

# Rialto school district launches free mobile app to boost literacy

By Yazmin Alvarez - April 26, 2017



*iecn photo/yazmin alvarez Cuauhtémoc Avila, Rialto Unified School District Superintendent reads alongside a Garcia FElementary School kindergarten students using the district's newFootsteps2Brilliance literacy app.*

Rialto Unified School District wants to build a community of readers and lifelong learners, and now, there's an app for that.

The district, in partnership with Washington D.C.-based literacy company Footsteps2Brilliance, unveiled a new bilingual English and Spanish Early Literacy Initiative Tuesday morning at Garcia Elementary.

The program is available through the Footsteps2Brilliance app, which can be downloaded on mobile phones, devices and computers, and is available for all residents of the district's attendance boundaries, including within the city and portions of Colton, Fontana and San Bernardino. Zip codes include 92376 and 92377.

Rialto is the first in San Bernardino County to be designated a Model Innovation City by the makers of the app. The Model Innovation City program is a social literacy approach that gives every school, family and community organization in the Rialto area free access to the Footsteps2Brilliance app to help all children become proficient readers by third grade.

And students at Garcia are already on the path to success.

In the two weeks since the program was implemented in Liz Lopez's kindergarten dual immersion classroom at Garcia, students have been introduced to more than 700,000 words. Some have even read more than 250 books in the short time.

They're learning more academic language along with comprehension and phonics," Lopez said. "To see their academic progress and they're social interactions with other students, it's just like — 'wow' — I can't even begin to explain the excitement."

The literacy program incorporates several components including project-based learning, journaling and computer skills — all at the swipe of a finger and with no internet connection necessary.

Once the app is installed on a mobile device or computer, it's ready to go.

But the reach to promote literacy doesn't stop at the school district. RUSD Superintendent Cuauhtémoc Avila challenges the Rialto community to read one million words, by September 1, 2017.

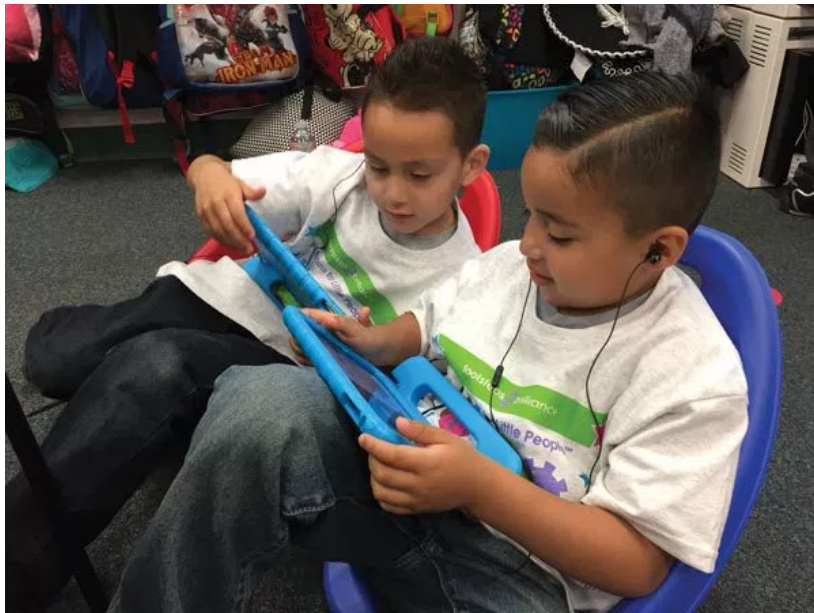
The goal is to create a community of readers, according to the district's literacy team.

Programs, classes and curriculums will be available for community members and middle schoolers.

“At this unique moment in history, technology offers the opportunity to scale educational opportunity in an unprecedented way. Smartphones and mobile devices have become ubiquitous,” said Avila.

The literacy effort supports the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Students and establishes a blueprint for districts around the nation to achieve early literacy success, the release said. RUSD currently has a latino enrollment of 83.51 percent, and growing.

To register for the **Footsteps2Brilliance** app, visit [www.myf2b.com/register/rialto](http://www.myf2b.com/register/rialto).



*iecn photos/yazmin alvarez*



*iecn photos/yazmin alvarez*

*Students in Liz Lopez's dual immersion kindergarten class at Garcia Elementary using Rialto school district's newest literacy app, Footsteps2Brilliance, have been exposed to more than 700,000 words since the app launched in classrooms two weeks ago.*

#### **Yazmin Alvarez**

Yazmin Alvarez is the Community News Editor for Rialto Record and Inland Empire Weekly. For news leads, she can be reached at: (909) 381-9898 ext. 207 or via email: [iecn.yazmin@gmail.com](mailto:iecn.yazmin@gmail.com)

