Project Title	Project Number
Reading enhancement project	2016/0990
	(To be assigned by the EPMS)

Basic Information

Name of School / Organisation / Individual

SKH ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL

Beneficiaries

- (a) Sector: ☐ Kindergarten ☐ Primary ☑ **Secondary** ☐ Special *(Please tick)*
- (b) Students: _____ (in number)* and _____F1-F5_____ (class level/age)*
- (c) Teachers: ___7___ (in number)*
- (d) Parents: _____N/A_____ (in number)*
- (e) Participating Schools (excluding applicant school): __N/A__ (in number and types)
- (f) Others (please specify): _____N/A_____

Proposal

(I)   Project Needs

(a)   **Please state the aims of the project in clear and concise terms and elaborate how the proposed project could impact on school development.**
       (Example: To enhance students' interests in reading through story-telling, singing, and drama...)

- To enhance students' interest in reading through guided reading/reading aloud fiction, audio books and online e-books.
- To promote reading and encourage students to <u>foster</u> a reading habit.
- To use information technology to motivate and empower our learners to learn at their own pace and help them to develop habits of self-directed reading.

(b)

(i)   **What are the areas of the needs and priorities of the school?**
      (Please tick the appropriate box(es).)

☑   Enhance learning and teaching to facilitate students' knowledge on subjects/learning areas / generic skills development

☑   Others (please specify) <u>Instilling confidence in students to use English on a daily basis and to encourage a 'reading for pleasure' culture.</u>

(ii)   **Please give background information to justify the demonstrated needs as mentioned in (b)(i).**

☑   **School development plan:**

- The major medium of instruction is Chinese at SKH St Benedict's School. The school as a whole is trying to raise the profile of English language within our students' learning environment. Our students desperately need opportunities to be immersed in the target language so they can gain confidence using English authentically. With limited exposure to English beyond the classroom, the school believes sustaining an English-rich environment is vital for enabling students to use English purposefully and authentically. The school plan prioritizes establishing and maintaining an English-rich environment for all stakeholders. In learning to communicate effectively, learners should learn to speak, listen, read and write effectively. The EDB policy recommends providing greater opportunities for learners to use English for purposeful communication and making greater use of literary and imaginative texts. One of the school's priorities has been to instill the habit of reading for pleasure in our students. To achieve this, a number of strategies have been instituted.
1. There are fortnightly lessons where a 35 minute lesson is dedicated to reading English material.
2. There are set reading lessons within the English scheme of work in Forms 1, 2 and 3 since fiction provides a good foundation to arouse students' interest in reading. It also provides an authentic starting point for discussion and writing.

3. The use of English reading materials has also been introduced in language across the curriculum initiatives in Form 1-5 where students read short, subject-relevant readings in English.

4. In the 2017-2018 academic year, curriculum mapping is underway, where material from other subject areas will be incorporated into the schemes of work for the English Learning Area.

5. Small group reading sessions will be introduced in 2017-2018 with all Form 1- 3 students using a variety of resources. These sessions will be conducted after school on Mondays and Wednesdays.

6. Our teaching pedagogy is headed towards more inquiry learning, flipped classrooms as well as self-accessed language learning (SALL) using IT as an impetus to achieve this. SKH St Benedict's aims to create an English-rich teaching and learning environment so as to encourage free expression and creativity. We have been organizing activities based on a communicative approach to learning and are designed to cater to the varying needs, abilities and interests of our students. In recent years, we have organized movie screenings at lunch and after school and a host of other English based activities which include assemblies, cooking classes, daily weather reports, mini-concerts, English speaking Friday and English Camp. We have also had the pleasure of hosting guest speakers.

☑ **Literature review summary:**

Encouraging students to read extensively is undoubtedly one of the best ways to help them improve their language proficiency. Research conducted in many different countries has shown that free voluntary reading is positively correlated with better reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, spelling, and grammatical development. (Asraf and Ahmad, 2003).

