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N E W S R E L E A S E

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Award-winning Prime Time program comes to Alliance

Prime Time Family Reading Time will be offered at Grandview Elementary School in Alliance this summer with opportunities for Spanish- and English-speaking parents and their children.

Prime Time is a Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) family literacy program designed to help strengthen participants' interest and skills in reading and talking about books. The series is offered free to families whose children ages 6 to 10 struggle with reading.

Grandview Elementary will host the bilingual series from 5-7 p.m. on six consecutive Tuesdays, May 31 through July 5. This will be Alliance's first Prime Time.

Each program begins with a light meal and continues with storytelling and discussion based on award-winning children's books. All books are read and discussed in both English and Spanish. Selected books will help families discuss themes such as determination, dreams, fairness, responsibility and identity.

Maurine Roller and Ruth Escamilla will introduce parents to the benefits and pleasures of reading and discussing stories with children. Families will also learn about resources and services available at the Alliance Public Library. Separate pre-reading activities will be available for younger siblings.

"We're not showing participants how to read, but why—for enjoyment, for insight, for conversation," said Erika Hamilton, NHC director of literary programs and state coordinator of Prime Time. "We look at situations in books and ask, 'Why did this happen?' 'Has this happened to you?' 'What would you do?' This kind of analysis helps students succeed in all of their classes, not just in reading and writing."

A 10-year impact study of Prime Time Family Reading Time found that students who participated in Prime Time during their early elementary years outperformed their peers on grade level content in standardized exams. Prime Time students scored higher in language arts and reading, mathematics, science, life science and other subjects. Published in 2010, the study was conducted in Louisiana where the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities developed Prime Time in 1991.

In Nebraska, more than 70 bilingual and English-only Prime Time series have been held in 15 public libraries, five elementary schools and two community centers since 2004, including programs in Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island, Norfolk and Scottsbluff. The NHC was recently honored in Louisiana with a Public Humanities Programming Award for hosting the second highest number of Prime Time affiliate sites in any state.

Prime Time is sponsored in Nebraska by the NHC with funding from the State of Nebraska, Nebraska Cultural Endowment, and Carol Gendler. The NHC is a private, statewide, non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Primary sponsors for Prime Time in Alliance include Alliance Public Schools and the Alliance Public Library.

For more information or to register to participate, contact Valerie Vander Schaaf or Amy Garza at (308) 762-4519.

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