

Lamesa ISD Launches Model Innovation Community with Footsteps2Brilliance to Power Early Literacy

First district in Texas Region 17 to adopt proven literacy ecosystem through support from The Weaver Foundation

LAMESA, TX, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Lamesa Independent School

“

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David Ritchey, Superintendent of Lamesa ISD

District (ISD) has officially launched a groundbreaking early literacy initiative in partnership with Footsteps2Brilliance, becoming the first Model Innovation Community (MIC) in Texas Education Service Center Region 17. The district’s commitment to foundational reading success, supported by financial backing from The Weaver Foundation, marks a bold step toward closing literacy gaps and investing in the future of every student.

“We believe that every child, regardless of their background, deserves the opportunity to become a

confident reader by third grade,” said David Ritchey, Superintendent of [Lamesa ISD](#). “This isn’t just a program, it’s a promise to our children that we see them, we believe in them, and we’re investing in their future starting now.”

Recognizing the foundation for all future learning is built in the earliest years, Lamesa ISD prioritized early literacy as a district-wide focus. Despite funding challenges, district leaders sought and secured support from The Weaver Foundation to bring Footsteps2Brilliance to every student from birth through 3rd grade. The partnership provides families, teachers, and community members with powerful digital resources in both English and Spanish, available online and offline, to accelerate reading development and foster a love for learning.

“Footsteps2Brilliance will provide an excellent opportunity for us to build very important early literacy skills in partnership with our parents and the entire community,” said Dr. Sue Starr, Principal of South Elementary School.

The district’s formal adoption of the Footsteps2Brilliance ecosystem was approved by the Lamesa ISD Board of Trustees in March 2025. On July 1, Superintendent Ritchey, Director of

Curriculum and Instruction Jaime Bahlman, Dr. Starr, and North Elementary Principal Dr. Kristi Griffin met with Footsteps2Brilliance, to align on strategic implementation plans.

“This partnership with Lamesa ISD reflects our shared belief that literacy is a community-wide responsibility,” said Ilene Rosenthal, Footsteps2Brilliance Founder & CEO. “By establishing a Model Innovation Community, Lamesa ISD is setting a new standard for collaboration, access, and early achievement.”

The launch of the MIC this fall will equip Lamesa’s youngest learners with personalized digital books, educational games, and classroom tools designed to develop critical early literacy skills. Families will also gain access to Footsteps2Brilliance at home, ensuring consistent learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

To learn more about Footsteps2Brilliance or the Model Innovation Community initiative, visit <https://www.footsteps2brilliance.com>.

About Lamesa Independent School District

Lamesa ISD serves the students and families of Lamesa, Texas, located in Education Service Center Region 17. The district is committed to providing a high-quality education that prepares all students for lifelong success. With a focus on early literacy, innovation, and strong community partnerships, Lamesa ISD supports learners from Pre-K through 12th grade across its campuses. Guided by the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to succeed, Lamesa ISD is proud to invest in programs that close achievement gaps and empower students to thrive.

About Footsteps2Brilliance

Footsteps2Brilliance is a national leader in early literacy innovation, offering a bilingual ecosystem of mobile-first solutions designed to [accelerate academic achievement](#) from birth through 3rd grade. Through its Model Innovation Community framework, Footsteps2Brilliance empowers schools, families, and community leaders to work together to ensure that every child becomes a strong, confident reader.

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