According to Von Sprecken and Krashen (Krashen, 2004), providing students with access to a large quantity of books in class was a predominant factor that help motivate students to read. They also found that students were more likely to read in those classes in which students did not need to bring their own books, and in which teachers tried to promote certain books.

☑ **Relevant experiences:**

Students perceive the English language as a tool to pass exams and seldom read for pleasure. In 2017, a number of new initiatives were trialed to help encourage a 'read for pleasure" culture in our school.

1. In June 2017, an experimental program – *English Explorers* - was run. Four student volunteers from **R College (RC)** were invited to run a reading and storytelling program over three sessions after school. Students from Form 2-5 participated. The volunteers ran the following activities:

   - Read aloud segments using online e-books (*Reading Pioneers*);Storytelling segments using Story Cubes; Heads up game (an app on the electronic devices); Show and tell – a game revolved around questioning skills. Students found these sessions meaningful and enjoyable as they were able to interact with native speakers who were their peers.

2. In Form 1 (*Reading Pioneers*) and Form 2 (online e-books and resources {*Listen A Minute/Breaking News English*}) students have been intermittently using *electronic devices* to access reading material to read aloud with the aim of improving diction and pace. Anecdotal observations indicate students are more engaged, attempt materials of differing difficulty and are happier dealing with material that offers them a sense of achievement with reading skills. This is compared to read aloud/guided reading sessions conducted with print fiction where students are easily distracted and easily deterred without the help of immediate 'audio' help.

(c) **Please elaborate the innovative ideas or new practices to enhance, adapt, complement and/or supplement the existing practices that will facilitate the development of the school to address the needs specific to its own context.**

Reflecting on examination results and daily interaction with students, it has been observed that students do not read extensively, struggle to read English texts and perceive reading as a chore. Students also lack opportunities to engage in English in meaningful ways other than for learning/teaching purposes. While we have promoted the use of English around the school ie. English Speaking Fridays and Fun Days, we find that students are shy or embarrassed and English Ambassadors lack confidence to lead.

(i) This project aims to further improve students' capability to think and communicate as well as to respond and give expression to experience.

(ii) To achieve these aims, this project will focus on: developing a reading habit and to establish a "read for pleasure" culture" among students; developing confidence to use English daily (e.g., present information, ideas, intended meanings, views, attitudes and feeling clearly, coherently and appropriately in a variety of contexts)

(iii) Reading is the foundation upon which language proficiency is based and it is the medium by which students experience the world. It is this experience and general knowledge which helps to prepare them for the challenges of the English language curriculum and the DSE. We need to instill a reading habit by starting with simple, enjoyable fiction texts which gives them a sense of accomplishment and will hopefully trigger in them that reading can be pleasurable; we also need to erase the fear that students have when reading longer, more complicated non-fiction texts as they progress through secondary school; in addition, we need to offer students a practical way to expand vocabulary and enhance writing skills because they unconsciously absorb genre, language patterns and structures through repetition.

(iv) As innovative educators, we strive to maximize learning opportunities by:
encouraging learners to interact in English outside the classroom since their peers from international schools (RC) will be leading the activities; exploring opportunities for experiential learning in the community by inviting English-speaking teenagers to exchange/share experiences to widen our students' exposure to authentic interactions; trialing strategies that will enable each learner to learn better and fulfil their potential, for instance, the use of *electronic devices* to read fiction and to practice pronunciation, diction and pace; using a variety of learning materials, activities to suit learners' needs eg information technology, print and non-print fiction, graded reading packets, games, quizzes; promote SALL by empowering students to select authentic resources that they think are suitable and interesting.

(v) Information technology plays a central role in delivering the outcomes of this project i.e, encouraging students to think and communicate in English, and to respond and give expression to their experiences). IT motivates and empowers our learners to develop habits of self-directed learning. Using *electronic devices*, we aim to: deliver a multi-media experience to struggling/emergent readers who need the benefit of audio to shore up confidence when reading aloud; reinforce "reader-led" progress allowing readers be in control of the level of difficulty they wish to attempt; consolidate SALL materials that readers and volunteers will use; engage and motivate learners who belong to a generation that are accustomed to asynchronous modes of learning and entertainment; the **use of an operating system and applications in English** that will further reinforce a communicative and purposeful approach to English language learning and broadens learners' view of the world through English; enhance listening comprehension, reading comprehension, guided reading and reading aloud skills using online resources (*Listen a Minute; Breaking News English; Reading Pioneers*) as well as to teach Phonics in Form 1.

