



PRESS RELEASE, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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Garcia Elementary Hosts County's Schools Reading Buddies Program

RIALTO - The San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, in partnership with the Woman's Club of Rialto and the Rialto Unified School District, will have its inaugural "Reading Buddies" program at Dr. Ernest Garcia Elementary School on Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 9 a.m.

The volunteer reading program calls on business, civic, community and education leaders to serve as role models to emphasize the importance of reading. Reading Buddies volunteers commit to read to students once a month throughout the school year.

Garcia Elementary Principal, **Ramona Rodriguez**, and Rialto Unified School District administrators, County Schools officials and various community leaders will lead a group of volunteers into classrooms of kindergarten, first and second grade students.

San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, **Ted Alejandro**, said that the foundation of a good education is the ability to read, and that it is vital we develop good reading skills in all our students so that they are able to achieve academically and become life-long learners.

The public-private partnership supported by local business and chambers, service organizations and other partnerships has been created and expanded countywide to include East Valley, West End and High Desert school districts, including Central, Chino Valley, Colton Joint Unified, Etiwanda, Ontario-Montclair, San Bernardino City and Victor Elementary.

"The Reading Buddies volunteer program is valuable in that it will bring volunteers together to promote literacy and emphasize the importance of reading," said Principal Rodriguez. "At Garcia Elementary, reading is a high priority, and this volunteer effort will provide a great opportunity for our kids."

The Garcia Elementary inaugural Reading Buddies program will kick off with an assembly, refreshments and reading at 9 a.m. Future Reading Buddies dates for the school are April 8 and May 20, which culminates with a final celebration. All future reading events begin at 8:45 a.m. Upon the conclusion of the 2014-2105 school year, the program will resume in fall 2015.

Garcia Elementary is located at 1390 W. Randall Avenue in Colton. Business or community members who would like to join the voluntary reading program should contact Rodriguez, via email, at rrodrigu@rialto.k12.ca.us or Linda Miranda with the County Schools office at (909) 386-2623.