This time of year is often one when families like to share the joy of reading. We’d like to help share that joy by offering up a list of notable recent books written for young people. The list includes a variety of genres, topics, and cultures. So whether you know a history fan, a lover of graphic novels, a sports fanatic, or a person who embraces magic and fantasy, we hope you’ll find something on the list worthy of sharing.

Lynn & Carol
Catlin Gabel MS Library

*All's Faire in Middle School* by Victoria Jamieson.
The Newbery Honor-winning author of Roller Girl is back with a heartwarming graphic novel about starting middle school, surviving your embarrassing family, and the Renaissance Faire. Eleven-year-old Imogene has grown up with two parents working at the Renaissance Faire, and she’s eager to begin her own training as a squire. First, though, she’ll need to prove her bravery. Luckily she has just the quest in mind--she’ll go to public school after a life of being homeschooled! As she did in Roller Girl, Victoria Jamieson perfectly--and authentically--captures the bittersweetness of middle school life with humor, warmth, and understanding.

*All the Crooked Saints* by Maggie Stiefvater.
This is a gripping tale of darkness, miracles, and family. Here is a thing everyone wants: a miracle. Here is a thing everyone fears: What it takes to get one. Any visitor to Bicho Raro, Colorado is likely to find a landscape of dark saints, forbidden love, scientific dreams, miracle-mad owls, estranged affections, one or two orphans, and a sky full of watchful desert stars. At the heart of this place you will find the Soria family, who all have the ability to perform unusual miracles. And at the heart of this family are three cousins longing to change its future: Beatriz, the girl without feelings, who wants only to be free to examine her thoughts; Daniel, the Saint of Bicho Raro, who performs miracles for everyone but himself; and Joaquin, who spends his nights running a renegade radio station under the name Diablo Diablo. They are all looking for a miracle. But the miracles of Bicho Raro are never quite what you expect.

*Clayton Byrd Goes Underground* by Rita Williams-Garcia.
Clayton feels most alive when he's with his grandfather, Cool Papa Byrd, and the band of Bluesmen--he can't wait to join them, just as soon as he has a blues song of his own. But then the unthinkable happens. Cool Papa Byrd dies, and Clayton's mother forbids Clayton from playing the blues. And Clayton knows that's no way to live. Armed with his grandfather's brown porkpie hat and his harmonica, he runs away from home in search of the Bluesmen, hoping he can join them on the road. But on the journey that takes him through the New York City subways and to Washington Square Park, Clayton learns some things that surprise him.
Creative Pep Rally by Andy J. Miller.
Every artist needs a little pep talk now and then. An inspiring tool and beautiful art book in one, Creative Pep Talk offers illustrated words of wisdom from 50 of today's leading creative professionals. With full-color, typographic prints and explanatory statements from a host of creative luminaries--including Aaron James Drapin, Oliver Jeffers, Lisa Congdon, Mike Perry, and many others--this volume encourages artists to stay excited, experiment boldly, and conquer fear. "Create curiosity," "Learn to say no," and "If you can't be good, be different" are just a few of the motivational maxims in this visually rich collection that's perfect for students, designers, artists, and creatives at any stage in their careers.

Diego and the Rangers of the Vastlantic by Armand Baltazar (Illustrator).
You've never seen Earth like this before: continents reshaped, oceans re-formed, cities rebuilt, and mountains sculpted anew. Dinosaurs roam the plains alongside herds of buffalo, and giant robots navigate the same waters as steam-powered ships. This is the world Diego Ribera was born into. The past, present, and future coexisting together. In New Chicago, Diego's middle school hallways buzz with kids from all eras of history and from cultures all over the world. The pieces do not always fit together neatly, but this is the world he loves. There are those, however, who do not share his affection. On his thirteenth birthday, Diego learns of a special gift he has within, a secret that is part of something much bigger--something he cannot understand. When his father, New Chicago's top engineer, is taken by the Aeternum, Diego must rescue him and prevent this evil group from disrupting the fragile peace humanity has forged.