(vi) Volunteers will work with readers to access to *electronic devices* in the English Centre at any time.

(II) Project Feasibility

(a) **Please describe the design of the project, including:**

(i) **Approach/Design/Activity**

The project aims to (approach):

1. Within a formal learning environment, cater for learners' varied needs, interests, abilities and learning style by using digital (online) and print materials (fiction books and reading packets); enhance English Language learning, arouse interest and broaden learning experiences through flexible use of a variety of resources such as different types of print and non-print resources; engage relevant community resources i.e. student volunteers from **College (RC)** to provide learners with opportunities for life-wide learning; enhance students' enjoyment and personal growth through reading,

2. Within an informal learning environment, promote a 'reading for enjoyment' culture and develop students' ability to present information (re-telling and interpretive reading) and feelings clearly and coherently as well as participate effectively in oral interactions informally during English Explorer activities with **volunteers from RC.**

    2.1. Students will be encouraged to borrow a book or to choose an online reading of a book (*Reading Pioneers*) prior to their English Explorers session.

    2.2. The English Explorers Program involves approximately **12 sessions**.

      - 72 junior form students divided into 3 groups – A, B, C. Each junior form group will attend 4 sessions

      - 36 senior form students will participate in the sessions to learn strategies to continue this activity with other groups (English Ambassadors)

    2.3. Each session will involve 6 student volunteers from **RC**. Students will present their chosen book at each session (total 4 sessions). They will share the story/retell with their group or do an interpretive reading of an excerpt of their choosing.

	English Ambassadors	Trainers/ Volunteers		
Junior Form Group A x 24	Senior Form A x 12		4 sessions	May2018-
Junior Form Group B x 24	Senior Form B x 12	6 from RC	4 sessions	Jun2019
Junior Form Group C x 24	Senior Form C x 12		4 sessions	
Reading Enrichment F1-F3 (using strategies from *English Explorers*)	Senior Form A, B, C *(see point 3 below)*	Subject to availability	18 sessions	Apr.-Jun 2019

3. Promote a 'reading for enjoyment' culture and develop students' ability to present information (re-telling and interpretive reading) and feelings clearly and coherently as well as participate effectively in oral interactions informally during small group after school reading sessions **with teachers and English Ambassadors.**

4. Utilise built-in self/peer assessment through the use of the *electronic device*'s *Screencastify* app to capture their 'read aloud' performance; students can upload videos onto online platform, seek feedback from teachers, peers and volunteers and include their own self-reflection.

5. *English Explorers* will be the stepping stone to using *electronic devices* to promote Self-access Language Learning (SALL)

    5.1. Learners choose materials and activities which suit their interests, level, needs and learning styles and work on them at their own time and pace. Learning is self-directed, with guidance from volunteers sought when necessary.

    5.2. Resources for SALL will include:

      [1] student volunteers from RC to guide, lead and train senior form English Ambassadors; **[2]** *Electronic devices* to access audio books and online e-books; **[3]** *Electronic devices* to record learners/readers progress, e.g. using Castify to record read aloud/retelling performance; **[4]** reading packets both fiction and non-fiction to cater to diversity of interests and abilities; **[5]** quizzes and games for increasing motivation and for practicing problem solving skills (e.g. Quizlet, Story Cubes, Kahoots)

(ii) Key Implementation Details
Project period: (1st April 2018 to 30th June 2019)

Month / Year	Content / Activity / Event	Target Beneficiary/Participants
May – Jun. 2018	Meet with RC volunteers, English Ambassadors – introduction.	Teachers, students and volunteers.
Sept 2018 - May 2019	Reading, sharing and presentations	F.1-F.5 + 3 Eng. Teachers (Based on approx. 72 junior form students; 36 senior form Eng Amb; 6 RC volunteers)
Apr. – Jun. 2019	F.1-F.3 After School Reading Enrichment Program	All F.1-F.3 students +5 Eng. Teachers + 36 Eng. Ambassadors
June 2019	Evaluation	Teachers, students and volunteers.

