FIFTH-GRADERS AT PUBLIC SCHOOL NO. 18 ENTER THEIR SPOOKY SAGAS IN NATIONAL CONTEST

ELA class will be published in a Young Writers USA anthology of short stories

*** Photos Attached: See end of release for captions. ***

PATERSON – While most people in February may be looking forward to Valentine’s Day, the fifth-graders in Tanya White’s English Language Arts (ELA) class have their minds on stories that have elements that are more closely associated with Halloween.

That’s because all 16 of the students in White’s class at Public School No. 18 have entered Young Writers USA’s Spooky Sagas contest. While there are prizes awarded when the contest’s top winners are announced in April, White is especially happy about the skills her students have developed through their participation in the contest.

“The students have embraced this opportunity to put their story writing skills to work,” said White. “Many of the students used descriptive language, and devices like imagery, settings, and suspense. We’re hopeful that we’ll do well in the contest, but I’m very glad to see how enthusiastic the students have been to write their scary stories.”

“It’s really great to see our young writers in Ms. White’s ELA classes putting their imaginations to work in these stories,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. “I’m very impressed that these fifth-graders have committed themselves to writing their scary stories. I wish them luck in the contest, and I hope that our students are very proud of their accomplishments no matter what the outcome of the contest may be.”

The students’ stories are “mini-sagas,” which are described by youngwritersusa.com as stories that are 100 words or less. Some of the titles of the students’ stories – *The Haunting of Hitch House* and *The Figure In The Dark*, to name a couple – were reminiscent of those penned by masters of horror like Edgar Allen Poe and Shirley Jackson.

All of the students’ works will be included in an anthology of stories published by Young Writers USA as well as memorialized in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

Caption for photos: Ms. White and her fifth grade “Spooky Sagas” writers at Public School No. 18.

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