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New York State Board of Regents  
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## NEWS

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### NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND STATE LIBRARY LAUNCH 2020 SUMMER READING PROGRAM, "IMAGINE YOUR STORY"

**Libraries Reimagine Summer Learning to Reinforce Continuity of Learning,  
Help Reduce Summer Slide**

#### [Interim Commissioner Tahoe Helps Kickoff Summer Reading](#)

The New York State Education Department and the New York State Library are partnering with 1,100 public libraries and neighborhood branches statewide to launch the 2020 [Summer Reading at New York Libraries](#) program, Interim Commissioner Shannon Tahoe announced today. The free, annual program gives children and their families the opportunity to access the vast resources of New York's public libraries to support summer reading and learning. This year's theme is "Imagine Your Story" and, due to COVID-19, local libraries across the State are reimagining summer reading this year in new and different virtual formats with exciting online activities, programs and events.

"Though some library buildings are still closed because of COVID, New York's libraries continue to faithfully serve our children to support continuity of learning and will maintain the free educational resources and programs upon which families rely through the summer months," Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa said. "We know that reading is the number one way students can prevent learning loss and New York's libraries have found numerous ways to keep children engaged and to make learning fun. I encourage parents to use these resources this summer and throughout the school year."

"Local libraries unlock the magic of reading for families with free access to thousands of age-appropriate books and e-books, all with just a local library card," Interim Commissioner Tahoe said. "More than 2.5 million young people participated in last

year's summer reading program. Virtual services are available 24/7 so families can safely support learning and exploring all summer long."

The 2020 summer reading theme is "Imagine Your Story," a celebration of fairy tales, folklore, mythology, and sharing your own unique story and voice. This year, libraries across the state offer a selection of exciting online and virtual programming – special events, reading challenges, fun activities, and more – throughout the summer months. Due to safety precautions still in place during the COVID-19 state of emergency, local libraries across the state are reimagining summer reading this year in new and different virtual formats with exciting online activities, programs and events.

To help celebrate the kickoff, Interim Commissioner Tahoe shared one of her favorite stories, "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" by Dr. Seuss in a [video message](#).

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer, Chair of the Education Committee, said, "Summer reading is such a wonderful and essential part of students' summer plans, and this summer, reading is more important than ever. I am pleased to support NYSL & NYSED's Summer Reading Program to help our students learn and grow. Even in the face of COVID-19, our public libraries helped residents of all ages remain connected, read new books and find resources. As our libraries reimagine The Summer Reading Program with new virtual programs, I encourage children to lose themselves in books, explore new ideas, and imagine their own stories."

Public and school libraries are working closely together to make Summer Reading resources and activities available to all students and families. Kids, teens and families can [visit their local public library's website](#) to find out how to sign up for Summer Reading events and activities, then register online to track books and e-books and earn badges and prizes from their local library.

In addition to partnering with local libraries and the State's 23 public library systems to offer [Summer Reading at New York Libraries](#), the State Education Department and the State Library partner with various statewide organizations such as the New York State Senate and Assembly, Hunger Solutions New York, the New York State Reading Association, the New York Library Association, the School Library Systems Association of New York State, 4-H, the New York Council for the Humanities to bring summer reading to communities throughout the state.

The New York State Library is a program of the State Education Department's Office of Cultural Education. Further information can be obtained by [visiting the Library's website](#).

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