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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Students at New Hope Elementary School Get Books on Break

Hillsborough, NC (June 6 and 7, 2016)- Approximately 650 elementary school students at New Hope Elementary School were able to select six to ten books each to enjoy over their summer vacation thanks to the Books on Break program. Students gathered at the elementary school in Hillsborough on June 6th and 7th to work with staff members and volunteers from [Orange County Schools](#), [the Orange County Public Library](#), [Friends of the Orange County Public Library](#), [New Hope Elementary](#), and the [Family Success Alliance](#) to help them select books. Students were encouraged to select books of interest, not just reading level, to provide many opportunities for reading over the summer, when a large number of kids experience “summer slide” due to lack of educational engagement.

According to a June 4, 2016 article in the New York Times, “Researchers credit the summer slide for about half of the overall difference in academic achievement between lower and higher income students.”

Inequity, aka the achievement gap, is one of the main reasons the Family Success Alliance is partnering with the Friends of the Orange County Public Library, the Orange County Public Library, Book Harvest, and the Orange County Schools to ensure kindergarten and first-grade students receive books to help keep them engaged during the summer months.

“This is just so powerful. The partnership and working together has been amazing and inspiring” stated Lori-Anne Shapiro, Chair of the Orange County Friends of the Library. “We are so pleased to not only have been able to contribute more than \$5,000 to purchase books for the kids, but also getting to work side-by-side with the school throughout the process.”

It was this partnership that inspired the Orange County Schools and New Hope Elementary to contribute additional funding to create the opportunity for second through fifth-grade students to also able to participate in the program.

“Literacy and a love of reading are some of the greatest gifts that we can foster in our students. Through the work of our school system and the support our partners, we're pleased to be able to provide this opportunity at New Hope.” stated Orange County School Superintendent, Dr. Todd Wirt.

Attached: Photos from K-1 book selection day with students, teachers, and volunteers. High resolution images available upon request.



Above left: New Hope Elementary School Principal, Damian Powell, interacts with excited student

Left: Volunteers from the Friends of the Orange County Public Library and Library staff

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