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First Lady Mary Pat Christie Announces Pleasantville's Leeds Avenue Elementary School To Receive 500 Books As Part Of Scholastic Summer Reading Challenge

Tuesday, May 10, 2016

Tags: [First Lady](#)

Trenton, NJ – As an initiative to encourage students to build their reading skills, First Lady Mary Pat Christie announced today that Leeds Avenue Elementary School in Pleasantville is receiving 500 books as part of the 10th annual Scholastic Summer Reading Challenge. Mrs. Christie, along with other Governors' spouses, is once again serving as a "Reading Ambassador" to help reinforce the significance that summer reading plays in the learning process.

"As the mother of four, I know that reading is an important life skill and a key to learning," said Mrs. Christie. "Reading inspires a sense of discovery, imagination and joy in our children and I am proud to have this opportunity through the Scholastic initiative to bring the wonder of books to the students of the Leeds Avenue Elementary School."

The Scholastic Summer Reading Challenge encourages young students to continue to read during the summer months in order to avoid the "summer slide" — learning losses which can occur when school is not in session. Ensuring that children have access to books during those months is critical to enhancing reading achievement.

"We are very excited and most appreciative to be receiving these books," said Pleasantville Mayor Jesse Tweedle. "I brought the Mayor's Book Club, a partnership between mayors and their local elementary schools or libraries, to Pleasantville. Through this project, mayors are demonstrating that communities need to work together to raise our children in a literate environment. My challenge is to have parents and guardians read to their kids each night and by having these books available helps facilitate this process. My objective is to get a book in every child's hand."

The Leeds Avenue Elementary School covers Pre-K to Grade 5 and serves approximately 500-600 students.

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"On behalf of Leeds Avenue School's students, parents and staff, I would like to extend special thanks to our First Lady, Mary Pat Christie, Pleasantville Mayor Jesse Tweedle and our Superintendent Dr. Leonard Fitts for awarding 500 books from Scholastic Inc. for our Summer Reading Challenge," said Principal Howard Johnson. "This effort supports our school wide goal of making every child a reader."

According to Scholastic, having children stick to a reading routine during the summer break is crucial to strengthening his or her reading proficiency. For every minute a child reads, he or she is enhancing those reading skills.

In New Jersey, students participating in the 2015 Scholastic Summer Reading Challenge read 10,902,902 minutes, ranking the Garden State as one of the top ten states in the country.

Last year, Newell Elementary School in Allentown logged 2,733,841 reading minutes, making them the number one school in New Jersey.

Since 2009, Scholastic's Summer Reading Challenge has generated more than one billion reading minutes from children across the globe. For 2015, that worldwide number totaled 286,611,349 minutes spent reading.

For more information about the Scholastic Summer Challenge, please visit <http://www.scholastic.com/ups/campaigns/src-2016>

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