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PLEASE NOTE: To attend the Cunningham Elementary author presentations, please RSVP with your name, title, and affiliation to be allowed entry into the school.

Famed children's authors to speak at Title 1 schools, give kids autographed books; Oct. 24

Reading Rock Stars authors Jon Scieszka, Arree Chung, Andrea Beaty

WHAT

AUSTIN—The Texas Book Festival's Reading Rock Stars program brings books to life for children in low-income schools, and will host authors from across the country at six local Central Texas schools. The authors will present their literary works in an entertaining fashion; the Texas Book Festival gives each student an autographed copy of their book and provides the school library with a new set of books. Media are invited to cover the author presentations at Cunningham Elementary School.

WHO

- More than 450 students, grades pre-K through fourth, at Cunningham Elementary—this year's featured Reading Rock Stars school
- Children's book authors **Jon Scieszka** (*Frank Einstein and the Antimatter Motor*), **Arree Chung** (*Ninja!*), and **Andrea Beaty** (*Rosie Revere Engineer*)
- Lois Kim, executive director of the Texas Book Festival
- Cunningham's librarian, Sharon Sparrow, and principal, Amy Lloyd

WHERE

Cunningham Elementary, 2200 Berkeley Ave. Austin, TX 78741. (Visitor parking is available in front of the school; author presentations will take place in the library.)

WHEN

Friday, Oct. 24, 8:10- 10:30 a.m.

- 8:10- 8:50 a.m.—Arree Chung, *Ninja!*, grades 1-2
- 9- 9:50 a.m.—Jon Scieszka, *Frank Einstein and the Antimatter Motor*, grades 3-5
- 10- 10:30 a.m.—Andrea Beaty, *Rosie Revere Engineer*, pre-K and K

**Note: book distribution and signing will take place directly after authors' presentations.*

VISUALS

Kids of all ages; famous children's authors; large banners and welcome signs for authors plastered all over the school; a library cart full of brand-new, signed books; stage with book-themed decorations including posters of book covers, cut-outs of authors, and props for interactive parts of the presentations.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Book Festival brings books to life for young readers through Reading Rock Stars, a dynamic program in which selected authors from across the country are invited to present their works to students in economically disadvantaged public schools. At the end of the presentations, each child receives an autographed copy of the book, and a set of books is also given to the school library.

Since 2001, the Texas Book Festival has given nearly 56,000 books to kids at Title I schools in Texas through its Reading Rock Stars program. For many children, it is the first book they have ever owned.

Originally created to serve children in the Austin area, the Reading Rock Stars program is expanding each year. With support from H-E-B's Tournament of Champions and Read 3 programs, The Wright Family Foundation, Target, and other generous donors, Reading Rock Stars is now serving Austin, the Rio Grande Valley, and new this year, Houston. The Texas Book Festival makes a three-year commitment to each school it accepts, bringing in different authors and new books each year.

Half of this year's Reading Rock Stars schools are from Del Valle ISD: Hillcrest, Baty, and Smith; the other half are from Austin ISD: Zavala, Ortega, and Cunningham, which will be featured as this year's media school.

"The festival does not send authors to speak to the children of privilege, rather to the children of hope—all from Title 1 schools. And the event is about more than just one day—it is about the lead-up to the event. Committed teachers and librarians build excitement in the students through creative activities, art and writing projects, guiding them to find their own voices and put their dreams into words," says Monica Brown, past Reading Rock Stars author.

"To own an \$18 picture book is a luxury the vast majority of children in the world can't afford, but the Texas Book Festival makes sure thousands of children do, in Austin and the Rio Grande Valley," says Brown.

For more information about Texas Book Festival's Reading Rock Stars program, please visit <http://www.texasbookfestival.org/welcome-reading-rock-stars/>.

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About the Texas Book Festival

The Texas Book Festival celebrates authors and their contributions to the culture of literacy, ideas, and imagination. Founded in 1995 by first lady Laura Bush, Mary Margaret Farabee, and a group of volunteers, the nonprofit Texas Book Festival promotes the joys of reading and writing through its annual Festival Weekend, the one-day Texas Teen Book Festival, the Reading Rock Stars program, grants to Texas libraries, youth fiction writing contest, and year-round literary programming. The Festival is held on the grounds of the Texas Capitol each fall and features more than 280 renowned authors, panels, book signings, live music, cooking demonstrations, and children's activities. Thanks to generous donors, sponsors, and 1,000 volunteers, the Festival remains free and open to the public. Visit www.texasbookfestival.org for more information, and join the conversation using the hashtag #txbookfest on Facebook Twitter, and Instagram @texasbookfest.