



## 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, a Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) family literacy program designed to help strengthen participants' interest and skills in reading, will return to Norfolk with opportunities for both Spanish- and English-speaking parents and their children.

Lincoln Elementary School will host the bilingual series on six consecutive Tuesday evenings from April 1 through May 6. Each program begins with a light dinner and continues with storytelling and discussion based on award-winning children's literature. The program is free and open to the public.

The six-week series is offered to families with children ages six to 10. It includes sessions on kinship, determination, dreams, greed, and fairness. All books are read and discussed in both English and Spanish.

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 also will 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.

Prime Time reinforces the role of family in society, encourages parents and children to bond over reading and learning together, and teaches parents and children to read and discuss humanities topics. The program also encourages parents to enter or continue their own educational programs to improve their employment opportunities.

"It is so 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."

Initially developed by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, bilingual and English-only Prime Time sessions have been held in Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island, South Sioux City, Scottsbluff, and other Nebraska communities over the last five years. This is Norfolk's fourth bilingual Prime Time, having held the first at Grant Elementary School in the fall of 2006.

Prime Time programs are sponsored in Nebraska by the NHC, the State of Nebraska, Nebraska Library Commission, and Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Primary sponsors for Prime Time in Norfolk include the Norfolk Public Schools and Read Aloud Norfolk. Both have played leading roles in applying for and implementing the program. Other funders and donors in Norfolk include Target, Culver's, and Runza, with major funding from The Connie Fund.

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

For more information or to register to participate, contact Pam Weyhrich, family reading night coordinator for Lincoln Elementary, at (402) 644-2550.

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