



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Read, read, read

THOMAS F. O'MARA July 15, 2013

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The importance of summer reading just can't be understated. That's exactly why my Senate colleagues and I are so grateful this summer to have the opportunity to team up with the New York State Library and public libraries statewide, including so many throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, to promote a new, online summer reading program called "Dig Into Reading."

At its most basic level, summarizing the range of research on the importance of summer reading for students can be stated as straightforwardly as this: it's about getting books into the hands of kids. According to Scholastic, the keys to successful summer reading are letting kids choose the books they want to read (91% of children say they're more likely to finish a book if they picked it out themselves), encouraging kids to read four or more books, and, very straightforwardly, providing easy access to books.

The underlying importance of access, of course, points directly to the critical role played by our public libraries to encourage students and their families to read, and as the gateway for making books and other reading materials and programs available throughout our communities.

One of the finest writers of all, William Faulkner, simply put it this way, "Read, read, read."

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