This year nine local councils applied for the Minigrant funding ($400.00). Those councils are:

1. Berkshire Reading Council
2. Cape Cod Reading Council
3. Central Mass Reading Council
4. Greater Boston Reading Council
5. M.A.C.U.R.E.
6. Merrimack Valley Regional Reading Council
7. Nobscot Reading Council
8. Pioneer Valley Reading Council
9. Southeast Regional Reading Council

*Note:*
Three of the nine proposals submitted are on-going initiatives, with six new initiatives.

Organizations to be served by the 2013-14 MRA Minigrant Projects include: hospitals, teachers & students, parenting communities, food pantries, local shelters, and Head Start Programs. It is estimated that when funded these projects have the potential to benefit thousands of people throughout the Commonwealth. The following is a list of the project summaries for each project and the MRA Minigrant Committee’s recommendations.

**MRA Minigrant Projects 2013 – 2014: Project Summaries**

**Berkshire Reading Council – Dr. Seuss Night** - On-going Project

*Summary of Project:* Council members will take turns reading/acting out various Dr. Seuss books to the children in the audience. This will include a visit by the Cat in the Hat. During ‘intermission’ we will be serving green eggs and ham, and juice. Council members will distribute a Dr Seuss book of choice to each child in attendance. Event will take place in a local bookstore.

It is anticipated that 5 to 8 local council members will be involved in the project. We estimate 75 - 100 individuals will benefit from this project.

**Budget: $400**
Cape Cod Reading Council – “What’s the Big ‘So What’ About Animals, Their Features, and Their Habitats? Inquiring First Graders Want to Know!” - New Project

Summary of Project: This project will allow first grade teachers the opportunity to integrate an inquiry based learning project centered on the intricate balance between animals, their adaptive features and their habitats with two units in the National Geographic Reach to Read Core Reading Series, currently used in Grade 1. Students will develop questions about specific animals that will then lead to focused research using a variety of texts as well as media. Students will participate in collaborative discussions that will create the foundation for written publications of their knowledge, including a written report. Students will also participate in a self selected publication chosen from a student generated menu that includes but will not be limited to: an animal wax museum, a newspaper, and/or a collection of poetry or other writing, each of which will reflect the importance of stewardship. 5 classroom teachers and 3 special education teachers who work with 1st grade will be involved with this project. Approximately 125 children in first grade at the Minot Forest School will benefit from this project.

Budget: $400

Central Massachusetts Reading Council - Supporting the Children at CANDO - On-going Project

Summary of Project: This project will provide books to be used by therapists at the CANDO (Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders) clinic at the UMass Memorial Children’s Hospital in Worcester. In an extension to this on-going project, materials will also be provided for parents of children being serviced at the clinic. CMRC has been contributing to various areas at the UMass Children’s Hospital for several years. In 2013, children’s books were donated to the newly opened CANDO (Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders) clinic. The clinic primarily serves children with autism spectrum disorders from preschool to school age as well as some young teens. They also work with children with other similar disorders.

Eight members of the CMRC Board will be involved plus regular members through contributions of books at the CMRC dinner meeting in May. Since this clinic just opened this past summer, there is no specific number of participants at this time, but their clientele is growing.

Budget: $400

Greater Boston Reading Council – Character Breakfast - On-going Project

Summary of project: On Saturday May 3, 2014, the Greater Boston Reading Council will host a character Breakfast at the McGlynn Elementary School in Medford, MA. The event is held in
collaboration with the Medford Family Network, which will serve breakfast, advertise, and manage the sign-up list. When families arrive, they will receive a Curious George themed breakfast. Then they will participate in the various activities, including coloring, arts & crafts projects, and word games related to literacy. They will also listen to stories read aloud and engage in music & movement activities. Families may also choose to have their photo taken with Curious George. Parents will return home with a packet of literacy information and children will receive a book of their choosing as well as poems relating to the activities. Council members will also be available to answer any literacy questions parents may have.

Approximately eight GBRC members will participate in this event. Approximately 230 people will benefit from this project. Approximately 100 participants will be children and about 130 will be accompanying adults.

**Budget: $400**

**Massachusetts Association of College and University Reading Educators - Teacher-Led “Un-Conference on Disciplinary Literacy” - New Project**

**Summary of Project:** This project is focused on supporting Brookline High School teachers involved in the Content-area Reading Initiative (CRI) in hosting their first teacher-led “un-conference” on disciplinary literacy practices at the high school level. The 18-person teacher group would like to invite 6th-12th grade teachers from across the state to visit Brookline High and share ideas, practices, strategies, and initiatives that have furthered adolescent literacy in the content areas. There will be a significant focus on sharing through technology (e.g., TED talk-type videos of proceedings; podcasts; tweets; blog-postings; so that teachers across the state who cannot attend in person can still participate). CRI is a multi-year inquiry project at Brookline High, and this first “un-conference” (i.e., very few PPT/speeches, and more workshops and interactive sessions) would be held in the Fall of 2015, after two full years of the project’s existence.

Jacy Ippolito and Christina Dobbs (MACURE), both of whom have been instrumental in moving the CRI project forward. Jenee Ramos and others involved in the project (teachers at Brookline High) are MRA members and will be presenting at MRA in spring 2014.

Approximately several hundred 6th-12th grade teachers statewide will be serviced by this project.

**Budget: $400**

**Merrimack Valley Regional Reading Council – “Come Read with Me” - New Project**

**Summary of Project:** Council members will provide Spanish and English picture books to families with children staying at Lowell General Hospital, Lowell, MA. These books will give
Parents an opportunity to read to their children while their child is recovering in a pediatric wing of the hospital.

It is anticipated that MVRRC Board Members will purchase children’s books and display bin for Lowell General Hospital Pediatric Ward. All council members will then be involved in the project through individual member book contributions at various local events throughout the year.

It is estimated that at least 100 families will benefit from this project.

**Budget: $400**

**Nobscot Reading Council – Project - Books for the Daily Bread Food Pantry - New Project**

This project will provide age-appropriate books for families receiving groceries from the Daily Bread Food Pantry in Milford. Families will pick up a book bag for their children to encourage and support literacy at home. Book bags, each containing three or more books, will be created for a span of readers, including young children through adolescent readers.

Seven NRC members will be involved in the project, through the ordering, assembling, and distribution process.

20 to 30 families from Milford, Hopedale, Upton, and Medway will benefit from this project.

**Budget: $400**

**Pioneer Valley Reading Council – Literacy at the Ronald McDonald House**

**New Project**

**Summary of Project:** Council members will provide native language reading materials for families with children staying at the Ronald McDonald House. These books will give parents an opportunity to read to their children while their child is receiving medical treatment.

It is anticipated that Pioneer Valley Reading Council Members will determine reading material needs and then books will be purchased and housed at Ronald McDonald house for the enjoyment of children.

All council members will then be involved in the project through individual member book contributions at various local events throughout the year.

It is estimated that hundred families will benefit from this project throughout the course of a year.

**Budget: $400**

**Southeast Regional Reading Council (SERRC) – Promoting Reading with Early Head Start Children - New Project**

**Summary of Project:** Council members will provide age-appropriate books, geared toward prenatal to age three children, and a small bookcase to the Early Head Start Program. The
“Reading to the Very Young Child” brochure will be given to existing EHS families. The books will be available in the center to read to children as well as take home to encourage language learning and foster the importance of books. It is estimated that 100 – 150 SRRC members will be involved with this project. Approximately 35 to 40 families will benefit from this project.

**Budget: $400**