
Baycrest Public School

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George Boyko, Principal

Dear Mr. Cottle:

Baycrest Public School is a multi-cultural inner city school in Toronto. Although we are quite small, over thirty different nationalities are represented by our students.

The parents of our kids, in Jesse Jackson words, ride the early bus. They hold down two jobs in order to save up the downpayment for a semi in the far suburb of Brampton. Their ambition is for each of their children to have their own bedroom. As you can imagine, money is tight with little available to do such things as purchase books for their children.

In recent years, we have received an increasing number of children from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan. I run a storytelling club at the school for a number of reasons, first and foremost is to introduce the children to the sheer joy of storytelling. It also improves their oral expression and ability to speak in public. However, I further feel that stories give insights into the cultures and attitudes of the countries from which they originate. When a child from Romania hears a story from Pakistan, they get an inkling as to what life in that country is like. And when a child from Pakistan hears a story from his country of origin, it validates and honours his national background.

Your donation of the Hoopoe storybooks were a wonderful surprise and the children who received them were absolutely thrilled. It is one thing to borrow a book from the school library. It is another thing entirely to have a book of your own, to read with a parent or family member, to leaf through in quiet and to treasure. As I said earlier, I suspect that in many of our households, it is the only children's book the family possesses.

I hope I am not being presumptuous but if it is possible I hope that you will keep Baycrest in mind if you decide to make another book donation to schools. Our kids would love to receive another book to share with their families. Be that as it may, I would like to thank you for your generosity.

Yours Truly



Bruce Stodart

cc. Aubrey Davis
