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February 8, 1993

Eli Segal
Assistant to the President
Director
Office of National Service
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Segal:

Congratulations on your appointment to this important position in President Clinton's administration. There is a great deal of interest in public service in Oregon. We have a wide range of individuals volunteering for our book and reading program -- from middle and high school students to seniors.

Former Gov. Neil Goldschmidt spoke to you at Pamela Harriman's home about a program our Foundation launched two years ago. SMART, Start Making A Reader Today, is a book and reading program for children in kindergarten through second grade.

The goal of SMART is to help create enthusiastic readers who can read at or above grade level by the time they leave elementary school. The long-term goal of the program is to increase the number of students graduating from high school.

To achieve these goals, the Foundation recruits organization and business sponsors to allow their employees to leave work during the day to tutor students in our public schools. These sponsors also provide the funds to purchase books and operate the program. There are 85 sponsors helping our schools in year two.

This year we have 1,500 volunteers working with 1,500 students in 21 schools around the state. We will give away more than 18,000 new books this year to our SMART students. Each SMART volunteer gives one hour a week to read to and with two children 30-minutes each. Each SMART student has two 30-

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minute sessions a week (two trained volunteers) and receives two new books each month to take home to keep.

We manage the program in the schools with VISTA volunteers and other in-school coordinators. We have eight VISTA positions now and hope to get a total of 15 for next school year. Each VISTA manages two schools by helping the Foundation recruit, train, schedule and manage volunteers.

Our program expansion is based (to some degree) on VISTA availability. We have recruited community volunteers to manage the program and pay them \$25/day expenses. We have also used the federal Chapter One program to provide coordination in several schools.

The Foundation's Board of Directors recently decided to try a community-based model in Southern Oregon next year. This model would have a local paid area manager and an advisory board that raises funds, recruits sponsors and makes decisions about schools.

About 60 percent of our volunteers are from businesses, the other volunteers are people who come in through news stories, word-of-mouth and presentations.

Teachers, principals, parents and volunteers have already seen a difference. Chronically absent children are coming to school more often, children are selecting books to read during free time, children are going to the library on their own, young children are learning the days of the week and the time of day by waiting for their volunteers to arrive. Parents are telling us their children are coming home with more enthusiasm for reading.

There are 47 schools on a waiting list for next year. We know we have a low-cost, high-payoff program that brings the community into public schools to help children succeed.

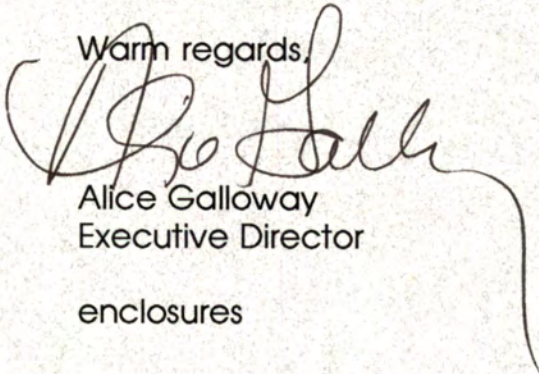
As you can tell, we are excited about SMART and the possibilities for future growth. People who have never volunteered before are volunteering now with the permission of their companies. These volunteers are telling us they are getting more out of the experience than the children. Managers are telling us their employees are returning to work more productive.

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I'm sending you some materials, including last year's evaluation. Neil also wanted me to enclose one of his business cards.

If you need any more information, please let me know. Good luck with the National Service effort. If Oregon is any indication about volunteer enthusiasm nationwide, you have a winner!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice Galloway". The signature is written in black ink and extends across the line of the typed name. A long, thin vertical line descends from the end of the signature, extending downwards towards the bottom of the page.

Alice Galloway
Executive Director

enclosures



NEIL GOLDSCHMIDT

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Alice Galloway
Executive Director

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OREGON CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION
SMART SPONSORS
January 8, 1993

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Albany Democrat Herald | Powell's Books |
| Alcohol/Drug Enforcement | Prineville Bank |
| Astoria Rotary Club | R.A. (Dick) Howells Co. |
| Ater Wynne Hewitt Dodson Skeritt | Ranch House Deli |
| Bank of the Cascades - Sisters Branch | Red Lion Hotels & Inns |
| Bank of Astoria | Reed Bros. Realty |
| Bean Foundation | Reed & Hertig Packing Co. |
| Bend Millworks | Rim Co. |
| Bend Chamber of Commerce | Rose's Restaurant |
| Bend Foundation | Rotary Club of Albany |
| Bright Wood Corporation | Samuel Johnson Foundation |
| Brix Maritime | Seaside Chamber of Commerce |
| Clatsop Community College | Seaside Rotary Foundation |
| Columbia Forum | Sedgwick James of Oregon |
| Columbia River Bar Pilots Association | Shilo Inns |
| Eagle Crest | Sisters Chamber of Commerce |
| Falcon Cable | Sisters Rodeo Association |
| Fred Meyer | Sisters Rotary |
| GTE | Sisters Depot Deli |
| Harsch Investment Co. | Smith's Home Furnishings |
| HGW, Inc. | Sundigne Homes |
| Hoyt's Hardware | Sunriver |
| IJL Corporation | Tektronix |
| Kaiser Permanente | Teledyne Wah Chang |
| Kiwanis International of Sisters | The Daily Astorian |
| Kiwanis Club of Madras | The Oregonian |
| Kiwanis of Sisters | The Bend Bulletin |
| KOIN-TV | This Week Magazine |
| Lion's Club of Madras | Thomason Ford |
| Literacy Line | Tonkon Torp Galen Marmaduke & Booth |
| M Financial Group | U.S. Coast Guard |
| Marketing One | U.S. West |
| McCormick and Schmicks | U.S. National Bank - Sisters Branch |
| NIKE, Inc. | U.S. Bakery |
| Norm Thompson | University of Portland |
| Olympia & York | VISTA |
| Oregon Freeze Dry | Washington Square |
| Oregon Community Foundation | West One Bank |
| Pacific Power | Wieden & Kennedy |
| Pamplin Corp. | |
| PGE | |
| Port of Portland | |
| Portland Food Group | |
| Portland Appeals Office | |

**GOLDSCHMIDT
INC.**

Alice Galloway

GET SMART



Over the past decade, U.S. business has become a major player in the education reform debate, and for good reason. As taxpayers and as employers, business helps foot the bill for educational failure.

