

THE HOLLYWOOD

# Star NEWS



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### Shadow Project helps special ed students

The Shadow Project, a Portland-based nonprofit that teams with teachers to close the achievement gap for students in special education, is encouraging youngsters to continue reading over the summer.

The project, which began with volunteers in 1997, became a nonprofit in 2003, assisting special education teachers. In 2004, the Portland Public School district donated space to store books and literacy supplies for teachers using the program.

This summer, the Shadow Project has opened an audio library with the SUN School at Woodmere Elementary School, 7900 S.E. Duke St., for children who have difficulty reading print. In addition, the students work with teachers one-on-one and in small groups for support.

Children with a reading disability called dyslexia often say the words on a page move around and many confuse some letters, for instance, B and D. The audiobooks help them “read” with their ears as they persevere

to master reading visually.

One student said, “I like to listen to the story and, with headphones, no one can distract you.”

The project emphasizes perseverance and pride in accomplishment, sometimes offering small prizes for students who meet a reading goal.

During the school year, the project also has “Supersensory Literary Space” in several schools. These give students a place to read, take tests, de-escalate and select audiobooks. The North and Northeast schools include Chief Joseph, Faubion, James John, Ockley Green and Rosa Parks.

The Shadow Project serves 1,600 students in 36 schools in the Portland area and McMinnville in Yamhill County. However, Oregon has more than 75,000 special education students, according to the project website, and fewer than 1 in 2 graduate with their class. The website is [www.shadow-project.org/](http://www.shadow-project.org/).