



Cresco Times-
Plain Dealer
Cresco, IA
Circ. 2430
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1/19/2011
44602



107-21

Iowa Public Television expands Martha Speaks Reading Buddies programs for Iowa schools

JOHNSTON - As part of its role as a critical resource for Iowa students and teachers, Iowa Public Television will expand outreach for an initiative designed to build vocabulary and reading skills in elementary school students.

Iowa Public Television will encourage Iowa teachers to establish Martha Speaks Reading Buddies programs in their schools. The initiative, tied to the PBS KIDS television series Martha Speaks, pairs kindergarten students with third or fourth grade students for eight 45-minute one-on-one sessions. Together they will share books and participate in fun

activities while building vocabulary, developing self-esteem and social skills, and enhancing a love of books and learning.

Over the next month, Iowa Public Television will contact 6,000 kindergarten teachers across Iowa, and will host informational sessions for teachers via the Iowa Communications Network (ICN). Extensive resources for teachers, students, and parents are available online, and Iowa Public Television has partnered with the state's Area Education Agencies (AEAs) to make related books available to teachers across Iowa.

Iowa Public Television's

trained educators are available to assist schools as they establish this innovative program in their schools. Educators, administrators, and families interested in learning more about the Martha Speaks Reading Buddies Program can contact Trista Peitzman at 515-242-6663.

The Martha Speaks Reading Buddies program is just one of several available to Iowa educators as part of the network's extensive educational services offerings.

For more information about Iowa Public Television's work with Iowa educators, contact Jennifer Konfrst at 515-242-3146.