



For Immediate Release

Seana Wagner/Public Information Officer
Napa County Office of Education
707-265-2351/707-483-1274
swagner@napacoe.org

**Footsteps2Brilliance[®]
Innovative Early Literacy Program
Now Available for All Napa County Preschoolers**

***Engaging e-Books and Learning Games
Provided by Partnership Between
Napa County Office of Education and NapaLearns***

Napa, Calif. – February 12, 2014 – The Napa County Office of Education (NCOE) is pleased to announce that, through a generous partnership with NapaLearns, all Napa County preschool age children have access to the breakthrough early learning platform Footsteps2Brilliance[®] at no cost to the children’s families or preschools. Footsteps2Brilliance[®] Academic Language Program for Students (ALPS) consists of 18 beautifully illustrated and animated eBooks in English and Spanish written by famous authors, along with over 200 education games. In addition, there is also a non-fiction series featuring 26 alphabet books and related education games.

On February 24, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at NCOE, 2121 Imola Avenue, Napa California, County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Barbara Nemko, Executive Director of NapaLearns Dr. Peg Maddocks and Footsteps2Brilliance[®] CEO Ilene Rosenthal will hold a press conference to kick off a county-wide early learning initiative with a presentation to leaders in the Napa County early childhood field and local elected officials.

“In the U.S. 46% of children enter kindergarten at risk of failure because they lack essential literacy skills,” said Dr. Nemko. “Footsteps2Brilliance[®] can teach young learners the basic vocabulary and reading readiness skills research has shown can be critical to school success. This can be a particularly effective tool for our young English learners. In a pilot study in the fall of 2012, a pre- and post- test study of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test showed that 88% of students who used the Footsteps2Brilliance[®] curriculum were at grade level by the end of kindergarten, compared to 59% of students at the beginning of the year.”

Footsteps2Brilliance[®] is typically available for a fee to parents and school districts. This county-wide license provides at no charge equal access to all preschool age children in Napa County. This is the first county-wide offering of this award-winning program in the United States.

According to Dr. Maddocks, Executive Director of NapaLearns, “NapaLearns has been looking for a scalable solution to provide all pre-K children and their families with digital apps that will help to prepare them for kindergarten. Since 80% of parents own mobile devices, this program is an innovative way to reach parents through devices they already own and to connect school and home. The Board of NapaLearns believes providing Footsteps2Brilliance[®] to all Napa County

families with preschool age children is a valuable investment, and will help meet our goal of closing the achievement gap in our local schools.”

The Footsteps2Brilliance[®] early learning program has been recognized with numerous awards including being named a Gold Winner by the National Parenting Publications Awards, and a 2012 First Prize Winner for Best English Spanish Learner/English Language Learner Edition by the American Education Publishers.

Footsteps2Brilliance[®] early learning apps can be downloaded to any computer, tablet or a mobile device. All Napa County preschool teachers are invited to attend one of two trainings. The training will include login information, age-appropriate use of the digital program and information on sources for low cost devices. Teachers can register for February 24 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m., or March 31 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. There is no cost to attend these sessions. Please visit napacoe.org/footsteps-2-brilliance to register and for more information.

As a web based program, children will be able to access the program both in their preschool programs and at home with their families. During the spring of 2014, NCOE will be reaching out to the parents of preschool aged children county-wide to offer support and training in using the Footsteps2Brilliance[®] program with their children. Parents interested in more information may sign up at <http://goo.gl/eo8At0>.

“Napa’s county-wide early learning initiative is a transformative model for early learning in the United States. By using smart phones and tablets that parents already own, Napa County is able to provide all parents with the tools they need to prepare their children for success in school and in life. It is exciting to see districts collaborating with one another to assure that all children enter kindergarten ready to learn,” according to Ilene Rosenthal, CEO, Footsteps2Brilliance[®], Inc.

For more information on the Footsteps2Brilliance[®] program for Napa County please contact Lori Hill, NCOE, lhill@napacoe.org, 259-5925.

The Napa County Office of Education - your partner for educational excellence - is a flexible, county-wide educational resource that offers a broad range of student services in response to changing community needs, supports and collaborates with local school districts, and disseminates research-based best practices to educators locally and statewide. www.napacoe.org.

NapaLearns is a public benefit 501c3 corporation formed to support and sustain educational innovations in all schools throughout Napa County and to bring equal educational opportunity to all of our students to ensure their success in college, career, and community.

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.

###