



New York State Board of Regents
MaryEllen Elia
Commissioner of Education
The State Education Department
The University of the State of New York / Albany, NY12234
Office of Communications



**NEWS
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2017**

For More Information, Contact:
Antonia Giuliano
(518) 474-1201
www.nysed.gov

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND STATE LIBRARY
LAUNCH 2017 SUMMER READING PROGRAM**

The New York State Education Department and the New York State Library, partnering with 1,100 main public libraries and neighborhood branches statewide, announced the launch of "Summer Reading at New York Libraries," the 2017 New York State summer reading program. The free, annual program gives children the opportunity to access the vast resources of New York's public libraries to support their summer reading.

"Studies show that children's literacy skills are strengthened when they read during the summer," said Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa. "Our summer reading program puts books in children's hands and is offered free of charge at over 1,000 public libraries statewide. I encourage parents and caregivers to support your child's literacy skills by encouraging them to participate in a summer reading program."

"When children read during the summer, it helps them build reading skills, prevent summer learning loss and prepare for a successful school year," said State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia. "We're proud to celebrate the 25th anniversary of our summer reading program, supported by the State Library in conjunction with our partners in the State Assembly and Senate. More than 2.1 million students participated in the program last year and we encourage more children to participate this year and experience the fun and adventure of reading."

This year is the 25th anniversary of the State Library's summer reading program. Last year, more than 2.1 million students and children statewide participated in the program. The State Library's goal is to reach 2.5 million participants in the summer reading program by 2018.

This year's summer reading program slogan is "Build A Better World". Children and teens participating in the program receive book recommendations and engage in educational activities at their local libraries. Library staff help children select reading materials and provide literacy-enhancing programs such as storytelling, music, creative arts, and performances. At the end of the program, participants receive formal recognition for their reading achievement.

"As a former teacher, I know how important it is to encourage students to continue reading during the summer months," said Senator Carl L. Marcellino, Chairman of the Senate Education Committee. "The Summer Reading Program gives children a chance to learn, explore and discover new things in a good book. I hope students and parents take advantage of this great program and all the tremendous opportunities available at our public libraries."

"The summer reading program is a great resource for both our parents and students to avoid the summer slide," said Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Chair of the Assembly Education Committee. "I would encourage all parents to take advantage of this wonderful program by visiting participating local libraries around the state."

"When a child picks up a book, they are given an amazing opportunity to learn, expand their imaginations and improve their literacy skills," said Senator Patty Ritchie, Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Libraries. "These are things that are especially important during the summer months. I encourage all families and children to take part in this year's summer reading program, which will help them continue to grow and learn while on a break from the classroom."

"As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Libraries, and more importantly a dad, I've seen first hand how libraries encourage children to be enthusiastic readers," said Assemblymember Dan Quart. "New York's Summer Reading Program reaches over two million students in our state and sets them up for success when they return to the classroom. It is with great pride that we celebrate the 25th year of this program, and I thank all participating libraries for supporting our kids."

For more information about “Summer Reading at New York Libraries”, please visit www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer or <http://www.summerreadingnys.org/>.

-30-

Follow the Commissioner on Twitter: @NYSEDNews