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NEWS – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Raising A Reader Program Launches In Solano County

FAIRFIELD - Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) has launched a well-respected children's literacy program for local children in early care and learning settings—including participating Quality Counts family child care homes and center-based programs. First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission awarded SCOE with funding to implement Raising A Reader. For the program year of 2018-2019, 20 Quality Counts sites will be participating in *Raising a Reader*, allowing over 500 children to take home a set of four books on a weekly basis and share with their families.

Raising A Reader is an early literacy program which teaches parents shared reading strategies by focusing on early brain development and strengthening family literacy routines. Children who participate in the program receive a signature red *Raising A Reader* book bag with several age-appropriate books to take home. Every week the bags will be rotated into children's homes, with approximately 100 books being brought into the child's home every year.

Raising A Reader is ideal for children from diverse backgrounds. The books are developmentally appropriate, culturally respectful and inclusive, and are available in Spanish and English. "The Solano County Office of Education joins First 5 Solano's commitment to reducing and eliminating opportunity gaps among children from diverse backgrounds, abilities and circumstances, and is proud to provide this program to children served in preschool and child care settings throughout Solano County. Our goal is to increase literacy among Solano County's young children and families, and therefore improve kindergarten readiness and overall reading proficiency of school-age children through *Raising A Reader*," remarks Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Superintendent of Schools.

In an effort to foster healthy brain development, enhance early literacy and language skills, promote healthy family engagement, and provide positive early learning experiences, SCOE will receive up to \$75,000 annually from 2018 to 2021 to coordinate implementation of *Raising A Reader*.

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