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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release:

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Elementary and Middle School Reading Elections Start Tomorrow

Naples, FL – Beginning on Thursday, March 5, Cyndi Young, Education Coordinator for the Supervisor of Elections Office, will bring voting machines to elementary and middle schools to provide eligible kindergarten through the 8th grade students' the opportunity to cast a vote for their favorite book in the 2009 Sunshine State Young Readers Awards Program (SSYRA) and the Florida Children's Book Awards Program (FRA).

This will be the 7th year the Collier County Supervisor of Elections Office has partnered with elementary and middle schools across the county to conduct the SSYRA and FRA student elections.

The SSYRA Program is an annual statewide motivational reading program for students in grades 3 – 8. The program, cosponsored by the School Library Media Services Office of the Department of Education and the Florida Association for Media in Education, was designed to encourage students to read. Students who read at least three of the 15 selected books are eligible to vote for their favorite. At the close of the election, results are tallied and submitted to Tallahassee for inclusion in the statewide balloting process. Winning authors receive special recognition.

The FRA program encourages younger students to become enthusiastic about books. The winning FRA book is determined by votes from students who have heard or read some of the eight nominations. The winning author is honored at the annual FRA Conference.

On Election Day, some students serve as poll workers at their school by checking in voters, distributing ballots, and/or handing out 'I Voted' stickers.

Last year, over 4,000 students student’s participated by voting for their favorite book. This year, the Supervisor of Elections office has partnered with four new schools to conduct their elections.

On March 5 at Naples Park Elementary, the Supervisor of Elections office will begin conducting the 2009 elections for students at 19 elementary and middle schools. The elections scheduled to date follows. Please note that times are subject to change and some times have not yet been determined.

Mar 5 – 1:00 p.m.	Naples Park Elementary
Mar 6 – 9:30 a.m.	Pelican Marsh Elementary
Mar 12 – 9:30 a.m.	St. Elizabeth Seaton
Mar 13 – 9:30 a.m.	Calusa Park Elementary
Mar 17 – 3:00 p.m.	Oakridge Middle School
Mar 18 – 1:00 p.m.	Community School of Naples
Mar 19 – 1:00 p.m.	Corkscrew Elementary
Mar 20 – 1:00 p.m.	Lely Elementary
Mar 23 – 9:30 a.m.	Estates School
Mar 24 – 10:00 a.m.	Village Oak Elementary
Mar 25 – 9:30 a.m.	Sable Palm Elementary
Mar 26 – TBD	East Naples Middle
Mar 27 – TBD	Lake Park Elementary
Mar 30 – TBD	Manatee Elementary & Middle
Mar 31 – TBD	Seacrest County Day School
Apr 1 – TBD	Tommie Barfield Elementary
Apr 1 – TBD	Seagate Elementary
Apr 2 – TBD	Palmetto Ridge Elementary
Apr 3 – TBD	Laurel Oak Elementary

“We believe it’s important to involve students in the democratic process by familiarizing them with the ease of voting, what to expect on Election Day and how to cast a ballot like an adult in a real election,” commented Jennifer J. Edwards, Supervisor of Elections.

For more information, contact Cyndi Young, Education Coordinator at The Supervisor of Elections Office at (239) 252-8805.

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