



## **Impact Report – Cooperating Teachers Classroom Library Project Spring 2012 – Spring 2017**

### **Overview**

In Spring 2012, the Center for Partnerships to Improve Education (CPIE) launched Classroom Library Project, an initiative that promotes the availability and use of diverse children’s books in classrooms. College of Charleston clinical practice interns (early childhood, elementary, and special education only) are invited to select three titles from a list of children’s books. CPIE then purchases two copies of the selected books—one is given to the intern for his/her future classroom, and the other is given to the cooperating teacher’s classroom. In exchange, each intern is expected to incorporate at least one book into classroom instruction during clinical practice and to submit a reflective essay that describes which book was used, how it was used, and the intern’s perception of the lesson.

Classroom Library Project was initially conceived to run in conjunction with the National African American Read-In, an effort to infuse literacy into Black History Month. Consequently during its first two years, Classroom Library Project occurred in the spring semester only and the book list reflected Black history themes. Also, the program was limited to interns majoring in early childhood or elementary education. Beginning in 2013-2014, the program expanded to include both fall and spring semesters, as well as special education interns. The fall semester book list consists of children’s books dealing with death/dying, disability, chronic health conditions, or mental health. The spring semester list is comprised of children’s books written by or about African Americans.

Recruitment of participants is handled by the Office of Student Services and Credentialing (OSSC) that oversees clinical practice. OSSC staff members make announcements at in-person sessions and send emails to the interns, college supervisors, and cooperating teachers. Follow up emails are sent close to the registration deadlines. When necessary, college supervisors are asked to remind interns to submit their reflective essays. In all of the years of Classroom Library Project implementation, fewer than five interns have failed to submit a reflective paper.

As indicated below, participation in Classroom Library Project has grown dramatically since its inception. This is largely because of the efforts of the Office of Student Services and Credentialing staff to ensure interns are aware of this opportunity so they can take the initiative to register.

2011-2012	3 interns
2012-2013	0 interns
2013-2014	11 interns
2014-2015	19 interns
2015-2016	31 interns
2016-2017	34 interns
<b>Total</b>	<b>98 interns</b>

### **Impact**

In spring 2016, a comprehensive impact report was developed using archived Classroom Library Data, including registration forms and reflective essays. Additional research was conducted to identify Title I schools in the represented school districts. A limitation of the earlier impact report is the exclusion of any data from cooperating teachers or P-12 students. To remedy this, a survey was developed for cooperating teachers in spring 2017. An email invitation was sent to all 83 cooperating

teachers who had participated in Classroom Library Project at least one time since its inception in spring 2012. With 33 survey participants, the response rate was 39.8%.

The cooperating teachers reported working in a range of classroom levels, with the majority in early childhood and elementary settings. Respondents were asked what grade level(s) they teach primarily and could select all that apply. Their responses were as follows: grades CD-5K (33%), grades 1-2 (30%), grades 3-5 (39%), grades 6-8 (6%), and grades 9-12 (3%).

Most teachers (73%) work in a single grade level, non-special education classroom, while others teach in special education settings that are either self-contained (21%) or resource (6%). Most teachers (94%) reported getting books just one time. One (3%) had participated in Classroom Library Project more than once while another (3%) has not received any books. It is not clear if this is a previous or current cooperating teacher. Regardless, at the time of survey administration, all current cooperating teachers should have already received their books. 70% said they remember which books they received, while 15% do not remember at all. Several teachers indicated that they mostly (9%) or vaguely (6%) remember the books. Teachers were not asked to name the titles they received.

Teachers were asked about their role in selecting the books they received. They were to select the option that reflects their role the majority of the time if they have had multiple interns who participated in Classroom Library Project. Most teachers (52%) worked collaboratively with their interns to select the book titles. 30% made suggestions but left the final decision to the intern. Some teachers (15%) were not involved in the selection process at all, while one (3%) made the choices for the intern.

Teachers are overwhelmingly pleased with the books they received. Twenty-three teachers (70%) selected *very satisfied*, 9% *somewhat satisfied*, and 15% *satisfied*. All were not happy, however—6% of respondents selected *not satisfied* or *disappointed*. The person who selected *disappointed* indicated that books have not yet been received.

The books are being used beyond the intern's clinical practice. When asked how the books are currently being used in the classroom, teachers provided a variety of responses. The responses were categorized as *leisure*, *instructional*, *special topics*, or *no use*. *Leisure* use refers to books that are available for student use and housed in a student library, reading corner, or similar set-up within the classroom. *Instructional* use involves use of the books during academic lessons, writing or reading instruction, and read-alouds. *Special topics* use focuses on character education, social emotional learning, or life skills. Because of the content of the books, using them to address Black History Month or to relate to students who may be experiencing specific health conditions are also considered *special topics* uses.

