

PRESS RELEASE

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Manassas City Public Schools, in Partnership with Footsteps2Brilliance®, Creates Transformative Mobile Technology Model to Scale Its Pre-K Services Citywide

May 1, 2015, Manassas, Va. -- On Wednesday, May 27 from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m., the City of Manassas and Manassas City Public Schools (MCPS) will hold a press conference to launch a transformative approach to early learning that will increase literacy for all 4 year olds in Manassas City. The press conference will be held at The Harris Pavilion, 9201 Center Street, Manassas, Va. It will highlight how MCPS is using mobile technology to scale pre-K services to all its 4-year old children.

“It is the goal of Manassas City Public Schools to accelerate early learning, close the literacy achievement gap, and support our English Language Learners,” said Dr. Catherine Magouryk, Superintendent of Manassas City Public Schools. “This goal is taking shape through a new partnership with Footsteps2Brilliance®. In the next few weeks, Footsteps2Brilliance® will be available, free of charge, to all pre-K children in the City of Manassas.”

Footsteps2Brilliance® is an interactive, mobile literacy program that has been proven to increase academic vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills in young students. All residents of the City of Manassas will be able to download the curriculum app for free on their smartphones and tablets, or use the program on their traditional computers.

“With the increase in rigor, a new reality exists for young students,” said Dr. Melissa Saunders, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. “Kindergarten has become yesterday’s first grade, and pre-K is now yesterday’s kindergarten. Due to budgetary and space restrictions, however, MCPS, like many other districts in Virginia, does not have the capacity to serve all the pre-K students within its jurisdiction. The Footsteps2Brilliance platform will allow us to create a blended pre-K model for all pre-K children, not just those enrolled in MCPS.”

The best public investment our dollars can make is in early literacy, which propels students towards academic success and increases their opportunities. Every \$1 dollar spent on quality early education produces a \$14 to \$17 return.

Research shows that the greatest disparity of knowledge among children is the vocabulary gap – the number of words a child knows from birth through third grade. Children from low-income families hear 30 million fewer words before the age of 3 than their more affluent peers. This problem is compounded by the fact that 61% of low-income children have no children’s books in their homes.

“Dr. Magouryk is leading Virginia and the nation in creating a transformative pre-school model that will level the playing field for all children,” said Ilene Rosenthal, CEO of Footsteps2Brilliance®, Inc. “By leveraging the mobile technology and traditional computers that parents already own, Dr. Magouryk will be able to provide every pre-K child in her district with hundreds of books, songs, and learning activities that have been shown to increase vocabulary and literacy in young children regardless of their socio-economic status.”

“Through the Footsteps2Brilliance partnership, MCPS will provide a springboard for all students, whether or not there is the physical capacity to bring them into the pre-K classroom,” said Dr. Magouryk. “When kindergarten students come to school with a strong literacy background, they have more opportunity to be successful academically as they progress through school.”

About Manassas City Public Schools

Manassas is located in the Northern Virginia region, approximately thirty miles southwest of Washington, D.C. The mission of Manassas City Public Schools, in partnership with the community, is to provide an innovative, engaging, inspiring, and challenging learning environment for all students.

The school division embraces the challenge and opportunity to serve the 21st century learner in a safe, healthy, and supportive school environment focusing on innovative learning that integrates the use of technologies, inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.

About Footsteps2Brilliance®:

Footsteps2Brilliance®, Inc. is the breakthrough early learning platform that accelerates early achievement by uniting the power of mobile gaming technology with the latest in cognitive research. *Footsteps2Brilliance®* provides enticing, interactive, 24/7 learning experiences that digitally link school and home to give students the edge they need for success in school today and the world tomorrow. www.footsteps2brilliance.com