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Reading Summit - More Words, More Children Addresses Growing Need To Increase Literacy for At-Risk Students in Grades K-3

CHICAGO - August 15, 2009 --Reading In Motion, a Chicago based not-for-profit organization helping at-risk students achieve literacy for over 25 years, will present a Reading Summit - More Words, More Children: Empowering At-Risk Children Through Reading on Thursday, October 8, 2009 at the Union League Club of Chicago.

Reading In Motion developed Benchmarks, a supplemental reading program, to aid classroom teachers to help more students read at grade level. It incorporates both small and whole group instruction with engaging music and drama-based methods to teach critical reading skills. Veteran Reading In Motion coaches train teachers and throughout the school year provide weekly on-site classroom support to help students achieve positive results in reading. The program is also available in Spanish.

"Studies show children are more motivated when they learn through music and drama," said Karl Andrees, executive director of Reading In Motion. "We've developed a data driven program using music to help students recognize phonemic sounds. As students progress, we add drama methods to keep them engaged and actively learning as the reading skills and strategies become more complex," he adds.

Susan B. Neuman, Ed.D., former U.S. assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education will keynote Reading In Motion's first summit. She will address the issue of how more words in at-risk children's lives will help improve their literacy skills and quality of life.

Dr. Neuman established the nation's Reading First and Early Reading First programs. Currently, she is director for the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) at the University of Michigan. She is also engaged in research projects focused on changing the odds for children in poverty.

"We want to increase the exposure of more words to more at-risk children and help more at-risk students achieve literacy and develop a high quality of life. The reading summit gives us an opportunity to partner with reading experts around the U.S. and share solutions with area educators, administrators and parents. Our primary mission is to increase the literacy of at-risk children," adds Andrees.

Timothy Shanahan, Ph.D., professor of urban education at the University of Illinois at Chicago and director for the Center for Literacy, will launch the day by discussing the improvement of literacy achievement. Dr. Shanahan is the former director of reading for the Chicago Public Schools and a past president of the International Reading Association. Shanahan has also authored or edited more than 150 publications on the topic.

In addition a panel of experts will offer ideas on how to focus on engaging instruction, the role of parents, and how to help get more books and more eyeball to eyeball instruction into the classrooms, homes and lives of at-risk students.

Solution partner panel includes:

o Lynn Fielding, of Kennewick School District in Washington will present Kennewick's model for assuring students are reading at or above grade level by third grade by providing more direct instructional time.

- ❖ Flora Rodriguez-Brown, director of Project FLAME and professor of education and coordinator of bilingual/ESL training programs at the University of Illinois at Chicago's will share family literacy issues

and ESL programs designed to increase improve the Latino parents and home literacy environments of their children ages three to eight.

- ❖ Reading In Motion will addresses how children are more motivated to learn through music and drama and will share Benchmarks a data driven supplemental reading program offering classroom teachers assistance to achieve more students reach grade level reading.
- ❖ Sharon Darling, president and founder of National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) and Laura Westberg, senior director of NCFL and Hug-A-Book will also offer information at the Summit.

Reading teachers, reading coaches, reading specialists, school principals, administrators, parents and graduate students will take away concrete tactics from the conference that can be used in their own classrooms and homes. The day-long conference offers five CPDU credits.

The Reading Summit held at the Union League Club of Chicago, 65 West Jackson Blvd., will begin with registration and continental breakfast at 8:00 a.m. Regular rate conference fee is \$165 inclusive of meals; graduate student rate is \$115 inclusive of meals. Business casual attire is required.

To register contact Reading In Motion at summit@readinginmotion.org or visit www.readinginmotion.org for more information.

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