Several teachers described multiple uses of the books, therefore each response was examined for separate uses. Forty-five individual teacher uses were counted and categorized. Of the 45 teacher uses, 56% (n=25) were *instructional*, 22% (n=10) *special topics*, and 18% (n=8) *leisure*. Just 4% (n=2) of the responses suggested *no use*. One teacher explained that, at the time of responding to the survey, the intern has not yet used a book during instruction. Another teacher reported that s/he had not received any books at all. Three teachers appear to have misunderstood the question because they responded "yes," "one", or "two." These responses were not categorized, therefore they are not reflected in the aforementioned percentages. The responses per category are included below.

<b>Leisure responses</b>	<b>Instructional responses</b>	<b>Special Topics responses</b>
Available to students	Social studies read alouds	We use them for lessons during Black History Month
In the classroom library	Writing prompts	Read-alouds to explain specific disabilities that students in the classroom may have
In the student library	Integrated with units as they relate to reading program in use	I use them in lessons throughout the year (part 1)—sometimes it's to make my students aware of the hardships of others
The books are in my classroom library for students to refer to	IB units in different grade levels that I work with	As a reference for social skills when needed
Classroom library use	We are reading one book as a group and having class discussions	Black History Month
I have them displayed in my reading corner	For thematic units	Student teacher used them to incorporate literature into Black History Month.
The other two in the classroom library	To enhance social studies	I have used the books for the two years following my intern as part of our Black History Month activities
They are available for students to read in my classroom library	To enhance reading instruction	We have read a couple of them aloud and talked about the issues raised in them
	Used in text sets as related to units of instruction	I read the book about peanut allergies to my class
	I use them as interactive read aloud during the appropriate units	Used for social skills
	I use them in my lessons throughout the year (part 2)—sometimes my focus might be an ELA standard like beginning, middle, end	
	As a mentor text	
	To teach characterization	
	Kids get to partner read these books as well	
	Incorporated into writing units	
	Incorporated into social studies units	
	Teacher read whole class	
	As read loud	
	As writing project	
	Still being read to the children	
	My intern designed a unit around one of the books	
	We've used the others for read-alouds	
	One as part of a Cinderella Unit	
	I use them to enhance instruction during the unit	
	As a resource for reading fluency	

Teachers were asked how Classroom Library Project has impacted their classroom and were allowed to select all answer choices that apply. Responses and selection rates are indicated below.

Enhanced my use of children's literature in my teaching	45.5%
Helped my students understand differences	48%
Motivated and engaged my students by relating to them	33%
Helped me address social emotional issues in my classroom	42%
Improved the diversity of my classroom library	51.5%

I'm not sure	6%
No impact	3%

Teachers were given the option to elaborate on their selection. One teacher commented that s/he “is always looking for quality books about different ethnicities and cultures.” Another has “[two] students who have peanut allergies in [the] class” therefore students are able to relate to the book about that topic. One teacher used the opportunity to state that s/he had not yet received books.

79% of teachers chose *very likely* and 15% selected *likely* when asked, “How likely are you to encourage future interns to participate in Classroom Library Project?” Three percent each chose *unsure* or *not likely*. The final survey item gave respondents the option to provide suggestions or additional feedback. Five teachers responded with the following comments:

*More variety*

*What a great project! My intern was very enthusiastic about the project and using the selections.*

*Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide additional reading opportunities for my students.*

*My student teacher this year chose not to participate. I feel this is such a valuable resource, there should not be any choice. It should be mandatory (sic).*

*A wonderful program!*

### **Assessment and Future Plans**

It is clear that Classroom Library Project is viewed favorably by cooperating teachers and that the books are being used beyond the intern’s time in the classroom. These uses are mostly instructional in nature, but also include leisure and special topics applications. To regularly examine the impact of Classroom Library project, an assessment plan has been developed. Intern data will be collected each semester from their registration forms and reflection essays. A survey will be administered to cooperating teachers in the spring semester of each odd year, beginning in spring 2019. The spring 2017 data will be used as a baseline and the survey items will be reviewed and modified after each administration. In spring 2019, only cooperating teachers who participated in Classroom Library Project in fall 2017, spring 2018, fall 2018, and spring 2019 will be invited to respond. During the summer of every odd year, a comprehensive impact report will be developed using both intern and cooperating teacher data.

Classroom Library Project will remain part of the CPIE portfolio of initiatives. As intern participation continues to grow, external funding will be pursued for sustainability purposes or maximum participation limits will be established. The two book lists (fall semester, spring semester) will be reviewed annually to refresh the selections and to manage costs. Books experiencing sharp price increases, out-of-print, or no longer eligible for free shipping may be replaced with lower cost alternatives. From either book list, titles not selected by interns in two consecutive cycles will be replaced. Additional titles will be added to each list to ensure a diverse selection of books across reading levels and topics.