



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Keeping Up With Summer Reading

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Teachers and librarians know that kids do better in school when they read over the summer, even if it is just 10 minutes a day. That is why I am urging families to take part in the New York State Senate's Summer Reading Program.

This year's theme is "Libraries Rock" and families can register for the Summer Reading Program on my website www.ritchie.nysenate.gov. In addition, students can track their reading progress on an online journal and share it with others. When they have completed

the journal, they will receive a special Summer Reading certificate.

One of the best places to get books this summer vacation is at one of New York's 1,100 public libraries. As Chair of the Senate's Library Committee, I have been working to see that these centers of learning have the resources they need to provide patrons—and especially children—with books, technology and so much more. This year, I was proud to have secured record funding in the state budget for libraries totaling \$96.6 million. This funding will make sure libraries can provide the public with important offerings and services all year long.

For suggestions on the most popular books for children by grade level, check out the Summer Reading Program website www.summerreadingsnys.org. This year, for the first time, students taking part in the Summer Reading Program will have access to myON, a digital library of 6,000 books for students from preK-12. With a free app, they can download up to 20 books at once and read offline. In addition, many of the 50 public libraries throughout our region also host special summer reading events to encourage families to read together and avoid the “summer slide.”

Last year, 2.2 million students across New York State participated in the Summer Reading Program—that's an increase of nearly 100,000 students from the year before. As the Summer Reading Program celebrates its 26th year, I would like to encourage even more young people to take part, use the summer months to enhance their reading skills and be ready to jump back into learning when school begins in the fall.