•The Committee for Economic Development, a group of mostly corporate executives, found that dropouts earn about \$237 billion less during their lifetimes than their peers who graduate. As a result, the government receives about \$70 billion less in taxes.

•Nearly a third of the nation's largest companies together invest \$25 billion a year teaching remedial math and reading to entry-level employees. Why? Because 20% to 30% of U.S. workers lack the basic skills they need to do their jobs.

•In the nation's prisons, 60% of the inmates are illiterate, and 85% of juvenile offenders have reading problems. It costs an average of \$20,000 to maintain each prisoner annually.

•The federal government spends \$100 billion annually and state governments an additional \$200 million in assisting illiterate adults.

•Perhaps even more ominously, a public unable to read properly and ignorant of government affairs raises questions about the long-term stability of U.S. society.

So how does Oregon measure up? Not well: Our school dropout rate is around 25%, 31st out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. And in a recent statewide survey of adult literacy, we found that while most Oregonians can read at some level, only a small percentage can interpret a poem, use a bus schedule, or determine correct change from a lunch bill.

Meanwhile, our economic strategy for the future, "Oregon Shines," commits Oregon to provide the best educated and trained work force in the United States by the year 2000, and a work force competitive with any country in the world by the year 2010. By that, we mean men and women who can think critically, communicate well, and operate effectively in a global economy.

And the National Educational Goals, agreed to by the president and the governors of each state at the 1989 Educational Summit, call for a high school graduation rate of at least 90% by 2000.

Those are worthy goals that few would argue with. But how do we get there from here?

Education is too important to be left to the politicians. If

our goals are to be anything more than lip service, every concerned citizen must get involved, including parents and business leaders. As I've said before, in the real world there are no shortcuts to solutions. Victory comes from many people biting off a piece of the problem over time.

Well, here's a piece worth chewing on: Poor reading performance by the third grade is a reliable predictor of delinquency, early childbearing, and school dropouts. If you are looking for a way to involve yourself and your business in the schools, then help a child to read.

You Can Help A Child Read

Here's how: SMART, Start Making A Reader Today, is a low-cost, high-payoff program designed to help children become

confident and enthusiastic readers who can read at or above their grade level by the time they leave elementary school. It combines an adult one-on-one volunteer program with books children can take home to share with their families.

SMART will begin in January 1992 as a demonstration project in eight elementary schools in Deschutes and Multnomah counties. Approximately 25% to 30% of the pupils in each of the participating schools are either unready to read or reading significantly below their grade level.

Each school will identify pupils from prekindergarten, kindergarten, first, and second grade. Pupils will receive one-on-one help at least twice a week.

The immediate goal is to provide SMART tutors from January to June 1992. This demonstration program will then serve as a model in the development of the ongoing program.

Businesses will be asked to contribute to the budget, but you and your employees' own time and effort as volunteer tutors are the most important contributions you can make. All volunteers will have the equivalent of one day of training with periodic retraining courses throughout the year, and should be prepared to commit at least one hour a week.

That's not too much to ask for our children's and our country's future. Remember, it makes a real difference to you and your

business whether these children succeed. We all pay the price for educational failure. And we can't afford to waste any more lives.

For more information on how to get SMART, call Alice Galloway at the Oregon Children's Foundation, 221-2012.

Former governor Neil Goldschmidt is a business consultant in Portland. His opinions also can be heard exclusively on KEX 1190 AM, Portland.



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SURVEY FOR
VOLUNTEERS,
SPONSORS,
PARENTS,
AND
STUDENTS
MAY 1992

October 5, 1992



Start Making A Reader Today

▼▼▼ In January 1992, the Oregon Children's Foundation launched SMART, a book and reading program, in eight Oregon elementary schools.

This report is based on year-end surveys completed by students, sponsors, parents, and volunteers. Responses were analyzed by Dr. Russell Gersten and his staff at the Eugene Research Institute.

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

SMART, Start Making A Reader Today, is a book and reading program designed and launched by the Oregon Children's Foundation in January 1992.

The Foundation, founded by former Oregon Gov. Neil Goldschmidt and the law firm of Ater Wynne Hewitt Dodson & Skerritt, started SMART in eight schools – four in Portland and four in Central Oregon. The original eight schools were:

Ball and Astor in north Portland
Kelly and Whitman in southeast Portland
Sisters
LaPine
Evergreen in Redmond
Bear Creek in Bend

The goal of SMART is to help create enthusiastic readers who can read at or above grade level by the time they leave elementary school.

The objectives of SMART are:

- Provide well-trained tutors to work one-on-one with students
- Establish meaningful adult-child relationships
- Get new books into the homes of students
- Increase partnerships between businesses, schools, and communities
- Design and test a program that can be adapted to classrooms throughout Oregon
- Encourage family participation
- Conduct short and long-term program evaluations

Every week, each SMART volunteer tutors two children 30-minutes each; students have two SMART volunteers and two 30-minute sessions a week. Each SMART student receives two books a month to take home to keep.





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Volunteers

The SMART Volunteer Survey was completed by 313 volunteers representing all eight schools. Their comments were grouped by subject. See Table One for SMART Volunteer Survey data.

