(School Name) Students Participate in Financial Literacy Reading Program

(SCHOOL NAME) is participating in Reading is an Investment -- a program that promotes the importance of reading and teaching young children basic personal financial concepts. (School name) joins 125 other Vermont elementary schools in offering the program this year in an effort to increase the financial literacy of youth statewide. Reading is an Investment is a program developed 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.

"Financial literacy is important to Vermont's future," said Vermont State Treasurer Beth Pearce. "Taking the time to teach a child something about personal finance is an investment in their economic futures. We've observed considerable growth in student participation in our financial literacy programs. I think that points to an understanding by adults that passing on our knowledge and skills to the next generation is extremely important."

The Reading is an Investment program takes a two-pronged approach to promoting financial literacy — class or library instruction and personal reading. Each fall, participating elementary schools receive 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: ***The Pickle Patch Bathtub***, by Frances Kennedy; ***Isabel's Car Wash,*** by Sheila Bair; and ***Stock Market Pie,*** by J.M. Seymour.

More than 2,200 students completed reading logs and entered the drawing last year for the college savings accounts. Students winning college savings account were: Arnel Husrefovic, Chamberlin School; Sarah Boyden, Fayston Elementary School; Brooke Ziemba, Franklin Central School; Kayla Meegan, Johnson Elementary School; Faith Russin, Lowell Graded School; Taylor Miller, Mary Hogan Elementary School; Mary Ann Eastman, Mary Hogan Elementary School; Mariah Folsom, Rutland Town School; Maegan Winters, Sharon Elementary School; and Gabrielle Boutin, 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 TD Bank Charitable Foundation, the Windham Foundation and Comcast. Vermont Higher Education Investment Plan prizes are provided by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation.