



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Senator Sanders Gives Away 40,000 FREE Books with UFT and First Book

JAMES SANDERS JR. June 3, 2019



State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) was proud to team up with the United Federation of Teachers and First Book, along with dozens of volunteers, to give away 40,000 free books on June 1, 2019 at PS 160 – the Walter Francis Bishop School – in Jamaica.

State Senator James Sanders Jr. said: “Every child should have access to quality books. Reading stimulates the imagination and opens up new worlds. It improves vocabulary,

communication, writing and grammar skills. In our current technological age, too many of our young people are busy on their smartphones, playing video games or watching television. They need to acquaint themselves with the written word. In addition to the wonderful new things they can learn by reading, just holding a book and turning the pages is an important part of the literary experience. Once they close the back cover after finishing a book, they will feel a sense of pride and accomplishment. It will inspire them to choose another book, and then another, and the path to learning and growth will begin. I hope that it will be a journey that they will continue throughout their lives. I am an avid reader, myself, and it was a habit that I began in my youth.”

Volunteers and community leaders helped unload and sort the pallets of books, which arrived the evening before the event, and sorted them by title and age group – early childhood education, elementary school, middle school and high school. Each parent was allotted 20 books per family and each teacher was allotted 50 books. The books varied from fairy tales and action / adventure to science fiction and biographies.

Since 1992, First Book has distributed more than 185 million books and educational resources to programs and schools serving children from low-income communities in more than 30 countries. First Book currently reaches an average of 5 million children every year and supports more than one in three of the estimated 1.3 million classrooms and programs serving children in need.

"It's great to see so many children excited about reading," Sanders said. "It's not often that people get to walk away with carts, boxes and bags of free books. I am so thankful to the UFT, First Book, PS 160 and all of the volunteers for making this event possible."