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NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

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Commissioners Sign On to Library Card Challenge

Leonardtown, MD – At a joint meeting with the St. Mary's County Board of Education, the Commissioners of St. Mary's County pledged their commitment to the White House Library Card Challenge.

Part of the ConnectED Library initiative, the goal of the challenge is to ensure every K-12 student across St. Mary's County has a library card and knows how to use it to access learning resources available at the public libraries. The initiative calls upon library directors to work with their elected officials, school leaders and school librarians.

The St. Mary's County Library will introduce Kids Cards. Available to young people up to the age of 18, they allow up to 5 books to be checked out. A/V materials, such as DVDs, audiobooks, music discs, are not included. The cards allow access to all of the Library's online resources, including eBooks, music, movies and digital audiobooks and magazines.

Items which are overdue will not incur fines. Card holders who lose an item will not be charged for the item, however the number of items available to check out will be reduced.

Children may have this new type of card plus a regular library card. Because the Kids Cards are fine free and involve no cost, kids may sign up for them without parental consent.

"The Commissioners of St. Mary's County are proud to sign on to this challenge," said Commissioner President Randy Guy. "We're hopeful all students in the county take advantage and obtain a Kids Card and explore everything our wonderful libraries have to offer."

Karin Bailey, St. Mary's County Board of Education Chair, J. Scott Smith, St. Mary's County Public Schools Superintendent and Michael Blackwell, St. Mary's County Public Library director joined Commissioner President Guy in formally signing on to the challenge statement.

In signing the challenge, all parties pledge to strengthen partnerships to wider access of learning resources, begin to close the achievement gaps and build a foundation for sustained collaboration to improve educational outcomes for all students in the community.