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Media Release

County Library Partners With District for Summer Reading Program

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Charleston, SC – Studies show that students who don't read during the summer will be less prepared when school resumes. That's why Charleston County Public Library (CCPL) and Charleston County School District (CCSD) are working together to extend student learning into the summer.

This [joint initiative](#) is part of CCPL's annual Summer Reading program. It is designed for children, teens, and adults and runs through August 17, right before the kids come back to school. The program was extended to better match students' summer vacation time. It features hundreds of free events and prizes provided by community sponsors.

"This partnership opens up so many opportunities for students throughout the summer," said Christy James, CCSD's Library Media Services Specialist. "The amount of access being provided is incredible. The program has sparked excitement among our librarians because it has also created a relationship with the public librarians so that we can continue the partnership all year."

This year's participants are outpacing 2018's Summer Reading campaign. As of July 8, there are just over 5,200 participants who have earned more the 2.6 million points. Points are earned based on the number of books a participant has read and result in prizes offered by the various sponsors.

According to Natalie Hauff, Director of Programs/Outreach and Communications with CCPL the collaboration with the school district has resulted in students of all ages embracing year-round reading.

"The incentives from our sponsors give kids something to look forward to, and we're so grateful to that," said Hauff. "Because we've expanded the program, kids from different geographic areas can now participate. It's introduced these kids to a whole new world."

Area principals recently visited James Island Library to read to students participating in the Summer Reading Program.

"Literacy shapes everything these kids will do in their future," said Jonetta Gregory, principal of James Island Elementary School. "This program provides access to reading and experiences and encourages not just the students but the parents as well."

Kids ages 11 and younger earn prizes for reading or listening to stories. Students entering grades 6-12 win prizes for reading whatever they like. Participants ages 18 and older are eligible for bi-monthly gift card prizes and a grand prize drawing.

The regional branches, as expected, have higher participation, which is why this year the program has hosted pop-up libraries in rural areas and partnered with CCSD's Nutrition Services to provide meals through the district's Seamless Summer Feeding Program. Free lunch is available to children and teens age 18 and younger at seven branches. Also, CARTA has launched a new Free Student Fare pilot program that allows students (ages 6 and older) to ride CARTA for free.

This is the second time CCSD and CCPL have partnered to implement the program. As part of the collaboration, every student has been automatically registered for the program that corresponds to their age.

"The kids truly miss school during the summer, even if they don't admit it," said James. "This program brings everyone together to support reading. The library has been incredibly responsive in making this program kid-centered and by removing barriers and creating access points at every turn."

Today's local libraries are not the traditional facilities where all is quiet. They are fun, community hubs.

"The Summer Reading Program is an extension of the fun, engaging activities we host year-round," said Hauff. "We're now able to expand our reach far beyond books."

For more information or to sign up for the program visit www.ccpl.org/summeronline or sign up at any CCPL branch.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD), a nationally-accredited school district, is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 87 schools and specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.