

An illustration of a young child with dark hair, wearing an orange shirt and blue pants, lying on their stomach on a pink cushion. They are holding an open blue book and reading. A white dog with brown spots is lying down next to the child. The scene is set in a lush garden with green trees, pink flowers, and butterflies. The sky is blue with white clouds. The text 'R.E.A.D.' is prominently displayed at the top in large, dark green letters, with 'READING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE DOGS®' written below it in smaller, dark green letters. Below this, a paragraph of text states: 'A therapy Dog Team will be on campus again this school year.' At the bottom, another paragraph of text describes the R.E.A.D. program and its history.

# R.E.A.D.

READING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE DOGS®

A therapy Dog Team will be on campus again this school year.

THE READING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE DOGS (R.E.A.D.) PROGRAM IMPROVES CHILDREN'S READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS BY EMPLOYING A POWERFUL METHOD: READING TO AN ANIMAL. BUT NOT JUST ANY ANIMAL. R.E.A.D. COMPANIONS ARE REGISTERED THERAPY ANIMALS WHO VOLUNTEER WITH THEIR OWNER/HANDLERS AS A TEAM, GOING TO SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES AND MANY OTHER SETTINGS AS READING COMPANIONS FOR CHILDREN.

R.E.A.D. IS THE FIRST AND FOREMOST PROGRAM THAT UTILIZES THERAPY ANIMALS TO HELP KIDS IMPROVE THEIR READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND ALSO TEACHES THEM TO LOVE BOOKS AND READING. IT'S BEEN GROWING AROUND THE WORLD SINCE NOVEMBER OF 1999 WHEN ITA LAUNCHED IT IN SALT LAKE CITY. MORE THAN 6,000 THERAPY TEAMS HAVE TRAINED AND REGISTERED WITH THE PROGRAM AND ARE GOING STRONG!



Dear Parents/Guardians,

09/16/22

This letter is to let parents know that Bear Creek Community Charter School will be participating in the Reading Education Assistance Dogs® (R.E.A.D.®) Program and your child **MAY BE selected** to participate! Although many students will benefit from the program, only a couple per grade can be invited for this session.

The homeroom teachers selected a handful of students that they feel would benefit from this program. This letter is to let all parents know that the R.E.A.D. team will be on campus throughout the year.

This program is dedicated to improving the reading skills of students and building confidence in reading and in themselves through a registered therapy team (a trained volunteer with his/her pet) as literacy mentors. Your R.E.A.D team at Bear Creek Community Charter School will be Mrs. Soroka and Rooney (English Setter).

Handlers and their dogs will work with individual students during school hours on a one-to-one basis for approximately 10-15 minutes each per week during their RTII block, small group time, arrival, or dismissal. Prior to each visit, Rooney will be treated with an anti-dander, anti-allergen product which greatly reduces the susceptibility of people who are around them.

Rooney and Mrs. Larissa Soroka have undergone extensive training to ensure the program is a success. Mrs. Soroka is a certified Reading Specialist and also completed reading education training through Intermountain Therapy Animals.

In addition to that program, they also did training through the Alliance of Therapy Dogs. Within both organizations, Rooney passed behavior tests and continues to participate in various pieces of training to develop his skills.

As we get to know the needs of the students more, we will bring this team in as another way to differentiate instruction for the students. There will be permission slips coming home in the upcoming weeks for the selected students. Even if your child isn't selected at this time, Rooney will be on campus for all to enjoy every week.

If you have any questions about Rooney or how their team works, please contact Mrs. Soroka at [larissa.soroka@bearcreekschool.com](mailto:larissa.soroka@bearcreekschool.com)

If you would like more information about the program, please visit <https://therapyanimals.org/read/>

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Corcoran