

(School Name) Students Invest in Reading and Learning Personal Finance

(SCHOOL NAME) is participating in the “Reading is an Investment” program for the (first/second) year. More than 120 Vermont elementary schools are offering the program in an effort to increase the financial literacy of youth statewide. The program promotes the importance of reading and teaching young children basic personal financial concepts. The program is sponsored by the Vermont State Treasurer’s Office and is distributed free-of-charge to participating schools.

(INSERT QUOTE FROM SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE)

The program aim is to increase school book collections in personal finance, give teachers and librarians related curricular resources, and encourage students to read books that teach money concepts.

“My office works with Vermonters of all ages to promote increased understanding and practice of sound money management skills,” said State Treasurer Beth Pearce. “Reading is an Investment represents a focused effort to reach elementary-age children with personal finance instruction. Early introduction of money management concepts enables children to learn and develop skills that will be with them throughout their adult working lives into retirement.”

The “Reading is an Investment” program takes a two-prong approach to promoting financial literacy — class or library instruction and personal reading. Each fall, participating elementary schools receive two or three new hardback books. Lesson plans and activities are included with the books to teach money concepts. At the same time, students are encouraged to participate in a personal financial literacy reading program. School librarians receive a recommended money reading list that highlights books that focus on basic financial concepts. Students who read at least three books from the list and complete personal reading requirements can send a completed reading log to the Treasurer’s Office for entry in a statewide drawing for one of ten \$250 accounts in the Vermont Higher Education Investment Plan — Vermont’s official 529 college savings plan.

The three books sent to participating schools this year are: *Pitching in for Eubie*, by Jerdine Nolen; *Rock, Brock and the Savings Shock*, by Sheila Bair; and *Give a Goat*, by Jan West Schrock.

In the program’s first year, 109 elementary schools participated. More than 1,300 students completed reading logs and entered the drawing for the college savings accounts. The ten students winning college savings accounts were: Isadora Beck, Bristol Elementary School; Hannah Bertrand, Franklin Central School; Aaron Cole, Readsboro Central School; Eva Frazier, Hinesburg Community School; Korbin Hughes, Bristol Elementary School; Emma Medor, Swanton Elementary School; Ian Parent, Williston Central School; Gianna Pezzetti, Rutland Town School; Myah Rocheleau, Swanton Elementary School; and Mariah Witham, Swanton Elementary School.

The Vermont program is underwritten by contributions to the Financial Literacy Trust Fund. The fund was created by the State Legislature in 2008 and authorizes the State Treasurer to receive money from a variety of sources to fund financial literacy programs. Major sponsors of the program are the Windham Foundation and TD Bank. Vermont Higher Education Investment Plan prizes are provided by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. The program also received a mini-grant from the Vermont Humanities Council.