



School news

from the Santa Barbara County Education Office

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To: All Media
For immediate release
April 10, 2017 – 16/17-N-21

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Students get new incentive in Battle of the Books

Nearly 200 students in fourth through sixth grades from more than 30 schools throughout the county will test their knowledge April 26 at the 16th annual Battle of the Books in the Santa Barbara County Education Office (SBCEO) auditorium.

About 8,000 students in public schools countywide have been challenged to read as many books as possible from a pre-selected list of 25 to qualify for the event. These books will be the source of the questions and challenges that the students will face at the “battle.”

Students are encouraged to read all 25 books, but they must read at least 15 to attend the Battle of the Books. Each school can send a maximum of five students.

“This annual competition is an entertaining opportunity for students from throughout the county to come together for a friendly ‘literary battle,’ but it’s also an important reading incentive program,” said county Superintendent of Schools Bill Cirone, whose office coordinates the event.

In addition to encouraging literacy and making reading fun, the Battle of the Books rewards reading comprehension and teamwork. Two teams of six or seven students compete against each other by answering 20 comprehension questions based on the 25 books. The students must agree upon and offer their answers as a group.

All teams will compete in a round-robin tournament of four battles, and the highest-scoring teams will take the stage for the final battle, facilitated by guest author Valerie Hobbs.

“When they arrive for the Battle of the Books, the students will be re-blended into teams so that no one school competes against another,” said Matt Zuchowicz, director of Educational Technology Services, the SBCEO department that conducts the event. “Regardless of who wins the final battle, every student is rewarded with certificates, and the winners receive books and custom-made tee shirts,” he added. “Students also have an opportunity that day to vote for a book they’d like to see on the list for next year’s event, which is a fun way to motivate and engage the young readers.”

For more information, call Rose Koller at SBCEO, 964-4710, ext. 5222.

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