



## NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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# **N E W S   R E L E A S E**

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## **Prime Time reading program returns to Norfolk**

Prime Time Family Reading Time returns to Grant Elementary School in Norfolk Sept. 10 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. The six-week series is offered free to Norfolk-area families with children ages 6 to 10. 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.

Grant Elementary School will host the bilingual series on six consecutive Thursday evenings from Sept. 10 through Oct. 15. Selected books will help families discuss responsibility, courage, curiosity, kinship and loyalty.

Discussion leader Darlene Rodriguez and storyteller Juanita Ramirez will introduce parents to the benefits and pleasures of reading and discussing stories with their children. Families will also learn about resources and services available through the Norfolk Public Library. Separate pre-reading activities, provided by Northeast Community College's Early Childcare Program, will be available for younger siblings.

"It's important for children to learn the joys of reading early in life, especially when it involves reading and discussing books with their families," said NHC Senior Program Officer Erika Hamilton, state coordinator of Prime Time. "A love for learning through reading has a positive impact on how well a child does in school."

In a 2008 survey of Nebraska families who participated in Prime Time, 87 percent indicated that the program changed the way they read and discuss books together, 68 percent improved their attitude toward the library, and 98 percent showed interest in participating again in Prime Time or similar family reading and educational programs. One Norfolk participant said that "Prime Time has been a fun 'mom and daughter' time to enjoy reading together."

Initially developed by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 48 bilingual and English-only Prime Time series have been held in 15 Nebraska libraries, five schools and one community center in the last five years, including programs in Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island, South Sioux City and Scottsbluff. This will be Grant Elementary's fourth bilingual Prime Time, having held their first in the fall of 2006.

Prime Time is sponsored in Nebraska by the NHC with funding from the State of Nebraska and Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Sponsors for Prime Time in Norfolk include Norfolk Public Schools and Read Aloud Norfolk.

The Nebraska Humanities Council is a private, statewide, non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For details about Prime Time at Grant Elementary, contact Delva Santee at (402) 644-2543.