(b) Please explain the extent of teachers' and/or principal's involvement and their roles in the project.

(i) Number of teachers involved and degree of input (time, types, etc.):
1. The NET and the panel head will work in collaboration with **five** teachers but will be directly responsible for the implementation of the project.
2. The panel head and form coordinator(s) will provide guidance on curriculum needs and the scope of student involvement in terms of the number of lessons and periods in which the project can be carried out.

(ii) Roles of teachers in the project: (*Please tick the appropriate box(es).*)

☐ **Leader**   ☑ **Co-ordinator**

☐ **Developer**   ☐ **Service recipient**

☑ **Others (please specify) Implementers and Facilitators**

(c) Please provide the budget of the project and justify the major items involved.
Grant Sought: _____$166,400_____

Budget Item*	Expenditure Detail		Justifications
	Item	**Amount ($)**	
I. Equipment	• Tablets @$2,350 x 45	$105,750	While the school has sets of tablets/notebooks *(for F1 students)*, we want to purchase about 45 *tablets (for F2-FS5 students)* that will be dedicated to running its **operating system and applications in English.** The tablets will be used in reading and speaking lessons as well as for running English activities after the completion of the project.
II. General expenses	• Reading Cards (range of levels)	$37,500	The reading cards offer students a variety of narrative genres and are short enough to be completed in a session/35 minutes. Reading cards avoid issues of continuity and loss of interests when longer novels are read for only 35 minutes per week and dragged out over 4 weeks.

	• Books(10 class sets)	$14,000	This offers progression for advanced readers. Sets can be used in class or borrowed for home use.
	Certificates/ materials/ miscellaneous	$ 1,950	Students are motivated by physical rewards for good performance and tend to do better with tangible recognition.
	Stationery	$1,200	The project will require miscellaneous stationery to run on.
	Posters	$1,0 00	Motivational reading posters for classroom and school noticeboards.
	Audit fee	$5,000	

Total Grant Sought ($): $166, 400

(III) Expected Project Outcomes

(i) **Please describe how to evaluate the effectiveness of the project;**

☑ **Observation:** Students will participate in book sharing in assemblies and reading lessons.

☑ **Pre-and post-activity surveys:** Pre and post surveys will be conducted for teachers, students and volunteers to assess degree of changes in expectations, attitudes, levels of enjoyment and usefulness of the program.

☑ **Others (please specify) Online recordings/Interviews:** Recordings of students reading aloud, retelling, storytelling will be collected at the beginning, middle and end of the project to measure improvements

Success Criteria:

For the evaluation by students, teachers and volunteers, it is envisaged at approximately 70% of students will:

1) Experience enhanced confidence in reading and speaking
2) Be motivated to read more
3) Be able to choose novels that are suited to their reading and interest level.

Evaluation will be conducted via a survey using the tablets.

(ii) **Please state the project deliverables or outcomes.**

☑ Others (please specify) **Storytelling Competition; Bookcover Design Competition; Book sharing clips.**

Report Submission Schedule:

Project Management		Financial Management	
Type of Report and covering period	**Report due date**	**Type of Report and covering period**	**Report due date**
Progress Report 1/4/2018 - 31/3/2019	30/4/2019	Interim Financial Report 1/4/2018 - 31/3/2019	30/4/2019
Final Report 1/4/2018 - 30/6/2019	31/9/2019	Final Financial Report 1/4/2019 - 30/6/2019	31/9/2019

Appendix: Implementation Plan

	English Explorers	**After School Reading Program**
Participants (students and volunteers)	The English Explorers Program take place over 12 sessions. • <u>36</u> senior form students (English Ambassadors) will be trained by volunteer students from RC. Cohort for English Explorers will be from Form 2- Form 5. • <u>72</u> junior form students divided into 3 groups – A, B & C. Each junior form group will attend Junior English Explorer Sessions. • 10-15 volunteers from RC.	•All Form 1, Form 2 and Form 3 students • 2 x teachers per form
• Skills focus	•To equip students with the confidence to speak English on a daily basis.	•To instill in students a love of reading and try and develop a 'reading for pleasure' habit. •Develop reading comprehension skills.

