YOUNG READERS HONOURED AT PREMIER’S READING CHALLENGE RECEPTION

Monday, 22 November 2010

Premier Kristina Keneally today congratulated students from across the State who participated in the 2010 Premier’s Reading Challenge – saying it had record participation with students reading more than five million books.

This year, 2,050 schools completed the 2010 Premier’s Reading Challenge with more than 195,000 students involved – 15,000 more than in 2009.

“If all of the books they read were placed side by side, they would stretch from Sydney to Tamworth; that is a fantastic achievement,” Ms Keneally said.

“I am extremely proud to see a record number of students participate in this year’s reading challenge and I congratulate each and every young reader,” Ms Keneally said.

More than 100 school students from 25 schools were chosen from a ballot to attend the reception, and were treated to a celebration of activities, book signings and the opportunity to meet their favourite authors, illustrators and sporting stars.

The event was held in their honour at the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Authors at the reception included Anh Do, Andrew Daddo, Peter FitzSimons, James Roy, Ursula Dubosarsky, Moya Simons, Tohby Riddle, Deb Abela, Duncan Ball, Boori Monty Pryor and illustrator Kim Gamble.

Rugby league players Mario Fenech and Hazem El Masri also attended the reception, helping to inspire our young readers.

“Improving literacy is a key focus of the NSW Government – this year we are investing $262.3 million on literacy and numeracy programs in NSW schools,” Ms Keneally said.

“The Reading Challenge is one of the many reasons why NSW kids lead the nation in literacy results.

“I hope this year’s participants will return to the challenge next year, which is set to be bigger than ever – with more than 600 new books, a new online magazine where students, parents, teachers – and even the Premier – can discuss the books they’re reading.

“I extend my thanks to all the teachers, teacher-librarians, public librarians and parents who supported our students in their quest and dedicated their time to developing the skills of our young people.”

Minister for Education and Training, Verity Firth, said all participating students should be extremely proud of their achievements.

“I congratulate students for taking the opportunity to find enjoyment in reading and improving their literacy skills.”
“This is what education is all about – providing students with experiences that will shape them as creative, inquisitive and confident adults – and it’s fantastic to see how the Premier’s Reading Challenge is contributing to that goal,” Ms Firth said.

Premier Keneally also thanked the Principal Partner, Dymocks Children’s Charities, Supporting Partner, OPSM, and Media Partner, *The Sun-Herald*, for their continued and strong support of the challenge.

**Schools represented at the Premier’s Reading Challenge Presentation:**

- Caringbah High School
- Condell Park High School
- Erina High School
- Floraville Public School
- Greenwich Public School
- Holy Family Primary School, Menai
- Iqra Grammar School
- Leppington Public School
- Malabar Public School
- Mary Immaculate Primary School, Bossley Park
- Minchinbury Public School
- Muirfield High School
- Parkes Public School
- Passfield Park School
- Plunkett Street Public School
- Sherwood Ridge Public School
- St Dominic’s Centre for Hearing Impaired Children
- St Francis Xavier’s Primary School, Belmont
- St Mary’s Primary School, Bellingen
- St Peter’s Catholic College, Tuggerah
- Stanford Merthyr Infants School
- Tamworth South Public School
- The International French School
- The Lakes Christian School
- Waniora Public School
- Wauchope Public School
- Weethalle Public School