



Cooperative for Education First Quarter Report, 2019



Students at El Mesías help celebrate the fact that CoEd's Textbook Program is now operating in more than 200 schools throughout Guatemala! *San Marcos, February 2019.*

The highlight of this year's first quarter was our busy tour season and all the milestones we celebrated during these trips. In February 2019, 45 volunteers traveled with Cooperative for Education (CoEd) throughout Guatemala's highlands to launch the latest iterations of our programs and celebrate accomplishments such as:

- Inaugurating our 50th Computer Center, dedicated in memory of Ernie Lobb, father of CoEd staff member (and founder of the Computer Centers Program) Howard Lobb.
- Reaching 200,000 students served through our sustainable programs—some of which have been operating for more than 20 years now.
- Expanding to our 200th Textbook Program school.

At one of our long-standing Textbook Program schools, we got to know the principal, Guisela, who has worked at Choquí since the school received its very first CoEd textbooks back in 2006. "Then, there were hardly any materials in the classrooms," Guisela told us. "Teachers had to look up teaching materials in outdated books that the school happened to have and make photocopies for the students. Students could try to find a relevant book at a nearby library, but the available books were often for the wrong grade level—they weren't what a middle school student needed." But now, thanks to the Textbook Program and its innovative revolving fund model, Choquí School purchased its very own brand-new textbooks for the THIRD time in 2019. (You can read the full story [on our blog.](#))

Similarly, when we visited San Andres Itzapa Cooperative School this year to celebrate *their* third time renewing their textbooks, we learned that some of the parents in the audience had been students themselves 17 years ago when the school received its first-ever textbooks. That's proof that the revolving fund model is working! A whole new generation is benefiting from the program nearly two decades later, all thanks to the initial investment from supporters like you. (Choquí and San Andres Itzapa are just two of the 40 schools in the Textbook Program that are purchasing new books this year in at least one subject, through their revolving funds!)

Keeping Kids in School

Not only does the Textbook Program last for the long term, it has also proven its ability to make a measurable difference in the lives of the students it serves. We recently completed a statistical analysis of enrollment and dropout rates at 38 Textbook Program schools, each over a span of ten years: starting five years before the program was introduced at the school and ending five years after the program was introduced. What we found was that 16% fewer students drop out when they have textbooks. This is a statistically significant result, indicating that the Textbook Program is keeping more kids in school! We estimate that more than 300 students who are in the program this year decided to stay in school *because of* the Textbook Program.

Building Synergy

Our study of dropout rates found another interesting result. When you look at schools that have added a CoEd Computer Center in addition to textbooks, the total decrease in dropout rates reaches 41%! This provides further evidence for our long-standing philosophy that deep development—providing multiple, layered programs at a single school—results in a greater impact than either program could have on its own.

We're working to further build this synergy by introducing organizational efficiencies between our program staff. This work has moved forward significantly in the past year thanks to Augusto Bal's first year in the new position of Subdirector of Programs in our Guatemala office. One such synergy that we're exploring this year is cross-training our teacher trainers in the Textbook Program and the Spark Reading Program so they can assist with either program's activities as necessary, while boosting each other's skills.

Our team on the ground in Guatemala has also been hard at work to respond to the country's latest developments. For example, as environmental concerns become increasingly important in the communities we serve, our Textbook Program staff decided to investigate whether it's truly necessary to provide a plastic bag for each student in the program to carry their books. After conversations with program schools, the team decided that this need could be met in other ways, helping us to cut down on plastic consumption. The Computer Centers team has also introduced improvements this year to the program's curriculum—look for more details about that in a future report!

Join Us and See for Yourself

The party's not over yet! We'll be celebrating these milestones all year long, with another round of inauguration (and re-inauguration) celebrations this July. In past years, our inauguration celebrations have drawn special guests like the podcasters from Stuff You Should Know and Guatemalan pop star Hancer. This summer, we'll travel with the creative entrepreneurs behind the Being Boss podcast, and we'd love to have all of you join us to see how your support is changing lives, every day! (Learn more at www.cooperativeforeducation.org/tours.)

Yours in service,



Joe Berninger

Executive Director