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International Paper Awards \$10,000 Grant for Expanding STEM Education within Decatur City Schools

DECATUR, Alabama (December 4, 2020)— International Paper awarded a \$10,000 grant benefitting the Decatur City Schools Foundation’s Library Expansion program. This will fund e-book access for Kindergarten-8th grades throughout the district. The Library Expansion program supports the Decatur City Schools effort to increase student engagement and increase the reading skills of over 6,000 students.

“We know that reading is key to success in school and beyond, and we want our students to have all the tools they need to succeed,” said DCS Superintendent, Dr. Michael Douglas.

“It’s important that all of our students have access to books, whether in school or at home, and with the Library Expansion program, we’re able to make sure that this happens,” said DCSF Executive Director, Stevi Price

The Library Expansion program will fund the purchase of e-books, both fiction and non-fiction, for 6,146 students in Kindergarten-8th grades. E-books (electronic or digital versions of physical books) go hand in hand with other resources that our district uses to teach reading. With more students in our district opting for virtual and blended (part virtual/part in school) education due to the COVID-19 pandemic, increased access to digital books is needed more than ever for students learning to read in grades K-3 and students reading to learn in grades 4-12.

All students in Decatur City Schools are provided a digital device (iPads for K-3 and Chromebooks for grades 4-12). Access is provided for e-books to students on these devices as well as other digital devices that they might have such as smartphones, laptops or desktops.

In 2018, Decatur City Schools purchased Accelerated Reader for K-8 students. This is an online platform for students to take assessments based on specific books read. Students have been able to use physical

books from the local school libraries, the Decatur City Public Library, and Epic Books (a platform that offers a limited amount of free e-books). We are continuing our use of these resources and will expand books available to our students through the Library Expansion program with e-books.

“We are so happy to partner with the Decatur City Schools Foundation and believe that libraries are a critical component to the success of a child’s education,” said Site Manager, Thomas Reeder.

More than 6,100 students in 15 schools in grades K-8 will be positively impacted

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