



**For immediate release  
May 30, 2017**

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**Book Harvest Joins Forces with Durham Public Schools  
To Tackle Summer Learning Loss at All 30 Elementary Schools**

**Durham** - In these days leading up to summer break, students in every one of Durham's 30 elementary schools are heading home with their very own tools and resources to preserve the gains they have made during the 2016-2017 school year.

Book Harvest collaborated this spring with Durham Public Schools and with school media coordinators and principals to provide a grant of books and summer learning resources to every elementary school. In seven of those schools – Y.E. Smith, Eastway, C.C. Spaulding, Merrick-Moore, Glenn, Forest View, and Lakewood – every child in the school is receiving a new string backpack preloaded with literacy tips and summer reading resources; the students then attend a special Books on Break event at which they select 10 free books to take home to read over the summer and to keep forever. The remaining schools are each receiving a grant of books and a toolkit to run their own Books on Break events.

Forest View Elementary School ESL teacher Catriona Moore has shared the boundless joy – and measurable success – of Books on Break since the program launched. “Books on Break prevents summer reading loss - it is that simple and that miraculous,” she said.

This book-based approach to the threat of summer learning loss is informed by rigorous research. According to Dr. Susan Neuman, Professor and Chair of the Teaching and Learning Department at NYU, “Access to books and educational material is the single biggest barrier to literacy development in the United States and beyond. If we can solve the problem of access, we will be well on the road to realizing educational parity – a goal which has eluded this country for generations.”

Books on Break in Durham is part of a larger effort that is reaching a total of 9,763 elementary school students with free books at 44 schools in Durham, Orange, and Chatham Counties and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools this spring. The program is a community-wide collaboration of volunteers, parents, administrators, teachers, students, foundations, and philanthropists who come together with a shared commitment to ensuring that every child in our community has the tools to succeed and is able to return to the classroom in the fall having preserved the academic gains from the year before.

For more about Durham-based Book Harvest and its Books on Break program, visit [www.bookharvestnc.org](http://www.bookharvestnc.org).

**About Book Harvest:** Book Harvest provides books to Triangle children and families who need them. Growing up in homes that are rich with books helps children start kindergarten ready to learn, combat summer learning loss once they are in school, and fall in love with reading. Since 2011, children have harvested more than 600,000 books to take home and keep for their very own, forever.

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