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NEW YORK STATE SUMMER READING PROGRAM LAUNCHED

New York State Library Announces Statewide Effort to Keep Kids Reading

Albany, NY---The New York State Library, teaming up with the more than 1,100 public libraries and neighborhood branches statewide, today announced the kick-off of "Summer Reading at New York Libraries," the 2011 New York State summer reading programs. Through these programs, young people will have the opportunity to access the vast resources of New York's public libraries to support their summer reading challenge and to gain recognition for what they achieve.

Through participation in these programs young people can receive reading lists and, in some cases, participate in programs and activities at their local libraries. At the end of the program, participants receive formal recognition for their reading achievement.

According to New York State Library officials, last year's summer reading program featured the participation of 1.5 million young people statewide. It is the expressed hope of program coordinators at the New York State Library, Assembly and Senate that increased attention on the benefits of summer reading will result in expanded participation.

John B. King, Jr., Acting Commissioner of the New York State Education Department noted that summer reading programs enable young people to maintain educational advances when not in school. "Statistics point to the disappointing loss of learning that takes place when young people are not in school during the summer. The effects of summer learning loss are especially dramatic for students from high-needs communities. By providing summer reading programs, the State Library and public libraries throughout the state - in conjunction with our partners in the State Assembly and Senate - can provide young people and their parents with the tools necessary to ensure year-long learning success and cultivate a love of reading," King said. For more

information about the importance of summer reading go to <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/research.htm>.

“For the children of our state, summer is a great time for fun, friends and, now through this program, building their reading skills. Every parent and teacher knows how essential reading is to educational success and ‘Summer Reading at New York Libraries’ will provide all of our students with a stronger foundation that will help lead them to higher achievement in school,” stated Senator John Flanagan (R-Suffolk), chairman of the Senate Education Committee. “This is the type of program that illustrates how integral libraries are to our communities and I urge all parents to visit their local library to join the summer reading fun.”

"I encourage families to use their libraries this summer," State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I - Schenectady), chair of the Senate's Subcommittee on Libraries, said. "Reading is a fun activity that opens the mind to all sorts of adventures. As a former teacher, I try to promote reading and learning as much as possible. Parents have a very important responsibility in their children's growth and education. Studies have shown that children whose families are involved in their learning become higher achievers and learn more quickly than children whose families are not. It's a big responsibility, but it's not difficult to help your children learn. The best way is to encourage them to read. By using your library this summer, children will find an adventure on every shelf."

"Summer Reading Programs are good for students and make reading fun," said Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan (D-Queens), chair of the Education Committee. "I encourage all students to participate in the programs at their local libraries."

"While there are so many fun activities for children to enjoy in the summer months – and reading should be one of those activities – our annual reading challenge is something parents can do with their kids, not only as a great way to spend time together, but as a way to ensure that their children are better prepared for the fall," said Assemblyman Bob Reilly (D-Colonie), chair of the Committee on Libraries and Education Technology.

For an overview of Summer Reading at New York Libraries and additional information for educators, parents, and caregivers, go to www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer.

Children, teens, parents, and caregivers can log on to <http://summerreadingnys.org> for activities, games, links, information and ideas to keep children reading all summer.