



# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Sept. 15, 2016

**CONTACT:** Lindsay Ivins, William Diepenbrock **PHONE:** 909-445-1001

## Abbott Elementary Celebrates Grand Opening of New Reading Room

**Lynwood** – More than 100 Abbott Elementary students peered around Sept. 14 at the 3,000 books lining their new reading room in search of the perfect story to snatch up first, while The Cat in the Hat began reading “Green Eggs and Ham” to a group of fascinated youngsters.

The students were the first to venture into their school’s new Reading Oasis, a literary retreat on campus where students can drop in, relax in a bean bag chair and open their minds to endless possibilities. In addition to its vast collection of books, the Reading Oasis is adorned with colorful paint, a large outside mural depicting Dr. Seuss tales and reading assistance technology to spark a passion for reading.

Abbott Elementary hosted a ribbon-cutting event Thursday to mark the facility’s grand opening, with Lynwood Unified students, parents, administrators and community members all eager to get a first glimpse. Free backpacks, books and school supplies were also given out to 100 students.

"Our ultimate goal is for all children to have a love for reading," Abbott first-grade teacher Valeria Corona said. "The seed has been planted and there are so many possibilities on how we can use this reading room to inspire our students to read."

Corona, a Kiwanis member from Santa Fe Springs, brought a Kiwanis group for children called the K-Kids Club to her campus last year to teach her students about giving back to the community. That event and her desire to encourage youngsters to read led to the Abbott Reading Oasis project.

Students can relax in the Reading Oasis and listen to an audiobook or work on homework while teachers can use the space to conduct reading comprehension interventions and tutoring sessions.

"It is so important for all students to have constant access to books while on our campuses, especially during recess and before and after school," Lynwood Unified Superintendent Paul Gothold said. "Having a passion for reading at a young age sets up students for success in all facets of life. When students love to read, they love to learn."

The project, supported through a partnership between Kiwanis and the Scholastic book company, is part of a nationwide Reading Rocks initiative led by 24-year-old Ashley Payton. Payton’s goal is to bring early childhood reading and comprehension to the forefront of academics by positioning the next generation of leaders for success.

Abbott is the 11th facility in California.

—more—

The **Lynwood Unified School District** is dedicated to offering students a world-class education to prepare them for success in college and career in the 21st century. Under its Achieving Greatness Initiative, the district is realigning all aspects of its organization to strengthen and expand instructional programs, enrichment and extracurricular activities, and support system for students and staff. For more information, visit [www.lynwood.k12.ca.us](http://www.lynwood.k12.ca.us).

Follow us on  Twitter @LynwoodSchools, or "like" us on  Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LynwoodUSD](http://www.facebook.com/LynwoodUSD)



California-Nevada-Hawaii District of Kiwanis Gov. Cherice Gilliam, who is Payton's mother, and other Kiwanis representatives attended the ribbon-cutting to discuss their plans for expanding the Reading Rocks initiative.

"So many students are going to benefit from this amazing reading room, and I hope we can expand this project throughout Lynwood Unified," LUSD Board President Alma-Delia Renteria said. "I really want to thank Abbott Elementary and Kiwanis for volunteering so much of their time to supporting student success here in our District."

### PHOTO CAPTIONS

**091416\_LUSD\_READING1:** Abbott Elementary first-grade teacher Valeria Corona (with scissors) prepares to cut the ribbon held by Thing 1 and Thing 2 from Dr. Seuss' "The Cat in the Hat" for Abbott's new Reading Oasis on Sept. 14. She is accompanied by local and regional Kiwanis dignitaries as well as Lynwood Unified Director of Elementary Education Dr. Alfonso Jimenez (left), Assistant Superintendent Dr. Gudiel Crosthwaite (third from left), Abbott Principal Adolfo Herrera (fourth from left), Superintendent Paul Gothold (fifth from left) and Board President Alma-Delia Renteria (fourth from right).

**091416\_LUSD\_READING2:** Cecilia Cordova (right) teaches younger sister Alexa, an Abbott Elementary first-grader, how to read "Cinderella" inside Abbott's new Reading Oasis during the Sept. 14 grand opening. The facility is a dedicated space for students to settle in, grab a book and spark their literary imaginations during their off-time on campus.

**091416\_LUSD\_READING3:** The Cat in the Hat, Thing 1 and Thing 2 entangle a few Abbott Elementary students in ribbon outside Abbott's new Reading Oasis on Sept. 14 after the grand opening. The facility is a dedicated space for students to settle in, grab a book and spark their literary imaginations during their off-time on campus.

###

---

The mission of **Lynwood Unified School District**, the cultivator of innovative thinkers, is to ensure each student fearlessly achieves his or her highest academic and personal aspirations while contributing to the greater society through a unique system distinguished by:

- ★ People of great character who inspire and lead by example
- ★ The instilling of courage to be creative
- ★ The transformative uses of technology
- ★ Safe and clean environments
- ★ The honoring of all voices of our community