

Heart of a Lion



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
UNIVERSITY CITY
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NewsRelease

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA ADVISORY: PERSHING ELEMENTARY'S NEW BELIEVE PROJECT LITERACY LAB OPENS TO STUDENTS ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15

WHEN: Monday, November 15, 9:15 to 10:45 a.m.

WHERE: Pershing Elementary School, 6761 Bartmer Ave, University City, MO 63130

WHAT: Students in grades K-5 at Pershing Elementary School will get to tour and explore for the first time the school's new Believe Project Literacy Lab Classroom. The cheerfully decorated room with bright couches and pillows has hundreds of books in which 90 percent of the main characters or authors are individuals of color. The room was made possible by the Believe Project, an initiative of St. Louis Black Authors of Children's Literature, a non-profit led by Julius B. Anthony. Media may videotape and interview students when they visit. Anthony and District officials will be on hand for interviews.

RSVP: Please contact communications@ucityschools.org if you plan to attend.

FURTHER DETAILS:

- The Believe Project Literacy Lab aims to improve reading proficiency for students, especially those in grades K-3.
- Research shows that if students aren't strong readers by third grade, they are four times more likely to drop out of school.
- Literacy labs enable students of color to see themselves and their lives reflected in the books that fill the shelves. The rooms are decorated to make them feel like a home.
- Students in grades K-3 will spend 90 minutes a week in the lab
- This will be the sixth literacy lab that the Believe Project has opened in the St. Louis region. The Opportunity Trust provided a \$34,500 grant to cover the cost of transforming the room and teacher training.
- Other contributors and supporters are: Nine PBS, Ready Readers, the Noble Neighbor, the Missouri History Museum, Turn the Page STL, and St. Louis Regional Literacy Association.

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