

**[Affiliate Name]**

[Date]

[Superintendent Name]

[Name of District] School District

[Mailing Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Dear [Name],

The mission of [Affiliate Name] is to enhance literacy among young children in [county name] County by providing books to children in their homes. Since [date], [Affiliate Name] has provided high-quality, age-appropriate, and developmentally appropriate books to children in [county name] County at no cost to participating families.

All children, ages 0 to 5, are eligible to participate in [Affiliate Name], an affiliate of Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. Currently, [number] children are enrolled in the program, which accounts for approximately [number] percent of the county’s 0-5 population. Approximately xx eligible children live within the xx School District’s boundaries.

On behalf of the [affiliate name] Board of Directors, I respectfully request that xx School District consider providing **$xxx** to cover half of the $25 annual cost for three- and four-year-old children in the district for the upcoming year. The other half will be paid by an Arkansas Imagination Library Cost-Share Grant funded by the Arkansas Department of Education. We will continue to solicit funds from local businesses, individuals, civic organizations, and foundations to pay for children under three years of age.

**About Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library**

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) is an evidenced-based program that helps prepare children for kindergarten and later academic success. The program’s impact has been widely researched, and results suggest positive increases in key early childhood metrics. Children enrolled in the program score significantly higher in reading comprehension and vocabulary measures than their peers - not only in kindergarten, but also in second and third grades.

DPIL is the world’s preeminent early childhood book gifting program. Local community affiliates partner with DPIL to raise funds to pay for books and shipping at a cost of $25 per child for one full year (one book per month for 12 months). Volunteers raise the funds, register children, and maintain the book order database. Each community commits to raising sufficient funds to serve children from the time they register until their fifth birthday.

[Name]

[Date]

Page Two

**Support for Imagination Library in Arkansas**

According to R.I.S.E. (Reading Initiative for Student Excellence) Arkansas, having books in the home is a better indicator of educational success than a parent's education. Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key has endorsed Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library as a way in which Arkansas school districts can meet the R.I.S.E. Initiative’s goals.

A letter of support from Commissioner Key is attached along with additional information about Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library and the program’s return on investment.

**The Need for Imagination Library in xx School District**

According to the Arkansas Community Foundation's Aspire Arkansas Report (2019), only 38% of Arkansas third graders are proficient in reading. Currently, less than xx percent of third graders in xx School District are proficient in reading. Third grade is an important milestone in a student's career in terms of reading proficiency and is correlated to whether a student will graduate from high school. Research shows that 85 percent of a child's core brain development occurs before the age of three. This "wiring" shapes infants and toddlers' ability to learn to read and think critically.

[Affiliate name] would be pleased to partner with xx School District to increase childhood literacy rates and promote a culture of reading among families in your school district. I am happy to provide you with more information or answer any questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [email] or at [phone number].

Thank you for considering this request. I would be pleased to make a presentation to your school board at an upcoming meeting to make a formal request for support and answer any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Position/Title with Affiliate]

[Affiliate Name]

Enclosures