VOLUNTEER IDEAS

✓ **Ways to improve SMART volunteer training sessions:**


- Furnish more information about how to deal with specific situations and student behaviors such as short attention span, angry or unhappy children, and children who don't want to read.
- Provide age-specific training by informing volunteers of what they can expect from each age and grade level in terms of behavior and reading skills.
- Have current SMART volunteers share their experiences with new volunteers.
- Provide more teacher/volunteer communication including teacher conferences and more information about specific needs of students.
- Provide alternative activities/ideas for working with children to get them interested in reading/writing.
- Conduct small, individualized trainings throughout the year for those who want additional training.

✓ **Situations Not Described in Training:**

The majority of volunteers who responded to this question (203) did not have any situations that came up during the year that were not covered by the SMART training; of the 102 volunteers who did:

- Eight volunteers responded they had questions regarding short attention spans and hyperactivity; they talked to their school counselors about individual episodes.





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Volunteers

- Six volunteers asked about students who shared their personal problems with them.

✓ **What To Do If You Can't Make A Session:**

- Arranged for a substitute (66)
- Called school and left a message (63)
- Rescheduled session (13)
- Cancelled (13)

✓ **What Have You Learned from Volunteering:**

Volunteers said they learned:

- Children need one-on-one help (50)
- They need patience and persistence (21)
- To respect teachers for the job they do (21)
- How to communicate with children (18)
- That each child is unique (18)
- SMART works and it is needed (13)
- About the education system's methods/problems (11)
- That children are wonderful and precious (10)
- Adult companionship is valued and needed (8)
- You don't have to be an expert to help a child (6)

✓ **What Benefits have Volunteers Received:**

- Satisfaction of helping children and community (102)
- Friendship with children (82)
- Good feelings (31)

✓ **What Changes Have You Seen in SMART Students:**

The great majority of volunteers (303) noticed changes in their SMART students, although 33 did not. Volunteers saw the following improvements in their students:

- Better readers (88)
- More enthusiastic about books (67)
- More open, trusting, and communicative (65)





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Volunteers

- More self confidence (39)
- Longer attention span (14)
- More determined to try harder (7)
- Better comprehension (4)

✓ **What Are The Program Strengths:**


- One-on-one relationship (136)
- Books going home with the students (25)
- Fills a need with at-risk children (11)
- Community and business involvement in schools (9)
- Good leadership, coordination, and organization (8)
- Support from the school staff (8)
- Flexibility of the program (6)

✓ **What Are The Program Weaknesses:**

- Need more quiet areas for reading (37)
- More communication with teachers (28)
- Better book selection (20)

More ...





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Volunteers

*COMPARISON OF VOLUNTEER SURVEY RESPONSES:
March 1992 - May 1992*

✓ **Survey Administration and Design:**

In March, 1992 a survey was administered to a sample of 354 volunteers. They had been participating in the program for approximately three months. In May, a revised survey was administered to 313 volunteers. The revised survey included several new open-ended items; therefore the number of forced choice responses was curtailed. However, five forced choice items were repeated on both forms of the questionnaire.

Although the samples were not identical, it still appeared reasonable to compare the mean performance on these five items to detect any significant shifts.

✓ **Feelings About Participation:**

One item asked the respondents to assess their overall feelings about participation in the SMART program. Mean scores were virtually identical from March (mean of 3.6) to May (mean 3.5). The mean score was midway between 3 "worthwhile" and 4 "excellent and valuable."

There was somewhat of a drop in the percentage of participants who found the experience "excellent and valuable;" dropping from 64 percent in March to 56 percent in May. It is important to note that over 98 percent of the volunteers found the program worthwhile or excellent and valuable.

✓ **Volunteer Training:**

There was an interesting increase in the mean rating of the adequacy of training, from 3.04 to 3.22, where 3 is "good job preparing" and 4 is "excellent job preparing." In March, only 25 percent felt the training was excellent, whereas in the May sample, 37 percent perceived the training as excellent.





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Volunteers

The percentage of volunteers who encountered situations not covered in the training increased from 22 to 33 percent. Clearly, over time, a wider range of situations is likely to occur. Several volunteers noted that some type of additional training several months into the project might be useful.

✓ **Thoughts About SMART Books:**

There was a small drop in the volunteers' feelings about the extent to which the SMART books were appropriate for the students tutored.

The mean score in March was 3.2 and in May 3.1 on the 1 to 4 scale. In March, 29 percent found the books excellent, whereas in May only 25 percent found the books excellent. In May, five percent more felt the books were "fairly appropriate" rather than generally appropriate.


In open-ended responses several volunteers indicated that a system to help them and the students find more age-appropriate books might be useful.

✓ **Absenses:**

Finally, by May, 74 percent of the volunteers indicated that they had missed a scheduled session, whereas only 34 percent had missed a session by March. This is an expected phenomenon.

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Sponsors

BUSINESS LEADERS' COMMENTARY ON SMART

The decision to devote a portion of a business' or agency's resources to SMART is made by its director or chief executive. To better understand the relationship between the SMART program and its volunteer resource, six leaders of businesses currently participating in SMART were interviewed.

Some of the sponsors' comments are listed in this report. A more extensive business/organization survey report will be conducted in year two of SMART (1992-1993).

✓ **Procedures:**

Interviews were conducted with representatives of businesses who work with seven schools in different regions of Oregon:

Sunriver Properties (LaPine)
Eagle Crest (Evergreen in Redmond)
Bend Bulletin (Bear Creek in Bend)
Portland Food Group (Kelly in SE Portland)
Smith's Home Furnishings (Whitman in SE Portland)
Government Agency (Ball and Astor in north Portland)

The government agency asked not to be identified.

✓ **Factors Leading to Participation:**

All but one of the business firms were introduced and invited to join the SMART program through personal contact with other business leaders who were involved in the program.

Several mentioned that direct personal contact with Neil Goldschmidt had been an important part of their decision to participate. Attending an informational meeting was a common step in the recruitment process, often at the personal invitation of a business associate.





