



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

**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents  
**FROM:** Elizabeth R. Berlin *Elizabeth R Berlin*  
**SUBJECT:** 2016 Statewide Summer Reading Program  
**DATE:** June 6, 2016  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):** *Mary Ellen Eis*

### SUMMARY

#### **Issue for Discussion**

Each Spring the State Library launches the annual statewide *Summer Reading at New York Libraries* program in partnership with public library systems and local public libraries across the state. Summer Reading at New York Libraries is one of the most popular and heavily used programs of the State Library. Last year, nearly 2 million children and teens participated in summer reading programs at local public libraries in New York.

The Board will receive a report on the 2015 Statewide Summer Reading Program and an update on plans for the 2016 program. The Board will also learn about a successful partnership with the Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Program that engages young people in the joy of discovery and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) through informal science activities offered by local libraries during the Summer.

#### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

For Information. 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 goal is to reach 2 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](http://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.

The Department will hold a statewide launch event at the new Phyllis Bornt Branch and Literacy Center of the Schenectady County Public Library.