



### **For Immediate Release**

Michael Collins, Director of Special Projects, Hawthorne School District

[mcollins@hawthorne.k12.ca.us](mailto:mcollins@hawthorne.k12.ca.us)

310-263-3974

Stephanie Levin, Program Director, GRoW @ Annenberg

[slevin@annenberg.org](mailto:slevin@annenberg.org)

310-209-1623

## **Hawthorne School District Receives \$100,000 Grant from GRoW @ Annenberg Foundation for Citywide Literacy Support**

Hawthorne, CA – February 1, 2021

Hawthorne School District is pleased to announce that it has received a grant from GRoW @ Annenberg in the amount of \$100,000 for the innovative work that Superintendent Dr. Helen Morgan is doing to support citywide literacy. This grant will be used to extend the successful literacy partnership the district developed with Footsteps2Brilliance®. It provides access to Footstep2Brilliance's proven bilingual pre-K to 3rd grade literacy solution to every family in the city of Hawthorne.

Since 2015, Hawthorne School District has partnered with Footsteps2Brilliance under a Model Innovation City implementation, giving every student and family with children ages birth to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, FREE access to the Footsteps2Brilliance suite of early learning mobile apps. The suite includes three breakthrough early literacy programs in English and Spanish: Footsteps2Brilliance, Clever Kids University® Pre-Reader, and Clever Kids University® I Can Read. The goal is to get Hawthorne children prepared for kindergarten and reading proficiently by 3rd grade.

“Research has confirmed the importance of early literacy in student success. It is of paramount importance that our children gain the skills necessary to be good readers and thinkers by third grade. The outcomes for students acquiring these important skills are much more promising than for students who struggle with reading by third grade,” says Dr. Helen Morgan. “We have been so happy to partner with Footsteps2Brilliance for the last several years to ensure all students in the Hawthorne community are provided with an engaging tool to promote literacy in our youngest learners. We are grateful that through the generosity of GRoW @ Annenberg our community will be able to continue this important

work with our children. Every opportunity we provide children to succeed is an investment not only in their future but in the future of our society.”

Hawthorne’s transformative literacy initiative was an important part of the district’s instructional plan amidst one of the toughest challenges schools have faced: the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic and resulting school closures. Hawthorne was able to leverage the Footsteps2Brilliance programs to keep students learning and engaged during school closures. Hawthorne students have read over 990,000 books and interacted with more than 290 million vocabulary words on Footsteps2Brilliance to date.

“GRoW @ Annenberg’s core beliefs center around the idea that accessibility and opportunities should be available to all, regardless of their family’s zip code,” says Gregory Annenberg Weingarten, Vice President and Director of the Annenberg Foundation and founder of GRoW @ Annenberg. “Hawthorne and Footsteps2Brilliance’s Model Innovation City provides a pathway for early success for all residents and is a blueprint for the nation.”

“We are thrilled that GRoW @ Annenberg has awarded this grant to such a deserving school district for their early literacy initiative. Dr. Helen Morgan and Gregory Annenberg Weingarten are making sure that every family has the resources they need to help children arrive at school ready to succeed and reading proficiently by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. I encourage all residents of Hawthorne to register for their free account at [www.myf2b.com/register/hawthorne](http://www.myf2b.com/register/hawthorne), and to begin using it with their children 15 minutes each day,” says Ilene Rosenthal, Footsteps2Brilliance CEO.

###

### **About Hawthorne School District**

Hawthorne School District is dedicated to educational excellence and the continuous academic growth of all students. Founded in 1907, the District is proud of its long tradition of academic excellence. There are currently seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and a charter high school in the District.

### **About GRoW @ Annenberg**

GRoW @ Annenberg, a philanthropic initiative of the Annenberg Foundation founded by Annenberg Vice President and Director Gregory Annenberg Weingarten, supports a broad range of innovative projects and organizations that address social and cultural issues, meet urgent community needs, and offer inspiration and collaboration—all with the goal of improving the quality of life in communities around the world.

### **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](http://www.footsteps2brilliance.com)

