



# Garfield School District No. Re-2

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April 29, 2010

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for the Raising a Reader program. I cannot emphasize enough how integral this program has become to our early childhood classrooms and what a boon it has been for our district.

Our district struggles with achievement gaps on a variety of performance measures, and consistently, children who are Hispanic, children who are English Language Learners, children who qualify for free and reduced lunch, and children who qualify for special education score at lower levels than do their peers. Our early childhood programs are designed as an early intervention for these populations, and having a quality program like Raising a Reader reaches the very audience at most risk for school failure.

We start the kindergarten year with a literacy screener, and our data show that children who participated in Raising a Reader are less at risk than those who did not. Only 26% of RaR participants required intensive intervention, whereas 41% of non-participants required intensive intervention.

The early exposure to books and reading is so incredibly important, and we're seeing that it is a powerful tool to close achievement gaps, even by age 5.

Additionally, Raising a Reader has become an integral part of our Gus the Bus early childhood outreach program. This bus visits families in their neighborhoods and targets families who were not able to get into preschool but who are still at risk for school failure. The bus is equipped with a toy lending library, Raising a Reader book bags, and literature from various public agencies that may be able to support the families. We also tie Child Find efforts to the outreach bus. Raising a Reader has been instrumental in assisting us with the vision, logistics, and materials to make this effort a success.

We are so very fortunate to have this program in our community, and Re 2 is grateful to have such a wonderful partner is helping all children be successful.

Sincerely,

Julie Knowles. M.A. ECSE, Ed.S.  
Director of Assessment and Special Programs