



For Immediate Release

Oliver T. Unaka, PIO
909.397.4800, Ext. 23885
oliver.unaka@pusd.org

**POMONA SUPERINTENDENT UNVEILS PROACTIVE BLUEPRINT TO FACILITATE
EARLY LITERACY FOR CHILDREN THROUGHOUT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S ENTIRE SERVICE AREA**

PUSD's Promise of Excellence Strategic Plan Outlines Offerings for Every Child in its Pomona and Diamond Bar Areas

Pomona Unified School District (PUSD) is set to debut its *Early Learning Literacy Innovation Summit* on **Wednesday, May 4, 2016 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Lincoln Elementary School: 1200 North Gordon Street, Pomona, CA 91766**. In accordance with PUSD's Promise of Excellence Strategic Plan, personnel at all levels are excited to unveil the District's complimentary and cutting-edge bilingual literacy program that will support all early learners, from birth through 2nd grade, within PUSD's Pomona and Diamond Bar service areas.

"Literacy is the only gift that continues to give far into the future," exclaimed PUSD Superintendent Richard Martinez. "National studies overwhelmingly prove that early learning and literacy offers significant benefits in terms of shaping personal character and instilling academic confidence. We are determined to provide every single PUSD student the right to a future filled with exciting options," continued Martinez.

The Footsteps2Brilliance Early Learning Literacy App provides a comprehensive literacy curriculum with more than 1,000 books, songs, and games that are fun for children and easy for parents to use on any smartphone, tablet, or computer with or without an Internet connection. By creating a bridge between the learning at school and the learning that occurs in the kitchen; the grocery store; the park; the car; or the doctor's office, Footsteps2Brilliance strengthens the family, community, and school partnerships.

This transformative literacy effort amplifies PUSD's "Tots, Teachers and Technology" program, which was recognized with California School Board Association's Golden Bell Award. Further, through the Early Learning Literacy Initiative, families that live within Pomona and Diamond Bar's school district boundaries —whether they are enrolled in Pomona Unified School District schools or not— will have free access to the award-winning Footsteps2Brilliance Early Literacy App. Available in both English and Spanish, the program has been recognized by *The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics*.

"PUSD's Promise of Excellence represents our unyielding commitment to Pomona and Diamond Bar families," said Board of Education President Adrienne Konigar-Macklin. "Early learners within Pomona Unified School District boundaries are on an effective and advanced path toward college and career success before they enter kindergarten."

Footsteps2Brilliance is both a forward-looking and unique Early Learning Literacy Initiative. The program enables PUSD to strengthen its partnership with parents, and the greater community, for maximum impact on child development during critical, formative years. As well, this initiative delivers on PUSD's Promise of Excellence Strategic Plan by mobilizing an entire academic community, within the District's two-city service areas, to embrace early learning and literacy.

"The Pomona Early Literacy Learning Initiative is a transformative model for supporting all children – birth through second grade – toward academic success," said Ilene Rosenthal, CEO of Footsteps2Brilliance, Inc. "My team stands ready to provide the structure for the Superintendent's summer challenge of 5-million words by September 1, 2016. Additionally, we are delighted to fully support this strong early literacy plan that Pomona Unified School District is bestowing upon families within its Pomona and Diamond Bar communities."

About Pomona Unified School District:

The Pomona Unified School District provides a well-rounded and challenging educational program of the highest quality, empowering students to lead productive, fulfilling lives as lifelong learners. Supported on a foundation of integrity and respect, students will gain academic excellence and take personal and community pride as responsible citizens and productive participants in a diverse society and global economy.

About *Footsteps2Brilliance, Inc.:*

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