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([HTTP://GCNEWSGAZETTE.COM/NEWS/6011/NEW-PROGRAM-TO-IMPROVE-EARLY-LITERACY](http://gcnewsgazette.com/news/6011/new-program-to-improve-early-literacy)) BY GRAYSON COUNTY NEWS GAZETTE

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## New program to improve early literacy

By Don Brown - [donaldbrown@civitasmedia.com](mailto:donaldbrown@civitasmedia.com)



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Submitted photo Catherine DeRosa made a presentation to the Grayson County Board of Education concerning Footsteps to Brilliance, a program designed to increase literacy in children from birth through third grade.

Implementation for Footsteps 2 Brilliance, made the presentation to the board, explaining that the program will be available to all children in Grayson County, not just those who are enrolled in schools in the county.

Footsteps is a program of curriculum available through any smartphone, tablet or computer. It contains more than 1,000 interactive books, songs and games that can be read in English or Spanish which can be downloaded to any mobile device.

The Grayson County Board of Education heard a presentation Thursday evening concerning a new program which is designed to increase literacy in children from birth through the third grade.

Catherine DeRosa, Director of Curriculum &

The program is aimed at young children who are not being stimulated to improve reading and vocabulary skills for any number of reasons. It is estimated that those children who are not encouraged to read could face up to a 30 million-word gap by the time they reach the third grade. Some studies indicate that those children either go on to drop out of school, or land in prison.

It is estimated that 80 percent of parents these days have access to mobile devices which their children can then use to access the Footsteps program, which can be downloaded for free then used even if the device is not connected to the Internet.

In other business, the board gave its approval to the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan, a state-required document which outlines the steps the district must take for steady improvement.

The plan delineated seven goals: To increase the average reading and math proficiency ratings for all students; to increase the number of students who are college or career ready; to increase the four-year graduation rate; to reduce the number of students scoring at the novice level in reading and math; to increase the average combined reading and math scores district-wide; all schools to sustain a safe and orderly learning environment; all students and teachers to be technology literate.

Student trips okayed included the high school girls basketball team over the holiday break for a tournament in Somerset, the tennis team to go to Pensacola, Fl. over the Spring Break, and for the Senior Class Trip in June which will take students to England and Ireland.

Approval was given for Caneyville, Clarkson and Wilkey Elementary Schools to apply for Read to Achieve grants designed to increase literacy skills for students K-3 in the amount of \$50,000 each over a four-year period.

Approval was given to create a part-time (15 hours per week) special needs aide at the Clarkson FRYSC. The board also approved creating an Instructional Aide position for Preschool, a district-wide position that will be placed at Clarkson Elementary School this year.

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