated by the Idaho state legislature, we are helping our Idaho elementary school libraries develop and foster critical early literacy skills in our next generation of Idahoans.”

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\*Idaho State Department of Education

\*\*National Center for Education Statistics, 2001