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Oct. 21, 2009

News Release

CDE Launches Adult Education And Family Literacy Week With Read-A-Thon

The week of Oct. 18 marks National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week following a resolution authored by Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO) to pay tribute to adult education and family literacy programs for their impact on the education of Colorado's adult learners and their families.

"Colorado has recognized that building an educated workforce requires broader scrutiny of our educational process," said Pamela M. Smith, state director of adult education and family literacy for CDE. "Because intergenerational literacy skills transfer, improving the education of parents can change the inevitable cascading pathway toward nonliteracy for their children. Family literacy programs do break this cycle of illiteracy."

To celebrate the week, the Colorado Department of Education asked Adult Education and Family Literacy along with Even Start programs across the state to participate in a Read-A-Thon. Following are samples of programs taking place this week.

Boulder Valley Family Literacy Program will sponsor a project at Pioneer Elementary School involving adult education students creating paper chains with school-age children. A link is added to the chain for each 15 minutes of reading time. A second project is a reading relay for adults and their children.

Metro State College Family Literacy Program will conduct a series of programs for families to read together with their elementary school children.

Montrose School District RE-1J will host reading time with their English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Local businesses have donated prizes. In addition, four adult education classes will take a field trip to the Ute Indian Museum in Montrose.

Phillips County Family Education Services Program in Holyoke will host a family read-a-thon. A \$25 gift certificate will go to the family who reads the most books during the week.

Focus Points Program in Denver's Five Points neighborhood will organize 350 ESL students to each read 10 hours this week, for a total of 3,500 hours of additional reading. The three students who read the most will receive a prize.

Of the more than 14,000 adults enrolled in the Adult Education and Family Literacy program at CDE, 66 percent consider themselves English language learners. Seventy percent of participants in the program are Hispanic, 15 percent are white, 7 percent are Asian or Pacific Islander, 6 percent are black and 2 percent are American Indian. Earning a GED or high school diploma is the desired outcome for 54 percent of adult learners.

For more information National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week, visit <http://www.ncladvocacy.org/aeft.html#>

For more information regarding CDE's Adult Education and Family Literacy program, visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/index_adult.htm

For more information, contact Mark Stevens, 303-866-3898, or Megan McDermott, 303-866-2334, in the CDE Office of Communications. To sign up for the CDE e-mail news service, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/index.html>.

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