



Roaring Fork School District

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February 16, 2010

Dear funding partner:

As the Preschool Coordinator for the Roaring Fork School District, I am involved with several programs serving children and their families. Our district administers one, the Colorado Preschool Program, with money received from the Colorado Department of Education. With this money we are able to provide up to four half days of quality preschool education each week of the school year at no cost to participants. To qualify for this program, children and their families must display a number of characteristics such as lack of parental education and delayed language acquisition that place them at risk for later learning or other problems in school. The families must agree to read aloud regularly to their children, to be involved in their child's classroom and to attend parenting classes. The school district's efforts at providing these services to children and families are enhanced by collaboration with other community partners.

One partner we are proud to be associated with is Raising a Reader and here's why. It is a comprehensive program offering high quality children's literature to families as well as educating those families and the children's teachers about the importance of reading aloud daily to young children. Reading and talking with children nurtures brain development and expands vocabulary. Both activities are important for later school success. Because of the diverse population here in the Roaring Fork Valley and in western Garfield County there are a number of families with young children whose parents may not have the skills to provide their children with early learning experiences, specifically literacy experiences. Your support of the Raising a Reader program locally will allow us to reach such at risk families and their children. As you know, prevention is a proactive measure that makes such a difference for a child and, in terms of later reactive measures, is cost effective.

Thank you for your consideration of the Raising a Reader program as a worthwhile project.

Cordially,

Thelma Zabel
Preschool Coordinator