



Contact: Sue Morgan
HCTA Communications
813-238-7902

For Immediate Release
May 29, 2012

Hillsborough Teachers Join with First Book and Community Supporters To Launch Partnership That Will Provide Free Books to Local Students

May 31 Events at Crestwood Elementary School Will Include Student Assemblies, Visits by Leaders of National Groups, and Reading by Award-Winning Children's Author

TAMPA—Leaders of organizations working together to get free books into the hands of Hillsborough County children will gather with students, teachers and staff, and community supporters at Crestwood Elementary School on Thursday, May 31, to present free books to kids there, discuss the new partnership, and join with an award-winning children's author to celebrate reading and literacy.

Every student at the school will receive a new free book that they selected with their teachers. The Hillsborough Classroom Teachers Association is partnering with First Book, a national nonprofit organization that has distributed more than 90 million new, high-quality books free to kids across the country. The First Book partnership with Hillsborough County teachers is one of several pilot projects being developed with the American Federation of Teachers and its affiliates across the country.

AFT Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson and First Book Executive Vice President Chandler Arnold will both be at Crestwood Thursday morning, along with children's author Erica S. Perl and local leaders. They will participate in two student assemblies and visit a fifth-grade classroom, where Perl will read from one of her books.

The day will begin with Perl telling students during morning announcements over the school's intercom system about the assemblies and the book distribution.

WHO: HCTA President Jean Clements, AFT Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson, First Book Executive Vice President Chandler Arnold, award-winning children’s author Erica S. Perl, Crestwood Elementary Principal Rosalind Daigneault, Crestwood Elementary reading coach Mary “Genna” Linkous, Crestwood PTA President Jacqueline Rodriguez, Leto High School Principal Victor Fernandez, and community supporters: Gary Cucchi, owner of Horace Mann Insurance; Jack Sardegna, of AXA Equitable; and Melissa Erickson, president of the Hillsborough PTA.

WHAT: Assemblies, book distribution, remarks on Hillsborough-First Book partnership, author reading.

WHERE: Crestwood Elementary School, 7824 North Manhattan Ave., Tampa, FL 33614

SCHEDULE: Thursday, May 31, 2012

7:45 a.m. - Morning announcement by author Erica S. Perl

8:15 a.m. - Second-grade assembly, including presentation of books

9:15 a.m. - Fourth-grade assembly, including presentation of books

10:15 a.m. - Reading by Erica S. Perl in fifth-grade classroom, from her book “When Life Gives You O.J.” Perl will sign a copy of the book for each student in the class.

###