

Approved as written 2/27/08.

WRL Board of Trustees

**Minutes of Board Meeting of December 5, 2007
Theatre Stage, Williamsburg Library**

Attending Were: Board Members Sue Mellen, Mary Norment, Phil Serra, Jack Willis; Library Director John A. Moorman; Staff Members Noreen Bernstein, Carrie Binsfeld, Patrick Golden, Genevieve Owens, and Christine White. Absent were Board Members Michael Fox, Susan Geary, Tory Gussman, Sarah Houghland, and Jean Van Tol. Guest Ron Fairchild, Executive Director Center for Summer Learning, School of Education, Johns Hopkins University.

Call to Order: Chair Willis called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned: Mr. Willis closed the meeting at 3:33 p.m. due to the absence of a quorum. The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, January 23, 2008 on the Theatre Stage, Williamsburg Library.

Presentation Summer Learning Study:

In his opening remarks, Mr. Fairchild thanked the Williamsburg Regional Library for participating in the summer reading study during the summer of 2006 and Ms. Bernstein for her assistance. The study evaluated the efficacy of the summer reading program on a child's reading ability and attitude about reading. Mr. Fairchild provided a brief overview of the study, its findings, and implications. In addition, he briefly discussed other research and empirical studies of summer reading programs including a large study conducted in the 1970's.

The presentation highlighted various opportunities to reach the younger population, especially those in high poverty communities. These opportunities included expanding outreach programs and working with schools and government to utilize FaRMs (Free and Reduced Meals) in collaboration with outreach programs to reach those children who need the programs the most. Mr. Fairchild closed his presentation answering questions about follow-ups and expansions to the study.

Additional information attached - Press Release.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine White

Approved as written 2/27/08.

NEWS RELEASE

WILLIAMSBURG REGIONAL LIBRARY | www.wrl.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 18, 2007

MEDIA CONTACT

Patrick Golden | voice (757) 259-4071 | pgolden@wrl.org

JOHNS HOPKINS STUDY VERIFIES IMPACT OF SUMMER READING PROGRAM AT WILLIAMSBURG REGIONAL LIBRARY

Children who participated in the Williamsburg Regional Library's summer reading program are more likely to retain and possibly increase their reading skills according to a study conducted by the Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University. This was one of the findings presented by Center director Ron Fairchild at a recent meeting of the library's Board of Trustees.

The study, conducted in the summer of 2006, included 64 students, their parents and teachers from Mathew Whaley and James River Elementary Schools. All students were participants in the Williamsburg Regional Library's summer reading program. Students were tested in the spring and again in the fall, while surveys evaluating the children's attitudes toward reading, books and libraries were completed by students, parents and teachers.

According to Fairchild, retention of reading skills was notably higher among younger children who participated in summer reading when compared to their peers who didn't. "The findings from this evaluation appear to indicate that the effect is greater for younger children still acquiring basic reading skills," he said. "Testing results for participating students entering grade five showed some increase in post-test scores, but these results were less significant than those for students entering grade two" he reported.

Williamsburg Regional Library Director John A. Moorman said "the study also showed students who participated in the summer reading program exhibit a more positive attitude about reading, books and library visits."

"More than 3,000 children participate in Williamsburg Regional Library's summer reading program each year," said library Youth Services Director Noreen Bernstein, "which is about 36% of the eligible population for our service area." Library director Moorman noted that most Virginia libraries average 13% participation in summer reading programs. "The Williamsburg Regional Library summer reading program has been going on for more than 25 years, and is a staple of library programming," he said. Participants in the summer reading program maintain a log of books they read or listen to, make weekly visits with library staff to discuss these books and have the opportunity to participate in crafts and other activities conducted at the libraries.

Fairchild told the library board that the size of the study and the vagaries of standardized testing required the results to be viewed with caution, but suggested that the results show ways that libraries can reach students and help them maintain and enhance their reading skills during school breaks.

Williamsburg Regional Library consists of the James City County Library, Mobile Library Services and the Williamsburg Library and serves more than 70,000 people in the City of Williamsburg, James City County and portions of York County.

- 30 -

Editor's Note: A photo illustrating this story is available