

**One School - One Book - Joe P. Eblen Intermediate**  
Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe

One School - One Book initiative helps build a community of readers, a sense of belonging within the school building and bridges the home-school connection. Reading together helps students work on active listening skills, build vocabulary, and develop a positive attitude about books and learning. Reading professionals recommend that adults read aloud to children even when they are able to read by themselves. When an entire school reads together, it generates excitement about reading and being a part of a fun program! This year for our One School - One Book Initiative we chose the book *Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe*. We loved the journey of Cricket and how in the end she realized just how brave and capable she was to carry on and take a chance on herself. Once our Title I department was able to purchase a copy of the book for every student and staff member, we began making our plans for our month of reading and activities.

We began by making a google classroom class to house all of our resources for the book and a google doc so teachers could sign up to read the chapters to students. Our Title I reading specialists met with all teachers during their professional learning community time to kick off the initiative and get them involved in the process. The exploratory teachers at our school agreed to play the chapter recordings, done by school staff members and two of our superintendents, and read along with students during their classes, while the homeroom teachers made sure the students had time during their classes to complete the trivia questions and challenges.

While our media specialist was attending the NCSLMA conference this past fall she spoke with Ms. Hackl about the initiative and was given many resources and grant opportunities that would go along with the book. We used many of these resources and adapted them to fit our timeline and students. After each chapter recording was played, students were able to answer trivia questions based on their readings and be entered to win a prize donated by a local business. Students were also encouraged to complete challenges based on the book including a class plant challenge, doogaloo (coin) decorating, research on local ghost towns, and more. Once challenges were submitted, the student's work was used to decorate the school for our visit from Ms. Hackl. Many homerooms also participated in the "Tour of Doors" competition where students came up with an idea based on the book to decorate their doors. At the conclusion of the grade level presentations from Ms. Hackl, all classes were able to tour the school and vote for their favorite door.

On the day of our visit from Ms. Hackl, we had each grade level meet in the gym for a wonderful presentation about the inspiration for the book, discovering things outdoors, reading and writing about what interests you, writing revision tools, and taking a chance on yourself. After the Q&A session, some of our student leaders walked Ms. Hackl around the school to see the student work and tour the decorated doors where she was able to speak to them about their work and love for the book. We also held a meet and greet with a small group of students who completed the most trivia submissions and challenges. During this time, students were able to

ask questions about the book, get their books signed, and take a photo at our media center photobooth that was themed around the book's setting.

Reading *Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe* together during our One School, One Book Initiative allowed Eblen Intermediate to collaborate within our school and our community while promoting a love for reading!