



Legislation Text

File #: 17-664, Version: 1

Adopt and present a resolution proclaiming September 2017 as Adult Literacy Awareness Month and recognizing three literacy students, Richard Diaz, Khatera Omari and Olivia Chavira Mercado, and their respective volunteer tutors, Anne Driscoll, Cynthia Gross and Bill Maxwell, for achievement of their literacy goals (Supervisor Brown)

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Library Services (Library) recommends the Board adopt and present a resolution proclaiming September 2017 as Adult Literacy Awareness Month and recognizing three literacy students, Richard Diaz, Khatera Omari and Olivia Chavira Mercado, and their respective volunteer tutors, Anne Driscoll, Cynthia Gross and Bill Maxwell, for achievement of their literacy goals.

SUMMARY:

In 1986, the United States Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 358, designated September as Adult Literacy Awareness Month; they authorized and requested that the President of the United States issue a proclamation which was signed by the late President Ronald Reagan on August 27, 1986. September continues to be recognized by Literacy programs nationwide as Adult Literacy Awareness month.

Approximately 20% or 60,000 of the adult residents of Solano County are considered functionally illiterate. Functionally illiterate adults may have some basic reading and writing skills but they lack the ability to use written language accurately and effectively, often reading at or below a 5th grade level.

Solano County Library Literacy Services focuses on providing literacy education for adults who want to improve their reading, writing and speaking skills. Students are matched with a fully trained volunteer tutor and work one-on-one to improve their literacy skills.

Adult Literacy Awareness Month provides an opportunity to share the stories of adult learners now served by Library Literacy Services, spread the word about the need for additional volunteers, let prospective students know about available resources and raise awareness within the community of the impacts of illiteracy.

Three literacy students have achieved milestone goals this year and are representative examples of the more than 283 students currently in the literacy program and the personal goals they are working to achieve.

Richard Diaz and tutor Anne Driscoll have recently made the decision to end their tutoring sessions because Richard has achieved his goal of being comfortable reading and sharing stories with his daughter and will have limited time as he is confident enough with his literacy skills to start his own small business.

Khatera Omari arrived in the United State from Afghanistan and is working with tutor Cynthia Gross to improve her English reading, writing and speaking skills and ensure that her young children have strong literacy skills so they will be successful upon entering the local school system. Khatera recently achieved a life-long goal, navigating the complexities and completing all of the requirements to becoming a citizen of the United States.

Olivia Chavira Mercado has completed all required subject elements and passed all sections of the General Education Development Test (GED) with the help of long-time literacy tutor, Bill Maxwell. In addition to completing her GED, Olivia's increased skills have allowed her to serve as a peer student volunteer, helping prospective and new students who are interested in the literacy program, and is an active volunteer in her child's school.

These are only three of the goals and outcomes that Solano County Literacy Services students and tutors are working towards, and are indicative of the possibilities that are achieved when the community is aware of and supports the literacy needs of its residents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no cost to the General Fund as the Library is funded entirely through property and sales tax revenue.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose not to adopt this resolution. This is not recommended because adults, who cannot read, write or speak English struggle daily to participate fully in their communities and a community whose residents are not literate will not achieve its full potential.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

There is no other agency involvement.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION