

To: Greg Buss, Chief Librarian (Brighthouse Branch)

From: William Ho

Date: January 30, 2015

Subject: *Proposal to increase the amount of donations of French books at the Richmond Brighthouse Library Branch*

Introduction:

The Brighthouse branch is the main and largest public library branch in Richmond and requires donations like all the other libraries in supplementing their shelves. The library has kept up on annual reports and survey data to the public about their use of library services and books dating back to 1994. Despite the changes over the years, the French book section of the library remains small.

While there is another Richmond branch that carries French novels, the Brighthouse branch is in the most convenient location in the center of town. There is a lack of new French literature being donated to the library.

There needs to be a change in how the library promotes donations to provide a better selection to the growing amount of French readers in Richmond.

Statement of Problem:

A lack of donation funds and book donations from the public is the continuing problem for the Brighthouse branch. The French immersion program has only grown over the past decade and the public libraries should be there to support their studies. Students should not be forced into using the internet for their only source of current French research material. The lack of newer French books affects program enrollment within the library like the French reading buddies program. The program depends on these books in order to provide both volunteers and students with learning material.

Proposed Solution:

One possible solution to the issue would be the requirement that there be a quota or percentage of the donation funds to be strictly made out for the donating of French books. By starting out with providing the main branch and eventually trickling down into the other libraries, Richmond residents won't have to travel as far to get the same kind of access to French literature. This also opens up opportunities for the French reading buddies program to start in other libraries as well.

Another solution could be to start a program that accepts French book donations to pay off their library fees. Any form of French book or novel if accepted by the library staff would fit into different categories that would each have a different price value. With this method, the library is able to collect books at a cheaper cost instead of not collecting any money at all. As long as an account under ten dollars in fines, their account is not frozen due to overdue payment.

Scope:

To determine and solve the issues surrounding the amount of French book donations, I plan to pursue five areas of inquiry.

1. Who are the main donors for French books at the library?

2. How do the Richmond Libraries currently promote book donations? What challenges do they face?
3. How do Richmond residents feel about the amount of French books at Brighthouse?
4. What are the pros and cons to increasing the amount of French books by donations?
5. What would be the cost of implementing the trade in program?

Methods:

My primary data source will be my observations from my own experience as well as surveys given out to those who frequent the French section of the Brighthouse branch. I will try to hand out enough surveys as to get an idea of the amount of French readers and their opinions on the amount of French books available.

Secondary sources will consist of surveys and annual reports published by the Richmond Public Library.

Qualification:

I was an early French immersion student and continued my high school education in French to graduate with my language certificate. I have volunteered over the course of three years since April 2007 to April 2010 in the reading buddies program at the Brighthouse branch. My time was spent reading with and doing activities with elementary school students in both French and English. I was able to get to know two librarians that were program managers over those years that can give me an inside perspective. It was at the library that I spent a year as a French tutor to a student I met through this program.

Conclusion:

The problems with the current lack of French book donations has had little change over the past several years at the Brighthouse branch and a complete lack of French selection at the other Richmond public libraries. The problem appears like it will continue unless new solutions and ideas for promoting book donations can alleviate the problem. By answering the five areas of inquiry, I will assess the feasibility of using city and provincial funds in creating a better stocked French literature section in the Brighthouse branch. With your approval, I will begin my research at once.