



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Teaching the Importance of Protecting Our Planet

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Every year, on April 22nd the world comes together to celebrate our planet and highlight efforts to protect it for future generations. Since its first celebration in 1970, Earth Day has grown to reach nearly 200 countries.

As we continue to learn that protecting the planet is a team effort, Earth Day has also become an opportunity to teach younger generations about steps they can take to safeguard the environment. That is why, in an effort to help spread the message of protecting the

planet, I host a special “Earth Day Poster Contest” each year for local students to take part in.

The theme of the annual contest, which is open to children in grades kindergarten through 6th, is “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle”. Children are asked to design a special poster that through their creativity shows how they pitch in to protect the environment, while encouraging others to do the same.

Through those posters and in the lessons they learn while making them, students can be introduced to a number of tips on how they can help the environment, including:

- Reducing paper use;
- Conserving water;
- Using reusable containers;
- Planting trees;
- Recycling old clothes; and
- Turning off electronic devices when not in use

School districts across our region have already or will soon receive information on how to enter their students into this contest. Posters will be featured on my website and I will be giving all participants a special certificate for their hard work. Classes entering the contest must submit entries by April 17th and can do so by clicking [here](#).