



## **NEWS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Girls Inc. of Carpinteria Launches Early Literacy Initiative to Prepare Local Students for Bright Futures**

*New initiative will provide after-school reading and literacy programs to ensure young girls are reading at grade level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade*

**CARPINTERIA – January 11, 2016** —[Girls Inc. of Carpinteria](#) is kicking off the New Year with the implementation of a new after-school reading and literacy program at [Carpinteria Unified School District](#) school sites and on the Girls Inc. Carpinteria campus. The Literacy Initiative is designed to provide age-appropriate literacy programs for K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade girls to help them succeed, launching them on a path to academic, social and lifetime achievement.

The goal of the program is to ensure young girls are reading at grade level by third grade.

“Students who are not reading at grade level by the end of third grade are at risk of falling further behind than their peers in all subject areas,” said Victoria Juarez, executive director of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria. “Reading at grade level is one of the strongest predictors of later success, setting the foundation for future academic achievement. We’re excited to play a role in building this foundation and providing girls both in our program and within the school district with the skills to unlock their fullest potential so that they can thrive.”

Girls Inc. of Carpinteria launched the Literacy Initiative in January 2016 following a grant from Girls Inc. National, as part of a nationwide effort by Girls Inc. affiliates to support academic success in the girls and young women they serve.

The program is now serving K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade girls in the organization’s after-school program and Kindergarten girls at [Aliso Elementary School](#). Girls Inc. hopes to continue bringing on new groups of kindergarteners each year and to expand to other schools in the District.

“Aliso School is pleased to again team with Girls Inc. to benefit our youngest scholars’ literacy skills,” said Aliso Elementary School principal Holly Minear. “We are grateful Girls Inc. provides dedicated extended day instructional programming in our classrooms with our kindergarten students to further support our students’ language development, reading, and writing skills. We are confident this collaborative effort will positively impact our students’ learning now and in years to come.”

The school-site outreach program is designed to support teachers and students, offering daily classes with literature being the focus of four session units. A collection of books featuring strong female characters, both fictional and biographical, will be used as the catalyst for learning. Through literature, kindergarten girls will experience high quality readings paired with vocabulary and discussion designed to meet the Common Core standards for literature. Girls will use literary content to gain phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency.

The program will follow the progress of the students, tracking and reporting their improvements through DIBELS assessment data taken over the course of three years.

Children who read at grade level by the end of third grade are shown to be more likely to experience academic success and graduate high school on time. In the Carpinteria Unified School District, this 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading benchmark is an important indicator. Thanks to community initiatives such as THRIVE, the number of students reaching this benchmark has been on the rise in recent years.

Through its Literacy Initiative, Girls Inc. of Carpinteria hopes to play an integral role in helping CUSD and its students reach their goals of grade level reading by third grade.

For more information about Girls Inc. of Carpinteria or the organization's Literacy Initiative, please call (805) 684-6364 or visit [www.girlsinc-carp.org](http://www.girlsinc-carp.org).

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*Girls Inc. of Carpinteria is a member of Girls Incorporated®, a nonprofit organization that inspires all girls to be strong, smart, and bold. With local roots dating to 1864 and national status since 1945, Girls Inc. has responded to the changing needs of girls through research-based programs and public education efforts that empower girls to understand, value, and assert their rights. We provide programs for girls 6 to 18 years old that focus on science, math, and technology; health and sexuality; economic and financial literacy; sports skills; leadership and advocacy; and media literacy. To learn more, become a volunteer or offer support, please visit [www.girlsinc-carp.org/](http://www.girlsinc-carp.org/).*

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