

The Karen Thomas Fund

Administered by

Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation

Changing Lives Through Literacy



Our Vision

The greatest gift
is a passion for reading.
It is cheap, it consoles, it distracts,
it excites, it gives you the
knowledge of the world and
experience of a wide kind. It is
moral illumination.

— Elizabeth Hardwick

Mission Statement

- The Karen Thomas Fund is dedicated to promoting literacy and a love of reading among elementary students (grades pre-K through 5) in the Ann Arbor area.
- The Karen Thomas Fund provides grants to teachers and other educators who seek funding for literacy-related projects
- The Karen Thomas Fund emphasizes projects benefitting the economically disadvantaged and other at-risk groups.

History

- Established in 2009 in honor of Karen Thomas, writer and reading volunteer
- Since its inception, the Karen Thomas Fund has awarded over \$65,000 in teacher grants
- Originally administered by AAPS Educational Foundation
- Transferred to Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation in 2017

Recent Awards

300 Books Before Kindergarten Thurston Families Read	Thurston
Reading Beyond the Classroom	Bryant
Updating the Library to Reflect Diverse Cultures and Interests	Logan
Reset Implicit Associations: Books With Black and Brown Characters	Bryant
Access to Quality Literacy Books	Pittsfield
At-Home Literacy for All	Lakewood
Latinos Con Libros – Latinos Who Read	Mitchell
Book Room Expansion – Replacing Flood Damaged Books	Allen

Themes in KT Grants

- Emphasis on multiculturalism and diversity
- Strengthen links between classroom and community
- Expand and update media center materials to reflect a rapidly-changing world

How Do Teachers Feel About Receiving a Karen Thomas Award?



A Teacher's Perspective

Rachel Taylor

Literacy Expert

Thurston Elementary School

Has received multiple KT grants

Reasons to Support the Karen Thomas Fund

- Grants go directly to teachers
- No marketing or salary expenses
- Targets most vulnerable students
- Helps even out inequities in resources
- Encourages reading across many genres
- Strengthens school-community link

How Can the District Help?

- Continue to publicize grants on social media and “AAPS District News”
- Make teachers and principals aware of Karen Thomas Fund
- Provide link to Karen Thomas fund on AAPS home page
- “Like” us on Facebook
- Provide information about Karen Thomas Fund at curriculum night, registration, kindergarten round-up

Three Ways to Donate

- Go to AAACF.org/Karen-Thomas
- On Facebook: Go to “Karen Thomas Memorial Fund”, click “Learn More” button
- Write a check to AAACF, specify “Karen Thomas Fund”

Questions?