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Most of those interviewed listed their desire to make effective, tangible contributions to the community and society as the most compelling reason for their decision to participate. As one director put it: *"Society is losing its children, and existing programs are known not to have the dramatic impact that is needed at this point."*

The business leaders view SMART as a program that offers a clear response to a demonstrated need. They also feel it is designed so that individuals can make a difference, and that they are making a difference.

They find SMART particularly appealing because it provides an opportunity for direct, individualized contact between their employees (the tutors) and students, *with no interference from a bureaucratic layer.*

✓ **Outreach to Other Businesses:**


Nearly all of the business leaders interviewed mentioned their efforts to recruit other businesses to participate in SMART. In several cases, executives had been responsible for significantly expanding the volunteer pool in their communities, and had plans for continued recruitment. All had used direct, personal appeals among their business associates.

✓ **Degree of Employee Involvement:**

The degree of participation varies widely among the executives and their businesses. Two executives regularly serve as tutors. Others reported sharing a student or substituting for an employee. Some executives were not being involved in the program in that way. They said they had difficulty finding time in their demanding schedules to be consistently available for tutoring.

In addition to providing employees as tutors, at least one business made a substantial financial contribution as well. All those interviewed said they plan to continue their organization's participation in SMART.





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Sponsors

✓ **Program Promotion:**

There is a wide range in the degree to which the program is promoted within companies. All of the Portland Food Group employees are expected to tutor as part of their employment; its director considers tutoring part of what it means to work there and fully compensates employee participation.

In contrast, at Smith's Home Furnishings, SMART has not been promoted internally by its director. Employees were informally apprised of the program by the company's human resources department. Employee response, however, has been very strong, with approximately 50 of its employees tutoring last year and more asking to be involved during the coming year.

More than half of the employees in the government agency office participate. Thus it appears that informal means can be equally effective.

Some executives report that certain employees are unable to take part because they are unable to leave their job during school hours. One such employee tutors on her day off, and is compensated by her employer.

No data has been compiled to systematically report what portion of employees in participating businesses have joined the SMART program, nor the extent of participation for different employment categories. One employer reported, however, that all of its participating employees were women.

✓ **Community Recruitment:**

Some businesses also recruit volunteers from their communities. Sunriver Properties, for example, actively promotes the program among Sunriver residents. *The success of their efforts is dramatized by the report that some volunteers are foregoing their annual winter vacations in Palm Springs so that they may continue to tutor their students.*





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✓ **Perceived Benefits to Employees:**

The government agency director credits employee participation in SMART with substantially improving office morale.

Several other executives reported increased productivity to be a benefit of participation for their businesses. There is evidence that tutors and students have bonded so that their relationships are personal as well as academic.

Tutors report to their employers that they feel appreciated for their efforts and enjoy feeling that they are contributing to the community. Some employees display pictures of the students they tutor at their desks, and the tutoring experience is a common topic of discussion in the office.

Disruption of business activity was not a problem for any of those interviewed. Most reported no disruption had arisen. Carpooling arrangements with free parking for tutors overcame a potential difficulty for employees in one downtown Portland office.


Overall, it appears that "administrative" employees have more flexibility in arranging their work schedule to participate during school hours than "support" workers.

✓ **Perceived Benefits to Children Served by the Project:**

Although business leaders reported they already saw specific benefits for their companies from participating in SMART, they are less certain of the long-term benefits for students because the program is new and untested. Their overall assessment is one of cautious optimism. They by no means hold a simplistic view that SMART is the answer to educational concerns.

They report that tutors become aware of challenges in students' lives that create obstacles to learning. Not every student-tutor relationship "clicks." Although tutors see many students improve their skills and become more interested in reading, not every student is seen to make dramatic progress.





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Executives are worried about raising expectations with a program that is in its earliest stages of development.

Some of the executives interviewed expressed a sophisticated understanding of both the potential benefits and dangers of their participation.

One executive summarized his concerns this way. *"We are tampering with the loyalties of somewhat vulnerable children and therefore must be extremely careful with getting 'more involved'."*

✓ **Conclusion:**

Executives declared a willingness to seek further financial and personnel support for SMART among other businesses and felt those efforts would be successful. Nearly everyone expressed a sense of responsibility for educating today's students, tomorrow's employees.

According to one business leader, *"We have to claim responsibility for our schools and not leave this to educators and administrators... We must get serious about our underfunding of research and development in this country, especially the development of a skilled workforce."*

Business leaders interviewed for this report are poised to act upon their sense of responsibility, and the existence and future of programs like SMART may well depend on business involvement.

Perhaps the next critical step for business leaders will be to use their credibility and practical enthusiasm to build support for educational programs like SMART among the voting, taxpaying public and to increase support for education in general throughout the state.

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Parents

PARENT EVALUATION - PILOT STUDY

✓ Introduction:

An essential component of the SMART Program evaluation was an assessment by parents of participating children. For the 1991-92 school year, a pilot study was conducted involving a sample of 42 parents at four school sites.

Informal, open-ended surveys were administered to parents of the children selected for the evaluation in each school. Results from Kelly and Whitman in southeast Portland, LaPine and Evergreen in Redmond were available for analysis in this report, and are summarized below.

✓ Methodology

Two different surveys and techniques were used to solicit parents' opinions of the program:


- Parents of students at Kelly School received a one-page questionnaire to fill out and return to the school office. Twenty-three forms were returned, assessing the experience of 24 students (one parent had two children in the program).
- Parents of students at La Pine, Whitman and Evergreen Schools were surveyed by telephone, with 19 interviews completed.

The Kelly questionnaire consisted of five open-ended questions, while the interview protocol administered at the other three schools included five open-ended and six objective questions.

✓ Findings

Parent assessment of the SMART Program was overwhelmingly positive. Parents were nearly unanimous in reporting that their children had become better readers, more enthusiastic about books and reading, and more self-confident students through participating in the program.





