PRESS RELEASE
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Library opens new kindergarten readiness space at Southeast Branch

COLUMBUS—Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) has opened a dedicated space at its Southeast Branch where preschoolers and their families can familiarize themselves with what it’s like in a kindergarten classroom.

Called a Ready for Kindergarten Area, the space includes an interactive whiteboard equipped with learning apps, a magnetic word wall, educational toys that assist with motor and cognitive development and more. The concept is reflective of CML’s strategy to impact Young Minds by improving kindergarten readiness, third grade reading proficiency and high school graduation rates.

“Kindergarten readiness is such a critical need throughout our community,” said CML CEO Patrick Losinski. “While this is a fun and attractive space, it’s not a play area. Everything is intentional and instructive.”

New environments can be intimidating, especially to children. Kindergarten can be overwhelming for some. CML hopes that familiarizing children with the kindergarten environment with this innovative area before they enter school will help alleviate uncertainty, giving these new students better opportunities for success from the beginning.

Access to the space will be limited to children who will soon enter kindergarten. The library will offer Ready for Kindergarten programming, a variety of literacy activities and tips for parents on ways to prepare children for kindergarten. CML hopes local preschools will take advantage of the space and there are also plans for targeted volunteer opportunities.

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The Southeast Branch’s *Ready for Kindergarten Area* was supported by a gift from PNC Bank.

“There is no greater investment in a child’s potential or in the future we all share than early education,” said Michael Gonsiorowski, PNC Bank regional president. “Columbus Metropolitan Library’s unique *Ready for Kindergarten Area* brings together parents and teachers to establish a solid foundation for children’s early learning while building on the early childhood progress that PNC Grow Up Great has supported here over the past 10 years.”

The *Ready for Kindergarten Area* at the Southeast Branch represents the fifth in the CML system. The first was piloted at CML’s [Karl Road Branch](#) in spring 2013 and continues to see a lot of activity. CML’s new [Driving Park](#) and [Whitehall](#) branches also have busy *Ready for Kindergarten Areas*, and the fourth space, at the Linden Branch, opened last year. CML plans to implement these features in each of its new or renovated branches, as well as throughout the system within the next several years.
CML was named a 2011 National Medal Winner by the Institute for Museum and Library Services for work in community service, the highest honor for libraries and museums. Columbus Metropolitan Library has been rated a 5-Star Library by Library Journal for seven of the eight years the magazine has published its industry ratings.

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