

D211 POST: FREMD ENGLISH TEACHER RECEIVES GRANT FROM BOOK LOVE FOUNDATION



William Fremd High School English Teacher Russ Anderson has received a grant from the Book Love Foundation which will allow him to increase the diversity of books in the classroom. Anderson was one of 60 teachers from across the U.S. and Canada.

“This grant allows me to put books in the hands of students and help shape the people they will grow to become, people who are kind, empathetic, creative, resilient, curious, and better than they were yesterday,” Anderson said.

The grant will allow Anderson to add between 175 and 200 books to his classroom library. As part of the grant application, he had to include a “wish list” of books he would add. His list included books like *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas and *March Trilogy* by John Lewis among many others.

“I am so grateful for the surge of own-voice stories that are separately needed in every classroom, but what separates this book, I think, is the immediate call for students to become involved in not only shaping their own stories but shaping the world around them into what they think it should be, Anderson remarked of *The Hate U Give*.

Anderson said the grant will allow him to build a diverse collection of literature which he finds to be very important.

“It helps build empathy and community and shows students the lives of people they might not otherwise meet,” explained Anderson. “It helps build a sense of identity and self when they see characters and people who look, believe, identify, and feel the way they do. It helps them discover and work through life’s big ideas that we tackle on a daily basis.”

The Book Love Foundation was created by teacher and author Penny Kittle in 2012 as a means to help teachers and libraries address teenage reading apathy. Since awarding their first grants in 2013, the foundation has donated more than \$365,000 to teachers in 38 states and four Canadian provinces.