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School News

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Covering the Buena Park School District

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

APRIL 2015



**A Community Update On
Program Excellence and Student Success at BPSD**

Footsteps2Brilliance Program a Hit!

It is no secret that young students love to play on phones and personal electronic devices. Wouldn't it be wonderful to know that your youngest children can easily access and use now-common devices to learn and love reading? Currently, Pendleton Elementary School students are using a literacy application, or "app," to do just that.

Principal Ms. Renee Jeffrey explained, "Kindergarten and first-grade teachers and students are now in their second year of using Footsteps2Brilliance, an interactive literacy app supported by tablet devices in the classroom. It is loaded with all of the components of a comprehensive literacy program. Students have access to an extensive digital collection of storybooks, reading comprehension activities, age-appropriate vocabulary exercises, reading development activities that engage students with the use of gaming technology, and book authoring and production tools. Students have their own personalized accounts with 'super-secret passwords,' which they use to gain access to all the materials for at least 20 minutes a day." Pendleton kindergarten teacher Ms. Bergstrom shared, "It's great to see our young students interacting with technology and improving their reading skills."

Ms. Jeffrey added, "Students are actively engaged in learning by listening to a minimum of one complete book every day, answering comprehension questions, matching important concepts, words and sounds, and writing and illustrating their own stories. Yes, these are five-and six-year-old students!"



Footsteps2Brilliance at Pendleton School Kindergarten

One of the most exciting parts of a child's school experience is realizing the ability to read. Unfortunately, many students have difficulty learning to read. There are a multitude of studies concerning young students and reading. Forty-six percent of American children enter kindergarten lacking the basic language skill they need to learn to read, and a high percentage of these students may never catch up. This is where Footsteps2Brilliance is helping. Ms. Palmer, a Pendleton kindergarten teacher, reported, "The Footsteps2Brilliance program engages students. They are excited to use the electronic tablets to perform the exercises and games and ultimately publish their own words. I see students accessing vocabulary and using it sooner and with more frequency and precision than before." First-grade teacher Mr. Paulson explained, "It's a great program that engages the students with literature."

So far, the Pendleton students are thriving with this ongoing reading opportunity. The young students are always asking for more Footsteps2Brilliance time; they never seem to tire of the interaction with it. First-grade student Christina shared, "It's fun! I like reading the stories and playing the games." The kindergarten and first-grade students have a thirst for reading and creating books. And isn't that what school should be for students, a place to develop a love of reading and learning? At Pendleton School, we think so.