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**DPS: 2010-08**

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** Dr. Frances Haithcock

**DATE:** January 5, 2010

**SUBECT:** Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! – "Champions Read, Readers Lead" Initiative

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! will be held Jan. 25-29, 2010, and your continued involvement is greatly appreciated. In an effort to support volunteers during Celebrate Literacy Week, the Florida Department of Education's Just Read, Florida! office and Scholastic Publishers are pleased to announce the **"**Champions Read, Readers Lead**"** initiative, geared toward motivating and rewarding the community members who become involved in local schools as volunteers. Through the "Give a Day - Get a Disney Day" program from Disney and its national partner, HandsOn Network, Celebrate Literacy volunteers will receive a one-day pass to a Disney theme park for their verified participation at a school as a volunteer during the week. As volunteers participate in the "Champions Read, Readers Lead" initiative during Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! we encourage volunteers to participate in activities centered around reading, which may include reading to students in classrooms, small groups, or individually.

Individual districts can register their schools and/or organizations as a partner with the HandsOn Network through an online registration system. Individuals in the community can register as a volunteer through your district and, once approved, volunteer in the schools any time during the week. Individual schools may also register on their own. Once the volunteers' activities have been completed and verified by the partner (school district), Disney will provide a one-day Disney theme park pass to the individual in exchange for their volunteered time. Please note that individuals must adhere to all district volunteer guidelines and requirements.

This offer through the HandsOn Network and Disney is only available to Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! volunteers, and volunteers must complete a minimum of one hour of service to qualify for the free park pass. Participants who wish to continue volunteering after Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! may continue to do so, as the Department encourages individuals to volunteer at their local schools.

More information on the "Champions Read, Readers Lead" initiative for volunteers will be available through the Just Read, Florida! Web site at: www.justreadflorida.com/literacyweek.asp. In addition, participating school districts will provide information to volunteers and schools from the HandsOn Network at: www.handsonnetwork.org/disney.

**Participation is entirely voluntary. Should your district choose to participate, you will be asked to complete the following steps:**

1. It is suggested that the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan Contact should serve as the contact for this initiative. The attached spreadsheet provides the names of the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan Contact. The contact will manage the registration and verification of schools in order to ensure their participation. Should you decide to assign this task to another district level contact, please notify Hope Colle of the revision at Hope.Colle@fldoe.org.

2. District contacts will register interested school/schools within the district at http://vop.handsonnetwork.org/ or provide directions to schools who may register on their own.

3. Once schools are registered, districts/schools should notify recruited volunteers that they are required to sign up their volunteer projects beginning Jan. 9, 2010, with the "Give a Day - Get a Disney Day" program via the HandsOn Network Web site in order to receive a park pass. The HandsOn Network Web site can be accessed at: http://disneyparks.disney.go.com/disneyparks/en_US/WhatWillYouCelebrate/index?name=Give-A-Day-Get-A-Disney-Day. Volunteers may include parents, older students, community leaders, civic officials, etc.

**"Champions Read, Readers Lead" Tools and Tips**

- Volunteers will be provided an online video demonstration on how to conduct an effective read aloud with children at the following Web site: http://www.justreadflorida.com/literacyweek.asp.
- Volunteers will be provided online written guidance on reading techniques at the following Web site: http://www.justreadflorida.com/literacyweek.asp.
- Volunteers may access a suggested reading list at the following Web site: http://www.justreadflorida.com/literacyweek.asp or volunteers may work with their assigned teacher on a reading selection.

- Volunteers will be provided specific directions on how to receive the one-day Disney pass during the registration process at: http://disneyparks.disney.go.com/disneyparks/en_US/WhatWillYouCelebrate/index?name=Give-A-Day-Get-A-Disney-Day.
- Questions and answers are available at: http://www.handsonnetwork.org/disney/faq.

This is an excellent opportunity for your district to benefit from additional volunteers in your schools in hopes of recruiting lifelong mentors and volunteers. Please feel free to contact the Just Read, Florida! office with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your support of Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! and the exciting events taking place all across our state.

FH/be/hc

Attachment