

Footsteps2Brilliance comes to Hendry County Schools

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(Submitted photo) Pictured from left to right, Donna Hull, Community Liaison for Hendry Reads 2 Succeed; Dr. Barbara Mundy, Director of Federal Programs for Hendry County Schools, Joe Timm, Rotary President; Lois Page, Director of Strategic Partnerships for Footsteps2Brilliance.

Hendry County School District has partnered with Footsteps2Brilliance to bring a transformative, community-wide initiative to all families throughout our county. Recognizing that 47 percent of children in Florida are not ready for Kindergarten, Superintendent Paul Puletti tasked his Director of Federal Programs, Dr. Barbara Mundy, to bring Footsteps2Brilliance here to close the early learning gap that often makes it difficult for some children to succeed in school and in life. The generous financial assistance of the Hendry District Schools Foundation and Lipman Family Farms has helped to make this possible.

Footsteps2Brilliance is an award-winning bilingual early literacy app for children ages 0-8 years old. This app can be used on any mobile device including smartphones, tablets and computers. Once it is downloaded it is fully accessible without an internet connection, giving families a portable library of hundreds of stories, nursery rhymes, skills games and writing activities. It has been tested in the district summer school program and at LaBelle ES in grades Pre-K-3. The success of the program led the district to develop its campaign called Hendry Reads 2 Succeed, which will place Footsteps2Brilliance in all elementary and preschools in the district. Best of all it is now available at no charge to all families. Simply by registering at this site myf2b.com/register/hendryparents can sign up and begin sharing activities with their children immediately.

As a community initiative, representatives from the school district and the new Community Liaison, Donna Hull, will be reaching out to stakeholders to build a cadre of Literacy Ambassadors to volunteer their time and/or services and ensure that all families have access to Footsteps2Brilliance. Ambassadors can support the partnership by, for example:

- Offering services to advertise Hendry Reads 2 Succeed to the community
- Assisting families in registering for the app
- Endorsing the initiative through various entities
- Donating to the partnership directly or through in-kind contributions

Children are our most important asset. When a community steps up to ensure that we have equal opportunities for every one of them, we all benefit. For information on how you can be a Literacy Ambassador, please contact Donna Hull at Hull.Donna1@gmail.com.

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