



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: Cultural Education Committee
FROM: Elizabeth R. Berlin *Elizabeth R Berlin*
SUBJECT: 2016 Statewide Summer Reading Program
DATE: November 3, 2016
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SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Summer Reading at New York Libraries is one of the most popular and heavily used programs of the State Library. In 2015, nearly 2 million children and teens participated in summer reading programs at local public libraries in New York.

The committee will receive a report on the 2016 Statewide Summer Reading Program participation and a brief update on plans for the 2017 program.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Education Law section 269 directs the Board to maintain a Library Extension Service, “for the employment of all suitable efforts to bring within the reach of all the people of the state, and awaken their desire for, increased opportunities and facilities for reading and study.” The statewide summer reading program provides resources to support both reading preparation and maintenance of reading skills.

Background Information

Studies show that library summer reading programs raise student learning levels and help prevent learning losses during the summer months. *Summer Reading at New York Libraries* provides exciting summer reading and literacy opportunities for young people of all ages and family members at New York’s 1,100 public libraries and branches across the State.

This successful and highly visible program brings children and families into local public libraries for fun reading and literacy activities during the summer months. Library

programs are offered free of charge to children, teens, and families statewide. The 2016 Summer Reading Program goal was to reach 2.5 million participants. In 2015, over 1.99 million of New York's children and teens participated in the program. During the past decade, program participation has almost doubled.

The State Library partners with the 23 public library systems on program implementation. The State Library offers high-quality educational materials, support through the www.summerreadingnys.org website and much more. Local libraries tailor the statewide program to local needs. Schools are strongly encouraged to collaborate with their local public library to keep students engaged in reading and learning during the summer months.

State Librarian Bernard A. Margolis will publicly announce the 2016 program participation figures for the first time at the November Regents Cultural Education Committee meeting. In addition, he will talk about plans under way for 2017 which will mark the 25th anniversary of *Summer Reading at New York Libraries*.