

June 2, 2026

Page 1 of 2



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT: RAINWATER CHARITABLE FOUNDATION - EXPANDING LITERACY ACCESS

This Informal Report provides an overview of the \$338,050 grant awarded to the Park & Recreation Department (PAR) by the Rainwater Charitable Foundation to expand literacy access for youth participating in the 2026 Camp Fort Worth summer program. The funding supports PAR’s ongoing efforts to prevent “summer slide” and improve or maintain reading levels among campers.

Camp Fort Worth is an eight-week summer program serving youth ages 5–12 at 21 community centers and four mobile recreation sites. Since 2018, PAR has partnered with the REV (Read, Excel, Verify) Partnership and the City Manager’s Office to integrate literacy initiatives into summer programming. PAR Literacy Initiatives utilize Literacy Support Specialists (LSS) to:

- Conduct literacy screenings (alphabet recognition, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension)
- Prevent summer slide through literacy-infused recreation and leisure reading into daily recreation
- Serve as access points for literacy services, resources, and information

In 2025, 957 youth were assessed, and 98% maintained or improved their reading levels, demonstrating the effectiveness of the program.

Established in 1991 by Richard E. Rainwater in Fort Worth, the Foundation focuses on strengthening communities by expanding access to high-quality education and supporting programs that help children and families thrive. The 2026 grant continues this legacy by investing directly in literacy outcomes for Fort Worth youth.

The grant will allow PAR to significantly enhance literacy services across all 25 Camp Fort Worth sites through:

- **Enhanced Literacy Support**
 - Increased staffing of Literacy Support Specialists
 - Sites with higher enrollment will increase from 1 to 2 LSS
 - LSS hours will increase from 20 to 25 hours per week
 - Addition of two Literacy Support Coordinators (Sr. LSS) to improve coordination between PAR, the Library Department, and Literacy Roundup (dyslexia screening), and to strengthen parent outreach and engagement
- **Program Incentives & Resources**
 - Incentives for “Literacy Champions” to encourage participation
 - Purchase of additional equipment (laptops, iPads, headphones)
 - Expansion of literacy activity kits to support enhanced lesson plans and engaging classroom environments

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Page 2 of 2



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The Rainwater Charitable Foundation grant enables PARD to deepen its commitment to addressing the local literacy crisis by expanding high-quality literacy support during summer day camp. This investment strengthens program impact, improves literacy outcomes for more children, expands access to literacy resources for families, strengthens program quality and consistency across all sites and enhances the department's ability to support youth literacy development across Fort Worth.

For questions regarding this information, please contact Monique Hill, Park & Recreation Department, Assistant Director at 817-392-5775.

**Jesus "Jay" Chapa
City Manager**