



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 23, 2021**

### **BEMIDJI, MN – Friends of the Carnegie Announce Book Grant Program**

The Friends of the Carnegie and the Herbert and Vivian Olson Children’s Reading Fund are donating to local elementary schools and libraries for purchase of library books for children from pre-K through Grade 3.

The mission of the Olson Reading Fund is to support early childhood education and children’s literacy. “Since we were unable to hold our regular Storytime at the Carnegie this past year due to the pandemic,” said Suzanne Liapis, President of the Friends, “we wanted to find another way to bring the joy of reading to area children. We felt that reaching out to help purchase library books for local schools would be a great way to expand our program, and at the same time show our support in this time of budget challenges.”

Grants have been made to Bemidji Area Schools ISD 31 to purchase new library books for Horace May, J.W. Smith, Solway, Northern, and Lincoln Elementary Schools, as well as the Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program. Other grants have been given to St. Philips School, Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners, Schoolcraft Learning Community, Heartland Christian Academy, and the Bemidji Public Library. The intent is to enable these organizations to expand their book selections for the youngest readers and the family members who read to them.

Storytime at the Carnegie, a free program for pre-school children, began in 2019 at the Carnegie Library in Bemidji. It is sponsored by the Friends of the Carnegie, and we are hoping to restart the program again this fall. Storytime was created thanks to a generous donation from the Herbert and Vivian Olson Children’s Reading Program, in support of early childhood education and children’s literacy.

To learn more about the Friends of the Carnegie and events at the Carnegie, or to volunteer as a Storytime reader or helper, please visit <https://friendsofthecarnegie.org/>, follow us on Facebook, or contact us at [info@friendsofthecarnegie.org](mailto:info@friendsofthecarnegie.org).

#### Photo Captions

Public Library Presentation: Sherilyn Brumback (right), Bemidji Public Library manager, receives a check from Suzanne Liapis, President of the Friends of the Carnegie, in the children’s section of the library.

School District Presentation: Tim Lutz (left), Superintendent of Bemidji Area Schools, receives a check for library book purchases from Catherine Marchand, Treasurer of the Friends of the Carnegie.