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Parents

Overall, parents applied glowing terms to the SMART Program, using phrases like "wonderful program", "the best thing we ever did", "love the program."

Parents made almost no critical comments about SMART, although several parents indicated only limited familiarity with its goals and activities.

✓ **Enthusiastic Readers:**

Parents of children at La Pine, Whitman and Evergreen Schools were asked "On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you describe your child's feelings about the SMART Program? (A 1 is not at all interested; a 5 is very enthusiastic.)" All parents rated their children's feelings as "very enthusiastic" (mean=5), with 18 or 19 selection a score of five, while the remaining parent answered "10" on a scale of one to five.

In response to the question "How does your child feel about reading with his or her SMART volunteer?", each of the Kelly School parents wrote positive comments.

Parents at La Pine, Whitman and Evergreen Schools were also asked a series of questions about the degree to which their children brought the program home. All parents said their children talk with them about the program, and bring books home.

All but one parent reported that their children read their SMART books at home, either alone or with other family members, or both. All parents from Kelly School said their students brought books home, and many were able to name their children's favorite book(s).

The books often became part of a family activity: "She loves bringing the books home and retelling the stories to the family"; "D. is very proud to bring home 'his own' books to read with mom and dad"; "The book he brings home is the book we read at night."





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Parents

The mean response was 4.7 when parents at La Pine, Whitman and Evergreen Schools were asked, "On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you describe your child's response to these books? (A 1 is not at all enthusiastic; a 5 is very enthusiastic.)" All but four of the 19 parents surveyed indicated their children were very enthusiastic about the books they brought home.

In the telephone survey, parents were asked whether and how their children had benefitted from the program. Every parent identified at least one benefit, and many listed several. Most parents said their children had become more interested in reading, and in fact now read much more often. One parent explained: *"Before SMART, my child hated reading. She would not read. SMART changed it. She read SMART books to her younger brother and parents at home. She loved the books."*

The Kelly parents were asked if they had seen their children become more interested in books as a result of the program. Twenty of 23 said "yes", with many adding enthusiastic comments. Two parents reported that their children now ask for books instead of toys in stores.

Fifteen of 19 parents at La Pine, Whitman and Evergreen Schools felt their children had become more interested in reading, two felt their children's interest level had stayed about the same, two didn't know. No parents felt their children had become less interested in reading after participating in SMART.

✓ **Better, More Confident Readers:**

Many parents noted that their children's reading skills and abilities had improved. One parent wrote, *"Now that he can read better, he enjoys reading to me. We take turns."*

Several parents were able to specify improvements in particular areas, including improved vocabulary, word recognition, fluency, and willingness and ability to sound out new words. Parents also frequently mentioned that as their children had become more skilled, they had become much more confident about reading: *"L. is not afraid to tackle longer words as a result of SMART"; "He feels good (about reading) and open to make mistakes."*





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Parents

✓ **Other Perceived Benefits:**

Several parents saw favorable results that extended beyond their children's reading skills, reporting that the SMART Program had increased their children's general self-confidence and self-esteem - *"her self-esteem boosted immensely, confidence level shot through the roof."*

✓ **Criticisms and Suggestions for Improvement:**

Parents made very few critical comments about the SMART Program, even when they were specifically asked to name problems or suggest how it could be improved. One parent reported that her son sometimes did not want to be pulled out of his classroom to meet with the SMART volunteer because it meant he missed what was happening in class.

A few other parents commented that they wished the program was more frequent or more consistent. Finally several of the parents of the second graders voiced concern that their children would no longer be eligible for the program next year, because there was no third grade program.

✓ **Parent Involvement:**

Parent participation in the evaluation was only one component of parent involvement in the SMART Program. Students regularly took SMART books home to read alone and with family members, parents were invited to meet their child's volunteer, and to participate in meetings of a SMART advisory group.

Because parent involvement is an exceptional part of the program, its performance is addressed separately here.

A consistent theme in the education reform movement in the past two decades has been to recognize the importance of parent participation in successful education programs. Much of the blame for student and school failure has been laid on "social disintegration" that includes a breakdown of family structure and decreased parental authority in their children's lives (Ravitch, 1985).





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Parents

Many subsequent studies have supported the conclusion of a 1976 report that educational gains for "disadvantaged children" are "likely to be largest and to be sustained when there is support in the total ecology of the child" (Shipman, 1976).

According to "effective school" researchers, supporting a child's total ecology requires a collaboration between home and school, with parents involved in their children's education (Comer, 1984).

To date, parent involvement in education has been formalized on a national scale only for parents of students with disabilities. Federal law mandates parental involvement in the education of these students by making parents and school personnel "equal participants, to jointly decide what the child's needs are, what services will be provided to meet those needs, and what the anticipated outcomes may be" (34 CFR 300, Appendix C, 1981).

Despite widespread research that supports home-school collaboration, parent involvement in education varies greatly among districts, schools, programs, and classrooms. Although model programs have successfully achieved parent involvement on several levels, there is yet no consistent opportunity for participation by all parents in school life.

Parent involvement can take many forms, ranging from supporting school learning at home, attendance at school events, volunteering in classrooms and other areas of the school, to participating in school governance and advocacy, which includes involving parents in monitoring school performance (Brandt, 1989).

To a large degree, the SMART Program is unusual in Oregon public education in specifically utilizing several strategies for parent involvement. The continued rarity of such involvement is reflected in the SMART parent evaluations, through expressed lack of awareness of the program's goals, techniques, and opportunities for parent involvement.





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Parents

Even though parents were overwhelmingly and enthusiastically positive about the program, several indicated less than complete awareness of its purpose and activities: *"If your goal is to get the kids interested in books so they'll learn to read, then with J. you've reached your goal."* *"The program seems to be good. I don't know much about it."*

Parents at Kelly School were asked "Would you like to be more involved in SMART next year? In what ways?" Nineteen of 23 parents responded to the question; seven answered "yes", seven answered "no", and five weren't sure. Many parents referred to other obligations, especially work schedules, in their response. Only one parent mentioned attending Advisory Committee meetings, and several said they didn't know how to become involved.

