

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Rell's 'Summer Reading Challenge' to Celebrate the Joy of Reading

Governor M. Jodi Rell on Thursday will congratulate Connecticut students for reading over 1.1 million books in the "2006 Governor's Summer Reading Challenge," and ask students statewide to "make reading a part of your summer this year," as she issues her reading challenge to Connecticut's children this summer.

Governor Rell will present students and school representatives from throughout the state with certificates of achievement for their reading prowess at a 2:30 PM ceremony at Bristow Middle School on 34 Highland Street in West Hartford.

"I am proud of the students that participated in this year's event and the thousands of students across Connecticut who took part in the Summer Reading Challenge last summer. It is a tribute to the dedication of teachers, principals and parents who help foster a love of reading in children," said Governor Rell. "Reading is the most important academic skill of all – one that goes the farthest in ensuring future success."

The Governor's Summer Reading Challenge was initiated in 1996, and since its inception, more than 7 million books have been read. This year 95,000 students participated representing more than 400 schools across the state. In 2005, one million books were read.

The awards are based on two factors: The average number of books read per student and the percentage of students participating in the challenge.

Following is a list of winning schools:

Elementary Schools

New Haven – Bishop Woods Elementary

Enfield – Prudence Crandall Elementary

Ridgefield – Scotland Elementary

Farmington – East Farms School

Willington – Center School

Lebanon – Lebanon Elementary School

Middle and High Schools

West Hartford – Bristow Middle School

Milford– East Shore Middle School

Wallingford – Sheehan High School

Wilton – Middlebrook Middle School

Cheshire – Dodd Middle School

Bethel– Bethel High School

Region 5 – Amity Middle School, Bethany Campus

Clinton–Jared Eliot Middle School

Litchfield – Litchfield High School

Other Winning Schools

Unified School District II – Riverview School

Wilton – Our Lady of Fatima School

Ridgefield – Saint Mary School

Additionally at the event, the Governor will present awards in recognition of libraries and school districts that partnered to promote the 2006 Governor's summer reading program. Receiving awards of merit are Guilford Public Library with Guilford Public Schools and the Burlington Public Library with Region 10 Public Schools.

At the conclusion of the event, the Governor will launch the '2007 Governor's Summer Reading Challenge.'

"When we encourage a love of reading in children, we are encouraging a lifetime of enjoyment. We are also fostering learning and knowledge about the world around us. This means a head start toward achievement in school, success in the workplace, understanding of other people and places, and the satisfaction of a good life," the Governor said.

The Department of Education is sending materials and posters to schools and libraries around the state to encourage students to be part of "Connecticut Reads 2007: the Governor's Summer Reading Challenge" The campaign helps link the efforts of school and public library summer reading programs, relaying a strong message about the importance of reading to students and parents.

For more information about the Governor's Summer Reading Challenge, students and families can contact the Department of Education's Office of Communications at 860-713-6548.