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

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

**MRA Minigrant Projects 2014-15: Project Summaries**

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

**Summary of Project:** Council members read aloud/act out various Dr. Seuss books; a visit by ‘The Cat in the Hat’ (courtesy Mary Hibbard, secretary, BRC); serving of Green Eggs & Ham; distribution of Dr. Seuss books to each child in attendance.

It is anticipated that 5 to 8 local council members will be involved in the project.  
An estimated 75 - 100 children of Berkshire County, MA will benefit from this project.  
**Budget:** $400

**Cape Cod Reading Council – Read to Me, It’s Fun! Encouraging Family and Early Literacy**  
New Project

**Summary of Project:** The primary purpose of the Read to Me, It’s Fun! Minigrant is to promote family literacy in early childhood by providing the recently published book, Read to Me, by Martha Zschock, to four programs offered through Cape Cod Child Development; the Teen Parent Program, Early Intervention, Safe Harbor and Angel House. This book lends itself to be read aloud and is specifically intended to encourage the engaging communication that happens when young children are read to by their primary caregivers. Through the purchase of these books, members of the Cape Cod Council of the International Reading Association (CCCIRA) will be able to offer support for families of young children who participate in the
Teen Parent Program, Early Intervention as well as clients at Safe Harbor, a transitional shelter for families with domestic abuse and Angel Wings, a program for women in recovery who are preparing to reunite with their children. The collaboration and “partnership between each of the participants in the grant and the Read to Me book, will offer opportunity for families to develop and celebrate the relationship between reading with your child and fun.

The programs at Cape Cod Child Development have open enrollment. Presently there are 15 parents in the Teen Parent Program and 340 families in Early Intervention, or about 900 over the year. The number of clients at the shelters will fluctuate; however there are presently about 6-8 at Angel House and the same at Safe Harbor.

Eight to fifteen members will help distribute the books and provide support for family literacy activities.

Budget: $400

Central Massachusetts Reading Council - Helping Children in Need - New Project

**Summary of Project:** This project will give the gift of good children’s books to Sherry’s House and Horizons for Homeless Children in Worcester, MA. Sherry’s House is dedicated to providing love and support for families with childhood cancer. Their home away from home approach has been successful since 1985. Horizons for Homeless Children in Worcester is an organization that supports families with young children who have no place to live. It offers play spaces for the children and literary experiences in addition to room and board for the families.

Eight members of the CMRC Board will be involved with these two projects plus members through contributions of books at the CMRC dinner meeting in May.

The families and their children who need to use the services of Sherry’s House and the Horizons facility will be served by these projects.

Budget: $400

Greater Boston Reading Council – Character Breakfast On-going Project

**Summary of Project:** On Saturday May 2, 2015, 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 and literacy-related activities. Council members will also be available to answer any literacy questions parents may have.

Approximately eight Great Boston Council members will participate.

Approximately 230 people will benefit. About 100 participants will be children and about 130 will be accompanying adults. (This is the limit set by our space constraints.)

**Budget: $400**

**Massachusetts Association of College and University Reading Educators - Teacher-Led “Un-Conference on Disciplinary Literacy” - Ongoing 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 early summer of 2015, after two full years of the project’s existence.

Other participating districts committed to attending the event include: Brookline, Danvers, Acton-Boxborough, Hudson, Dorchester, Cambridge, Needham and more. This activity will involve 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 as well. 6th-12th grade teachers statewide will participate, totaling approximately one hundred participants.

**Budget: $400**

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

**Summary of project:** The MVRRC minigrant is designed to supply families who have children staying overnight in the pediatric wing of the Lowell General Hospital, books to read to their children while recovering. The books will then be taken home with the child at discharge, promoting literacy in the home.

The whole council will continue to be involved through individual member contributions at various local events throughout the year.
Approximately 100 families in the Greater Merrimack Valley will benefit.

**Budget: $400**

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

**Summary of Project:** The Nobscot 2015 minigrant will provide literacy materials to the children and families living in the Pathways Family Shelter in Framingham. Specifically, school supplies and backpacks will be purchased to help outfit the school age children for the start of school in August/September 2015. Books, representing all genres, will be purchased in the spring to refresh the books available in a communal reading room. The books will be picture, board, and reference books, novels for young readers, and books for the whole family to read and enjoy. Writing materials will be purchased and donated for all the children to use, but special supplies will be bought for preschool age and even younger children to draw and write and have fun using writing supplies.

At least 10 council members will assist in the purchase of the writing materials and selection of the book titles.

Our minigrant will serve the families living at the Pathways Family Shelter for temporary (no longer than 90 days) housing. For our 2014 minigrant, approximately 53 families (86 children and 56 adults) were served. Depending on the number of families who will need shelter at Pathways this coming year, the number of families served by this new minigrant is expected to be about the same.

**Budget: $400**

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**Southeast Regional Reading Council (SERRC) – A “Novel” Approach to Thematic Instruction - New Project**

**Summary of Project:** In September of 2014 a new school was established in Fall River. Many problems arose, including the lack of an elementary library. The Grade 5 teacher provides instruction to the 3 existing Grade 5 classes. This minigrant will provide theme-based novels for instruction to Grade 5 students will lead to increased test scores and equally as important, an appreciation of books and reading.

Approximately 100-125 SERRC Members will be involved by being asked to donate books to help build the classroom library.

Approximately 75 students and 1 teacher will benefit from this minigrant.

**Budget: $400**