One parent summed up the challenges both schools and parents face in truly achieving parent involvement: *"It is a great program. I didn't know exactly what it was at first. I don't know how I would become more involved. We may not be in this district next year."*

Achieving parent involvement on several levels in programs like SMART requires lasting and creative effort. To optimize parental involvement, parents need to feel an integral part of the program. They need frequent, understandable communication about the goals, objectives and techniques of the SMART Program. Parents must be offered varied, flexible and meaningful opportunities for participating.

More ...



STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS READING - PILOT STUDY

✓ Introduction:

Since a major goal of the SMART program is to enhance students' attitudes towards reading, an attitudinal measure was administered to a small group of students in May, 1992. Forty-nine students (kindergarten through second grade) at three school sites (Whitman, LaPine and Evergreen), participated.

The assessment instrument was administered by the school site coordinators at the three schools. A major purpose of the pilot study was to examine the feasibility of using this type of assessment on a broader scale during the 1992-1993 school year.

✓ Procedures:

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, developed by McKenna and Kear (1990), uses a four-point pictorial scale. The points are linked to pictures of Garfield, the popular cartoon character. For each of the 20 items in the survey, students select one of four Garfields - Happiest, Slightly Smiling, Mildly Upset, Very Upset to represent their response. A copy of this survey can be found in Appendix Two.

In scoring, each item is assigned 1,2,3, or 4 points, a "4" indicating the happiest (leftmost) Garfield. Sample questions measuring attitude towards recreational reading include: *How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday? How do you feel about getting a book for a present?* Two questions related to academic reading are: *How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read? How do you feel about reading your school books?*

This survey is increasingly used in primary education. Reliability coefficients ranging from .74 - .89 were based on a national sample of over 18,000 children in grades 1-6.




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Students

Scores are obtainable for: Recreational Reading, Academic Reading, and a composite score.

Students were administered the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey to provide a profile of their attitudes towards Recreational (free reading) and Academic reading activities.

Both sub-scale (Recreational and Academic) as well as total scores are reported in Table 2. Scores for the first and second graders are converted to national percentiles.

✓ **Results:**

Scores of the first and second graders surpassed national averages. (Refer to Table 2 for a complete recording of the scoring results.) This is higher than one would anticipate for students who teachers feel need special assistance in reading.

The 19 first graders generally had more positive attitudes towards recreational reading. The seven first graders at LaPine, however, were slightly more favorable towards academic reading.

The total composite scores of the 17 second graders were the highest. These students appear to have more balanced attitudes towards recreational and academic reading. Kindergarten scores could not be compared to norm scores. However, two of the three school sites tended to favor recreational over academic reading.

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey will be administered again at the end of the 1992-1993 school year to monitor attitudinal changes of the group of tutoring participants in all 20 schools.





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Appendix One
SMART Parent Interview Format

1. Does your child talk about the SMART Program?
Yes No
2. Does your child talk about his/her volunteer?
Yes No
3. Does your child bring books home?
Yes No
4. Does your child read the books at home?
Yes No





If yes:
Alone? With you? With another person?
5. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you describe your child's feelings about the SMART Program?
6. Would you describe your child's feelings about reading as:
 - Becoming more interested?
 - Staying about the same?
 - Becoming less interested?
7. Have you seen any benefits for your child? What?
8. Have you seen any problems for your child? What?
9. Would you like your child to continue in the program next year?
10. Is there anything else you want to tell us?



Appendix Two

ELEMENTARY READING ATTITUDE SURVEY

School _____ Grade _____ Name _____

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| © 1990 United Feature Syndicate, Inc. | <p>1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?</p>  |
| © 1990 United Feature Syndicate, Inc. | <p>2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?</p>  |
| © 1990 United Feature Syndicate, Inc. | <p>3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?</p>  |
| © 1990 United Feature Syndicate, Inc. | <p>4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?</p>  |

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2

5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?



6. How do you feel about starting a new book?



7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?



8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?



3

9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?



10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?



11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?



12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?



4

13. How do you feel about reading in school?



14. How do you feel about reading your school books?



15. How do you feel about learning from a book?



16. How do you feel when it's time for reading class?



© 1990 Learning Features Corporation
17. How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?



18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?



19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?



20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?



Table Two

ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

| | <i>Recreational (Part 1)</i> | | | | <i>Academic (Part 2)</i> | | | <i>TOTAL</i> | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|
| KINDERGARTEN | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> |
| Whitman | 7 | 33.6 | 4.1 | -- | 37.6 | 2.4 | -- | 70.7 | 6.0 | -- |
| La Pine | 4 | 35.3 | 3.8 | -- | 23.0 | 4.0 | -- | 58.3 | 6.0 | -- |
| Evergreen | 2 | 30.5 | 3.5 | -- | 22.5 | 8.5 | -- | 53.0 | 12.0 | -- |
| GRADE 1 | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> |
| Whitman | 7 | 33.3 | 4.6 | 65.0 | 30.4 | 5.1 | 49.0 | 63.7 | 10.0 | 59.0 |
| La Pine | 7 | 31.7 | 5.1 | 58.0 | 32.7 | 4.6 | 63.0 | 64.4 | 9.6 | 59.0 |
| Evergreen | 5 | 32.6 | 5.2 | 65.0 | 30.4 | 3.6 | 47.0 | 63.0 | 8.4 | 55.0 |
| GRADE 2 | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Percentile</i> |
| La Pine | 8 | 35.0 | 4.5 | 79.0 | 33.9 | 7.1 | 78.0 | 68.9 | 11.6 | 79.0 |
| Evergreen | 9 | 35.4 | 3.3 | 79.0 | 33.1 | 4.6 | 73.0 | 68.6 | 6.0 | 79.0 |

SD = Standard Deviation

N = Number of students responding to survey

OREGON CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

The Oregon Children's Foundation is a non-profit organization started by former Gov. Neil Goldschmidt and the law firm of Ater Wynne Hewitt Dodson & Skerritt. The Foundation is dedicated to finding comprehensive solutions for the long-term needs of Oregon's children.

