



**PRESS RELEASE
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Senator Blumenthal Announced \$250,000 in Federal Funding to the Stamford Public Education Foundation and Reading is FUNDamental

STAMFORD, CT – August 26, 2022 – Community members gathered in the Stamford Government Center lobby yesterday morning as **Senator Richard Blumenthal** announced \$250,000 in federal funding for the **Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF)** and **Reading is FUNDamental (RIF)**. The press conference began with a warm welcome from **Mayor Caroline Simmons**, who introduced the senator. Remarks were made by SPEF CEO **Lindsay Wyman**, RIF CEO and President **Alicia Levi**, and **Dr. Tamu Lucero**, Stamford Public Schools Superintendent. "We are deeply grateful to Senators Blumenthal and Murphy for their leadership on behalf of this project and their work to include the funding," said Ms. Wyman. "It's pretty incredible, 36,000 books for 12,000 students, and digital resources for 7,700 students."

SPEF will use the funding to support book distributions and literacy activities for children in the Stamford area, providing three free books to 12,000 Pre-K through 5th-grade students. In addition, the funds will also help create a free digital library with 1,000 titles and to produce bookmarks, parent tip sheets, and other materials to supplement reading engagement. Each year, SPEF organizes free book giveaways throughout the city with its initiative, Books Across Stamford. Approximately 5,000 free books are distributed to students each year. This state funding will allow SPEF, in partnership with RIF, to more than double this amount, reaching more children and helping them build home libraries.

About SPEF: Founded in 1996, the mission of the Stamford Public Education Foundation is to elevate student success by delivering educational programs and solutions that promote equitable access to quality public education in Stamford. For further information, visit www.spefct.org.

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