



Reading Volunteers Needed!

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Alton, IL – The Raise Your Hand Mentoring Program of the Alton School District is training new volunteers to be Reading Mentors for the current school year. The district's Safe Schools/Healthy Students program began a partnership last year with the OASIS Institute (funded through Macy's and BJC Healthcare), to promote literacy with elementary students. Through last year's pilot, 21 volunteers were paired with students at two elementary schools. Volunteers commit to one hour a week with students, doing reading related activities designed to spark a love of reading. Since 1989, OASIS tutors have helped more than 330,000 children nationwide strengthen their reading skills, positive connection to school, and attitudes about learning.

This school year, the program is expanding to East Elementary. Marybeth Gras, Mentoring Coordinator for the Alton District, says "Students greatly benefit from simply having someone provide individual attention and listen to them read. In turn, volunteers report that they find the experience rewarding and fun". The volunteers work one-on-one with their students each week at school throughout the school year as tutors, mentors and friends.

The next OASIS training will begin in September. Interested volunteers can contact Marybeth Gras at (618) 433-4910 or mgras@altonschools.org. You can find more information about the OASIS Tutoring Program at oasisnet.org/volunteer.

For more information on the Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative, visit <http://sshs.samhsa.gov>. For more information on Alton's Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant, programs and services, contact Sandy Crawford at 433-4907, scrawford@altonschools.org.