The Oregon Children's Foundation supports programs that prevent serious future problems, reduce public cost, and allow children to grow into healthy, productive adults.

Early literacy is the Foundation's primary focus.



OREGON CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

222 S.W. Columbia ■ Suite 1850
Portland, Oregon 97201
503 - 221 - 2012

LITERACY LINE

1 - 800 - 322 - 8715

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SMART.™

Start Making A Reader Today



"SMART.™ is a very basic, straight forward program. The key ingredient is volunteerism — one person stepping forward to help one child succeed. Making a personal commitment to children is the most important contribution you can make to the future of Oregon."

— Neil Goldschmidt



WHY SMART.™

Poor reading performance, as early as the third grade, is a reliable predictor of delinquency, early childbearing, and school dropout. In Oregon, approximately 25 to 30 percent of elementary school students are unready to read or are reading significantly below their grade levels.

According to *Kids Count Data Book*, Oregon's school dropout rate is 27 percent. Oregon is ranked 31st out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

School dropouts are more likely to:

- Commit crimes
- Be dependent on welfare
- Become teen parents
- Live in poverty

SMART.™ IS

A book and reading program designed to help create enthusiastic readers who can read at or above their grade level by the time they leave elementary school.

A partnership among local businesses, organizations, parents and schools to provide help for students in kindergarten through second grade.

A program that provides free age-appropriate books for students to take home to share with their families.



SMART.™ WILL

- Create enthusiastic readers who understand what they read
- Improve performance on student reading assessments
- Provide well-trained adult tutors to work one-on-one with students
- Give each SMART child two 30-minute volunteer sessions weekly
- Establish meaningful adult/child relationships
- Increase partnerships between businesses, schools and communities
- Encourage family involvement



“**B**randon didn’t like going to school in the beginning and now he loves it. You have got his attention and that is really important to me.”

— Kelly School Parent

PARENTS CAN:

- Participate in the design and success of SMART
- Read with their children
- Attend Family Reading Nights and other school functions
- Contribute ideas and communicate concerns



“**I**t is always more rewarding to see that not just funds are raised for a program, but that also volunteers are participating in making the program a success . . . One can never question the importance of investing in the next generation; the children of today.”

— Arnie Vered, Vice President of Olympia & York, sponsor of Ball and Astor Schools

BUSINESSES CAN:

- Adopt a school
- Provide opportunities for employees to volunteer one hour a week during the school year
- Provide the necessary funds to purchase books and support SMART in the school
- Encourage other businesses to get involved



“**T**he single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.”

— *Becoming a Nation of Readers*

VOLUNTEERS CAN:

- Make a commitment to children
- Volunteer to tutor at least one hour a week at a SMART school
- Participate in the SMART training sessions
- Look for family strengths and encourage parental involvement



“**I** have been in education for 27 years, and I can honestly say that I have never been affiliated with an enterprise that has given me more hope than SMART has.”

— Mary Beth Van Cleave, principal Kelly School

SCHOOLS CAN:

- Volunteer to be part of the SMART Program
- Identify SMART students
- Provide an in-school liaison
- Help distribute SMART books
- Assist in program evaluation

SMART.TM is an elementary school book and reading program that combines adult one-on-one in-school volunteers with free age-appropriate books children can take home to share with their families.

By targeting children in kindergarten through second grade, SMART brings vital resources to bear at a critical period in reading development.

This approach is based on three sound principles:

1. Building meaningful relationships between children and adults
2. Encouraging family participation
3. Providing books for children to read at home



GET INVOLVED

Call the Literacy Line for a SMART Volunteer Application and training dates:
1 - 800 - 322 - 8715

Contribute to the SMART Program by sending a check to the Oregon Children’s Foundation,
222 S.W. Columbia, Suite 1850,
Portland, Oregon 97201

Encourage your employer to get your company involved

LISTEN TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND READ TO AND WITH THEM.



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SMART - Start Making A Reader Today

SMART.™

Start Making A Reader Today

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



“**SMART.**™ is a very basic, straight forward program. The key ingredient is volunteerism — one person stepping forward to help one child succeed. Making a personal commitment to children is the most important contribution you can make to the future of Oregon.”

