

Officer responsible Community Advocate	Author Bruce Meder, Community Development Adviser
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The purpose of this report is to provide advice to the Board on the request for funding for the 'Books in Homes' project at Hammersley Park School.

BACKGROUND

Board members will recall that a deputation of the Assistant Principal from Hammersley Park School and a member of the Board of Trustees spoke at the meeting on 31 March 1999. The school intended to introduce the project in Term 3 and asked the Board to contribute towards the total cost of \$6,000 over a three year period.

THE PROJECT

The 'Books in Homes' project was initiated by Alan Duff in an attempt to break the cycle of "booklessness" in homes. The scheme is predicated on the premise that failures in adult life often stem from a lack of books in the homes. The project recognises that "kids who cannot read become adults who cannot communicate and that is a serious disadvantage in a world that operates on the written word".

The project presently operates in 134 schools, with schools being selected in an area where the children are most likely to come from "bookless" homes.

HAMMERSLEY PARK SCHOOL

Hammersley Park School is a decile 2 school located in one of the city's lowest socio-economic areas. The school has a role of 173. It is expected that all the students will take place in the scheme, with each child receiving 15 books of their choice over the three year period.

DISCUSSION

Although the application for assistance has come from the school it should be noted that the scheme is designed to place books in the **homes** of children where otherwise there would be few or no books. The project does contribute to some of the desired outcomes of the Council's Community Development and Social Well-Being Policy, specifically:

- Equitable Access to Opportunities, Community Resources...
- Improving the Position of the Least Advantaged.
- High Self Esteem.
- Self Determination and Empowerment.

The scheme also meets some of the desired outcomes of the Council's Children's Policy, via:

- Equitable access to opportunities.
- Improving the position of the least advantaged
- Higher self esteem and positive world view.
- Improved services and resourcing.
- A future with 'hope'.

Furthermore members will recall that at 3 February 1999 Board meeting a resolution was passed that "the Board consider establishing guidelines for handling funding requests from schools". It may be appropriate that this request be deferred until these guidelines have been established. However, this request may be considered as assisting

children in their homes rather than a school project. This distinction will need to be discussed by the Board before deciding on an allocation to the project.

COSTING

The total cost of the project is \$4.10 per book, plus GST and administration, a total of approximately \$12,500 over the three year period. The school is contributing half of this and is seeking the other half from sponsorship.

Recommendation: That as this is a project assisting children in their homes (and not a core school project), a grant towards the total cost of \$6,000 from the 1998/99 Community Services Fund be allocated to the 'Books in Homes' project operating from Hammersley Park School.

For discussion