



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Everett Launches Innovative City-Wide Early Reading Challenge Using Mobile Devices

On Wednesday, May 7, 2014, Superintendent Frederick F. Foresteire and Mayor Carlo DeMaria, from the City of Everett, will hold a 9:00 a.m. press conference at Everett High School, Culinary Arts to unveil an innovative city-wide early learning reading challenge using smart phones, tablets, and computers. The Everett School Committee, Superintendent Frederick Foresteire and Mayor Carlo DeMaria are creating an Everett Family Early Learning Center. They are challenging all pre-K through 3rd grade children to read one million words by the end of the summer. The City has partnered with *Footsteps2Brilliance, Inc.*, an early learning mobile technology platform, to provide a library of eBooks and educational games to every family within the Everett urban zip code.

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 4 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. No single strategy offers a greater return on investment than providing early learners with the tools needed to read proficiently by third grade. For every \$1 dollar spent on quality, early childhood interventions produces a \$14 to \$17 return.

“Mayor DeMaria and I recognize the importance of bringing literacy to the children of Everett. By developing a Family Learning Center at the Devens School to learn about the *Footsteps 2 Brilliance* program, it is our hope to build a strong literacy partnership with the parents of our community. We recognize the value of including parents in the process of educating their children. *Footsteps2Brilliance* provides the platform to support this partnership,” states Everett Superintendent Frederick F. Foresteire.

Everett Mayor Carlo DeMaria adds, "I commend the School Committee and Mr. Foresteire for bringing us together to implement this unique interactive learning tool that will assist our children in achieving academic success. This unique collaboration will not only help promote the initiative, but will bring the community together to support our children around literacy."

"Everett's city-wide early learning initiative is a transformative model for the United States. By using the smart phones and tablets that parents already own, Everett is able to economically provide all parents with the tools they need to prepare their children for success in school and in life, according to Ilene Rosenthal, CEO of Footsteps2Brilliance®, Inc."

About Everett Public Schools: "As Superintendent of Everett Public Schools, we are committed to the belief that all children can meet challenging expectations through a partnership among home, school and community. Parents, together with our administrators, teachers and support staff share a common focus, which is to prepare our students to be independent thinkers and enthusiastic learners. As students matriculate through schools, they are encouraged to work hard, respect others, appreciate the diversity that surrounds them and strive for academic excellence. By working with our youngest children to develop literacy, this partnership will give them the academic boost they need to graduate and to be active participants in a global world."

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

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