



September 19, 2018

Dear Families,

My name is Abby Levin and I'm the Teacher-Librarian at Cedar Park. It is my privilege to serve in this role and I'm thrilled to launch another year of library learning! I'm writing to welcome new families to our community and provide an overview of our library program and services.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES

My teaching is driven by the following core values:

- **high standards** (for myself, my students, and the library program)
- **equity** (inclusion, representation, identity safety)
- **strong relationships** (professional collaboration, community voice, reflective listening)
- **mindfulness** (teaching of self-regulation, attention, breath awareness)
- **innovation** (risk-taking, creative exploration, flexible problem solving)

PROGRAM MISSION

Cedar Park Elementary Library serves students and teachers in pre-K through 5th grade. Our three part program mission includes:

- **Reading Advocacy:** to nurture **a lifelong love of reading** across a range of genres
- **Information Literacy:** to empower students to **locate, use, and produce** information critically, effectively, and responsibly
- **Social/Emotional Learning:** to build **self-awareness, compassion,** and **global citizenship** through reflective reading and critical inquiry

SCHEDULE: FIXED & FLEX

Cedar Park library offers a combination "Fixed & Flex" schedule, with **weekly library visits scheduled for all classes from preK-5**. Pre-K students attend a story time with songs, movement, rhymes, and stories. K-5 student lessons include stories/book talks and mini-lessons related to literacy: authors, informational texts, genre study, and more.

I offer several additional time slots each week for "flex time," during which I am available to collaborate with classroom teachers in content areas to build skills in information literacy (such as how to ask a research question, evaluating sources to determine reliability, note-taking, citation of sources, digital citizenship, and technology).

MAKERSPACE

A Makerspace is "a **collaborative work space** inside a school, library or other facility for **making, learning, exploring and sharing.**" Makerspace combines **art, craft, and engineering to provide problem solving opportunities and open-ended exploration.** Our (low budget/low tech) Makerspace includes building supplies (such as legos and geodisks), art/craft materials (like cardboard, fabric, magazines, yarn, paint, straws), along with challenge prompts.

Last year, students used supplies to respond to challenges (lego, finger knitting, and marble run), make self-portraits out of found objects, make comic books & puppet shows inspired by favorite authors, construct a dog competition obstacle course, color panels of a collaborative mural, and—in the case of our 4th and 5th grade Global Reading Challenge team—make a semi-animated film!

Our Makerspace is open during lunch second recess (**11:00-11:30**) on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays** beginning **Tuesday, October 2nd**. Each classroom teacher will be given **3 Makerspace passes** to offer to students each day, on a sign-up basis.

Students may not attend Makerspace without a pass from their teacher. Once they begin at Makerspace, they must stay until recess ends at 11:30.

CHECK-OUT INFO

- **Fixed Library Days** **Courtney:** Tues, **Wood:** Tuesday, **Paul:** Wednesday, **Hoppins:** Wednesday, **Lackie:** Wednesday, **Pua:** Thursday, **Veling:** Thursday
- **Item Limit:** **Grades K-2:** up to 2 items, **Grades 3-5:** up to 3 items, **Pre-K:** 1 item (begins January), **1 Playaway audio book/out** at a time (grades 2-5). **Students can keep items for up to 3 weeks without renewing**, as long as they are not on hold for another student.
- **Book Buffer:** While routines become established, I provide a "buffer" through October—if students forget to return books on check-out day, they will be allowed to check-out 1 item.
- **Open Check-Out:** If students are ready to exchange books before their designated day, they may visit the library **Tu, Wed, Th** at **AM recess** or **Tu, Wed, Th before school** beginning at **7:35 (at which time families are invited too!)** Families may check out additional items on their own accounts, up to 6 at a time.
- **Book Return:** It will be helpful to **designate a single spot in your home** for your child to keep library books and get them in backpacks the night before checkout day.

On library day, students put **books in designated library bins outside their classrooms** as part of their morning routine. Families may return items in these bins or in the **library slot** located at the **front of the circulation desk**.

- **Overdue & Lost Books:** This year, I'll begin sending **overdue notices home via the e-mail addresses** listed on student accounts (or via kid mail, if none

listed). If an item shows up in your child's account as overdue and you believe it was returned, contact me so I can ensure that it was not mistakenly placed on the shelf.

For late or lost items, I offer a "**Food for Fines**" program, in which students can bring in donations for North Helpline foodbank to waive their balance. Alternatively, they can donate their time to the library to "work off" the fine.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Children's Film Fest Seattle Last March, as part of our library goal of media literacy and part of our equity goal of representation and diversity, Cedar Park Elementary K-5 students attended the Children's Film Fest Seattle at NW Film Forum in Capitol Hill. K-2 students viewed animated shorts and 3-5 viewed short "live action" films from around the globe: "See the World. Feed your Mind." It was a beloved event for our community, so we decided to make it a Cedar Park tradition. Stay tuned for more details in January.

Global Reading Challenge is a trivia-bowl style competition, sponsored by the Seattle Public Library, open to 4th and 5th graders in which students collectively read 10 books and cram details. Last year, our team was so small that we chose to participate by making a film retelling just one of the books (Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai). This year, I will invite students to join the team and introduce the titles in November. Depending on the number of students and their interests, we may participate in the traditional trivial bowl or attempt another creative project. Stay tuned for more information!

Author Visits & Reading Promotions This year, we will invite guest authors to meet with classes via Skype, beginning in October with Pakistani American author Saadia Faruqi, who recently launched the popular Yasmin series for Early Readers.

Library Leaders Students will be invited to help in the library throughout the year. Roles include collection management/shelving, special projects, makerspace support, serving on a Library Advisory Committee, and more.

MORE! Many more events to come! I will send additional info on special activities, projects, and events as the year goes on.

STAYING IN TOUCH

Questions? Want to volunteer? You can e-mail me at ahlevin@seattleschools.org.

I look forward to a dynamic year of reading and discovery with your child!

Best,

Abby Levin

P.S. To access our **library catalog** or learn more about our library learning, you can find me here:



www.cedarparklibrary.org



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