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The Newmarket Public Library Receives NH State Library ARPA Grant Funding

The Newmarket Public Library is pleased to announce that it has been awarded \$10,469 in funding through the Institute for Museum and Library Services “Grants to States” program. The grant program is part of the American Rescue Act Plan of 2021 and is being facilitated by the N.H. State Library.

The Newmarket Public Library will use this grant award to implement an early literacy initiative with program partners Newmarket Recreation and Lamprey Health Care.

In the grant application, the Newmarket Public Library detailed that it would meet these needs by using grant funds to implement a Mother Goose on the Loose program for babies and toddlers. This will include the purchase of board books, flannel board stories, scarves, musical instruments, and puppets which will provide a variety of stimulation and enhancement during the programs. Library staff will curate early literacy kits that parents will be able to checkout to reinforce activities and learned behaviors at home. Recognizing that not all of the youth who stand to benefit from these services are library users, the library plans to offer “pop-up” story times off-site at the Newmarket Recreation Department’s infant programs and pre-K playgroup and at the Lamprey Health Care’s pediatric waiting area. As an affiliate of the national early literacy program Reach Out and Read, Lamprey Health Care will be an important partner in helping the library meet the early literacy needs of Newmarket’s preschool population. Library staff will have the capacity to register parents for library cards so that they can check out early literacy materials with convenience from both off-site locations. The library will also create a series of StoryWalks® that can be enjoyed both on the library grounds and at other area locations, thereby reinforcing active and joyful reading experiences throughout the community.

Equally important to the project’s success is creating a warm and welcoming space for learning that is imaginative and engaging for children. Developing play spaces in libraries is a growing trend and an important one in establishing the public library as a destination place within the community. Through this project the library will provide age-appropriate toys such as activity trees, blocks and shape-sorters, a new puppet theater where children will be able to create their own stories, and a play setup that simulates a home environment where children can role play familiar tasks. Our goal is to fashion a space in the children’s room for imaginative, cooperative and skill-building play.

“Public libraries serve a valuable role by modeling behaviors for caregivers on supporting pre-reading skills through training, support, and age-appropriate collections” said Library Director Kerry Cronin. “We are thrilled to work with program partners Newmarket Recreation and Lamprey Health Care to accomplish this important early literacy work and expand the library’s reach within the community.”

“New Hampshire’s strong relationship with its public libraries was made even more evident during the past two years,

when librarians and their staffs were able to adjust services nimbly in order to continue to meet the needs of their communities,” said N.H. State Librarian Michael York. “The innovative programs funded by these grants will continue to strengthen not only public library services, but also the communities in which the libraries reside.”

“As pillars of our communities, libraries and museums bring people together by providing important programs, services, and collections. These institutions are trusted spaces where people can learn, explore and grow,” said IMLS Director Crosby Kemper. “IMLS is proud to support their initiatives through our grants as they educate and enhance their communities.”

The Newmarket Public Library’s goal is to have the program up and running by early April.

Part of the N.H. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, the N.H. State Library promotes excellence in libraries and library services to all New Hampshire residents, by assisting libraries and the people of New Hampshire with rapid access to library and informational resources throughout the development and coordination of a statewide library information system; by meeting the informational needs of New Hampshire’s state, county and municipal governments and its libraries; and by serving as a resource for New Hampshire. For more information visit nh.gov/nhsl

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