— Neil Goldschmidt

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This Week

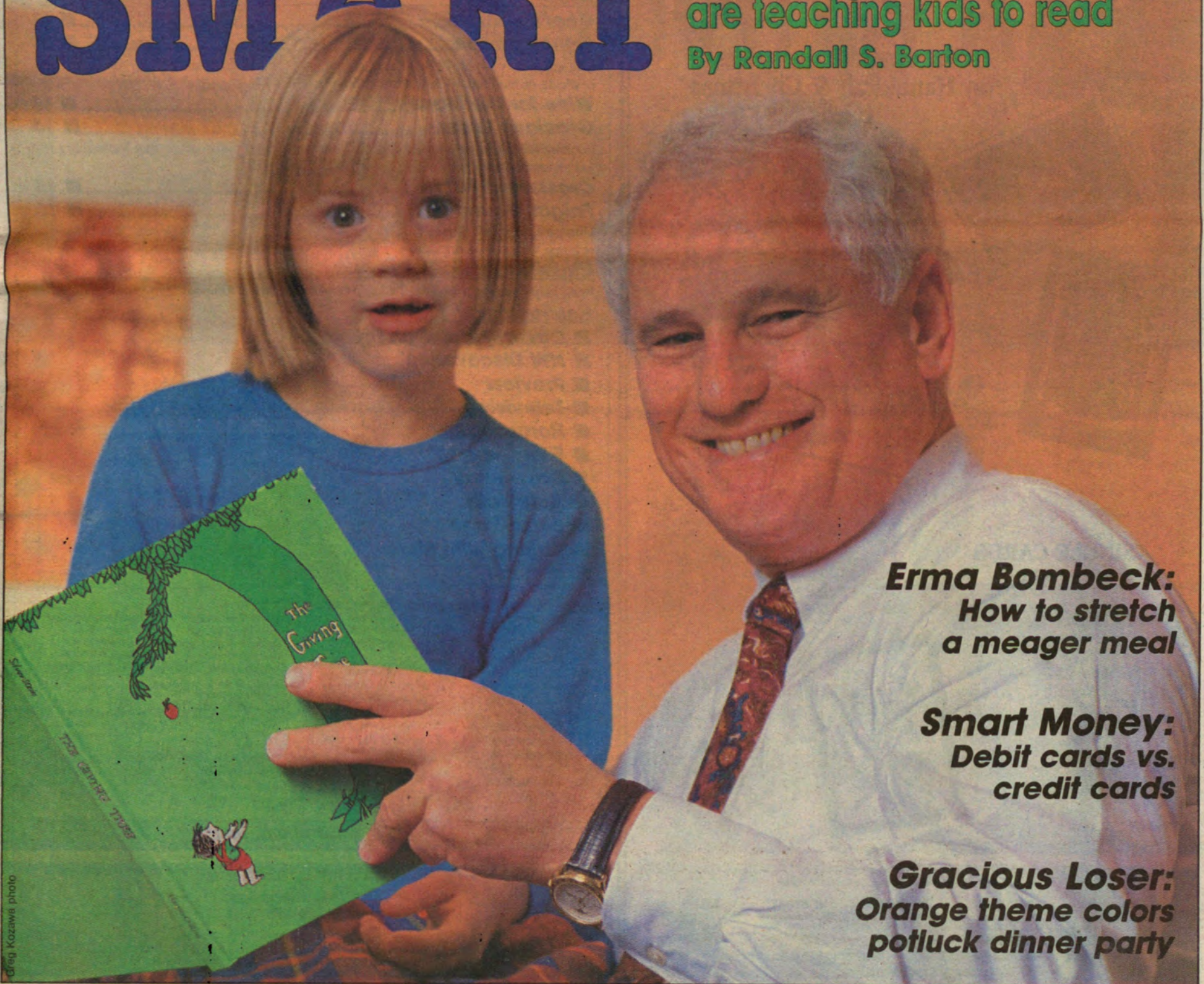
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SMART

Neil Goldschmidt's volunteers
are teaching kids to read
By Randall S. Barton



Erma Bombeck:
How to stretch
a meager meal

Smart Money:
Debit cards vs.
credit cards

Gracious Loser:
Orange theme colors
potluck dinner party

Greg Kozawa photo

SMART

Start Making A Reader Today

SMART volunteers help children become confident and enthusiastic readers who can read at or above grade level by the time they leave elementary school. SMART volunteers give one hour a week to help two children 30 minutes each. SMART students receive two new books each month to take home to keep.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____

Zip _____ Home Phone _____ Office Phone _____

Business _____

Why do you want to help young children learn to read? _____

How did you hear about SMART? _____

Please check preferred school (s):

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astor N. Portland | <input type="checkbox"/> Ball N. Portland | <input type="checkbox"/> Seaside Heights Seaside | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuck Redmond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kenton N.E. Portland | <input type="checkbox"/> Faubion N.E. Portland | <input type="checkbox"/> Astor Astoria | <input type="checkbox"/> Lynch Redmond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kelly S.E. Portland | <input type="checkbox"/> Whitman S.E. Portland | <input type="checkbox"/> Bear Creek Bend | <input type="checkbox"/> Evergreen Redmond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beaver Acres Beaverton | <input type="checkbox"/> Kinnaman Beaverton | <input type="checkbox"/> LaPine LaPine | <input type="checkbox"/> Madras Madras |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cornelius Forest Grove | <input type="checkbox"/> David Hill Hillsboro | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunrise Albany | <input type="checkbox"/> Sisters Sisters |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Waverly Albany |

Preferred time of day:

Early morning (8:30-10:30)

Mid-morning (10:30-12:00)

Afternoon (12:00-3:00)

Preferred day of the week: (circle)

M T W Th F

■ Please turn this page over and complete important information.

■ Send this application to the Oregon Children's Foundation.



Oregon Children's Foundation

222 S.W. Columbia, Suite 1850 Portland, Oregon 97201 (503) 221-2012

VOLUNTEER RECORD CHECK

The Oregon Children's Foundation and the public schools participating in the SMART program want SMART to be a positive experience for volunteers and children. Our first priority is the well-being and safety of our SMART students, and our SMART volunteers.

Please complete the following questions and sign the Criminal Check Authorization box. Applications will not be processed unless this portion of the form is completed. Thank you for your help.

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Social Security No. _____ Sex: _____ M _____ F

Have you ever been convicted of a sex-related crime? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, did the crime involve force or minors? Yes _____ No _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime involving violence or threat of violence? Yes _____ No _____

Are you currently charged with or under indictment for any of the above? Yes _____ No _____

ADVISORY: A check of the volunteer's criminal history may be made by the Oregon Children's Foundation and the Oregon Department of Education to verify the responses to the questions on this form. All volunteers need to sign the criminal check authorization below before they can volunteer. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

CRIMINAL CHECK AUTHORIZATION

I hereby grant the Oregon Children's Foundation and the Oregon Department of Education permission to check civil or criminal records to verify any statement made on this form.

Date _____ Applicant _____

Thank you for volunteering to help Oregon's children

SMART.

Start Making A Reader Today

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