



from the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
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SC students to be challenged to “Read Your Way to the Big Game”



Columbia – The SC Education Oversight Committee (EOC) today announced “Read Your Way to the Big Game,” a partnership with the athletic departments of both the University of South Carolina and Clemson University to motivate and incentivize all elementary and middle school students in South Carolina to read grade level texts.

The “Read Your Way to the Big Game” contest, which will begin in school year 2015-16, provides the opportunity for all elementary and middle school students who meet a six-book challenge to qualify for tickets to the Palmetto Bowl, the “big game” between the University of South Carolina and Clemson University football teams. Two students will be chosen at random to win two tickets each as well as pre-game passes to the historic match-up, which will take place at Williams Brice Stadium in Columbia on November 28, 2015. There will be two student winners; one for the University of South Carolina and one for Clemson University.

“The EOC is thrilled to partner with USC and Clemson on this program, which we hope will get children excited about accepting and completing the reading challenge and becoming life-long readers and learners,” said Melanie Barton, EOC Executive Director. “An early foundation in reading is one of the highest predictors for individual success, and student motivation is often increased when children are given the freedom to choose books that interest and excite them.

Schools, classroom teachers and school library media specialists will also have the opportunity to participate in next school year’s challenge. Two schools with at least 70 percent participation will be drawn at random to receive \$2,000 for their school libraries. Also, five participating teachers will be chosen, each winning \$500 for their classrooms. Finally, two teachers or school library media specialists who decorate bulletin boards, doors, or walls to promote the challenge will be entered to win \$500 each for their classrooms or libraries. Materials for the program will be mailed to schools at the beginning of the 2015-16 school year.

The SC Education Oversight Committee is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina’s education system.