Expected Outcomes/ Sustainability	• The trained English Ambassadors will demonstrate confidence conducting the following school-wide speaking activities:
	   1) English Camp
	   2) English Song Dedication program
	   3) Daily weather report
	   4) Assemblies
	   5) Master of ceremonies
	   6) Form 1 activity days
	•Junior form students will show confidence and an increased interest in reading.	

Timeline	•2018 May & June – liaise with RC to secure volunteers and finalise sessions for 2018-2019 year. •2018 September – Meet RC volunteers. Our students co-plan with RC volunteers for coming sessions. •2018 Sept - 2019 April – Sessions with RC volunteers to run the English Explorers program. •2019 April - 2019 May – The trained English Ambassadors conduct Junior English Explorers with junior form students. •2019 June – English Camp to be conducted by English Ambassadors; conduct survey with all English Ambassadors and participating students. •2019 June – Story Telling Competition & Book Cover design.	•Scheduled every Monday and Wednesday to be conducted by Teachers. •10-15 students per group. •18 sessions conducted by both Teachers and trained English Ambassadors.
Activities	•Reading aloud •Joint/Shared Reading •Word games – Bananagrams, Bingo, Dominoes •Speaking/Conversation games – Story cubes, Charades, Show and Tell	•Joint/Shared reading •Reading aloud •Retelling

Strategies adopted by RC student volunteers	(these are strategies which the RC volunteers are already familiar with through their own learning experiences with the International Baccalaureate curriculum) • Cooperative learning – think-pair-share, round robin, jigsaw, brainstorming • Directed reading – phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension • Joint/scaffolded reading • Retelling/Storytelling skills • Modelling	Explicit direct instruction using the Teacher notes on the Guided Reading Cards: • Checking for understanding - continually verifying that students are learning while they are being taught • Explaining - teaching by telling • Modelling - teaching using think aloud to reveal to students the strategic thinking required to solve a problem • Demonstrating - teaching using physical objects to clarify the content and to support kinesthetic learning
English Ambassador Training	• Volunteers will adopt the above strategies to model the skills necessary to run different activities for junior form students. (Reading using online talking books, print guided reading cards; leading different games) • English Ambassadors will be trained to: 1) Conduct joint reading/read aloud to junior form students using directed reading strategies focused on – phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension 2) Model storytelling skills 3) Use different vocabulary and conversation games to train students to confidently run school-wide speaking activities	
Materials/ Resources	Online talking books Games – Bingo, Dominoes, Storycubes, Bananagrams Tablets	• Student Guided Reading Short Reads – Fiction and Non-Fiction • Teacher Guided Reading Short Reads – Fiction and Non-Fiction • Novels - class sets
No of sessions	12 sessions	• 45minutes/session • Every Monday and Wednesday (2017-2018; 2018-2019)
Teachers role	• To plan, facilitate and monitor activities to maximize learning opportunities. • To coordinate activities across junior form.	
Competitions	**Storytelling**	**Book Cover Design**
	• Conducted at English camp • Small groups will brainstorm, plan, create (write) a narrative based on a chosen theme. • Groups will practice and present their story. • Tablets will be used to brainstorm, plan, create. • Tablets will be used to record each storytelling. • In groups, students will use the tablets to view, evaluate each performance and then vote on the best performance.	• Conducted in April/May • English teachers will run the competition across junior forms. • Students will design a book cover for one of the excerpts they have read on the reading cards during the after school reading program. • Students will use their tablets to photograph their entry and upload it. • Online Forms will be used to conduct the final count for the competition.