

Ben Westlund
State Treasurer
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Contact: James Sinks
503-508-0737 (cell)
James.Sinks@state.or.us

Want to win some money? Treasurer Westlund reminds Oregon kids to finish reading by March 19

Children who complete 'Reading is an Investment' can win \$250 scholarships

SALEM – The end is near for this year’s edition of the popular “Reading is an Investment” program, but there’s still time for Oregon schoolchildren to enter and earn a chance at a \$250 college scholarship.

March 19 is the deadline for students to complete the required reading and submit entries through the Oregon State Treasury’s financial literacy program for elementary-aged youths. The program encourages kids to read and also to gain a better understanding of financial concepts, such as the value of saving and the peril of debt.

As part of the outreach effort, 726 school libraries from border-to-border received two donated books.

“Teaching kids about money and to be wary of debt is one of the smartest things we can do,” Treasurer Westlund said. “With this program, I hope we can help Oregon’s next generation to make wise decisions in an increasingly complicated financial world.”

It’s easy and free to participate. Information and entry materials are available through the interactive web portal at the Office of the State Treasurer, www.ost.state.or.us. Click on the “Reading is an Investment” link. Information also is available by calling the Office of the State Treasurer at 503-378-4329.

With the deadline looming, entries are starting to pour in to the Treasurer’s online system, with roughly 242 received Wednesday and Thursday. That brought the total as of Thursday to almost 800 children who have completed the program and submitted entries. Every Oregon child is eligible, either as part of a class project or by logging hours reading on their own at home.

The donated books are provided through a partnership with the Oregon College Savings Plan, the state-sponsored 529 plan that helps families save for college and job training. Students who track sufficient hours reading will be entered into a random drawing for one of 100 scholarships, worth \$250 apiece, from the Oregon College Savings Plan.

This year's donated books are "A Chair for my Mother," by Vera B. Williams, which illustrates the value of saving through the story of a family that sets aside money following a fire; and "Kids Guide to Money Cents," by Keltie Thomas, which allows readers to determine their "money personality" and even offers business startup advice.

The books were selected by a panel of teachers and librarians, and each book has been aligned state standards in Math, Language Arts, Social Sciences, the Arts, Career-Related Learning, Science and Health and developed activities for each grade level.

Participating students can read the donated books, plus others from an age-based recommended list, which is available from the Reading is an Investment website. Completed entries can be submitted on the website and are due by 5 p.m. on March 19.

The random drawing for the scholarships will be in April, with 20 winners chosen in each of the state's five Congressional districts.

The Oregon State Treasury protects public assets and saves Oregonians money through its investment, banking, and debt management functions. The office also promotes public outreach and education to help Oregonians learn strategies to save money, invest for college and make smart financial choices.

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