Dragonwatch by Brandon Mull.
In the long-awaited sequel to Fablehaven, the dragons who have been kept at the dragon sanctuaries no longer consider them safe havens, but prisons and they want their freedom. The dragons are no longer our allies.... In the hidden dragon sanctuary of Wyrmroost, Celebrant the Just, King of the Dragons, plots his revenge. He has long seen the sanctuaries as prisons, and he wants nothing more than to overthrow his captors and return the world to the Age of Dragons, when he and his kind ruled and reigned without borders. The time has come to break free and reclaim his power. No one person is capable of stopping Celebrant and his dragon horde. It will take the ancient order of Dragonwatch to gather again if there is any chance of saving the world from destruction. In ancient times, Dragonwatch was a group of wizards, enchantresses, dragon slayers, and others who originally confined the majority of dragons into sanctuaries. But nearly all of the original Dragonwatch members are gone, and so the wizard Agad reaches out to Grandpa Sorenson for help. As Kendra and Seth confront this new danger, they must draw upon all their skills, talents, and knowledge as only they have the ability to function together as a powerful dragon tamer. Together they must battle against forces with superior supernatural powers and breathtaking magical
abilities. How will the epic dragon showdown end? Will dragons overthrow humans and change the world as we know it?

*Flying Lessons and Other Stories* edited by Ellen Oh.

Whether it is basketball dreams, family fiascos, first crushes, or new neighborhoods, this bold anthology--written by the best children's authors--celebrates the uniqueness and universality in all of us. In a partnership with We Need Diverse Books, industry giants Kwame Alexander, Soman Chainani, Matt de la Peña, Tim Federle, Grace Lin, Meg Medina, Walter Dean Myers, Tim Tingle, and Jacqueline Woodson join newcomer Kelly J. Baptist in a story collection that is as humorous as it is heartfelt. This impressive group of authors has earned among them every major award in children's publishing and popularity as New York Times best sellers. From these distinguished authors come ten distinct and vibrant stories.

*I Believe in a Thing Called Love* by Maurene Goo.

Desi Lee believes anything is possible if you have a plan. That's how she became student body president. Varsity soccer star. And it's how she'll get into Stanford. But she's never had a boyfriend. In fact, she's a disaster at romance, a clumsy, stammering humiliation magnet whose botched attempts at flirting have become legendary with her friends. So when the hottest human specimen to have ever lived walks into her life one day, Desi finds guidance in the Korean dramas her father has been obsessively watching for years--where the hapless heroine always seems to end up in the arms of her true love by episode ten. It's a simple formula, and Desi is a quick study. Armed with her "K Drama Steps to True Love," Desi goes after the moody, elusive artist Luca Drakos--and boat rescues, love triangles, and staged car crashes ensue. But when the fun and games turn to true feels, Desi finds out that real love is about way more than just drama.

*The Book of Dust* by Philip Pullman.

Malcolm Polstead is the kind of boy who notices everything but is not much noticed himself. And so perhaps it was inevitable that he would become a spy.... Malcolm’s parents run an inn called the Trout, on the banks of the river Thames, and all of Oxford passes through its doors. Malcolm and his daemon, Asta, routinely overhear news and gossip, and the occasional scandal, but during a winter of unceasing rain, Malcolm catches wind of something new: intrigue. He finds a secret message inquiring about a dangerous substance called Dust--and the spy it was intended for finds him. When she asks Malcolm to keep his eyes open, he sees suspicious characters everywhere: the explorer Lord Asriel, clearly on the run; enforcement agents from the Magisterium; a gyptian named Coram with warnings just for Malcolm; and a beautiful woman with an evil monkey for a daemon. All are asking about the same thing: a girl--just a baby--named Lyra. Lyra is the kind of person who draws people in like magnets. And Malcolm will brave any danger, and make shocking sacrifices, to bring her safely through the storm.
Patina by Jason Reynolds.
Patina, or Patty, runs like a flash. She runs for many reasons--to escape the taunts from the kids at the fancy-schmancy new school she's been sent to since she and her little sister had to stop living with their mom. She runs from the reason WHY she's not able to live with her "real" mom any more: her mom has The Sugar, and Patty is terrified that the disease that took her mom's legs will one day take her away forever. So Patty's also running for her mom, who can't. As her stress builds up, it's building up a pretty bad attitude as well. Coach won't tolerate bad attitude. And now he wants Patty to run relay...where you have to depend on other people? How's she going to do THAT?

The Playbook by Kwame Alexander.
A New York Times Bestseller! You gotta know the rules to play the game. Ball is life. Take it to the hoop. Soar. What can we imagine for our lives? What if we were the star players, moving and grooving through the game of life? What if we had our own rules of the game to help us get what we want, what we aspire to, what will enrich our lives? Illustrated with photographs by Thai Neave, The Playbook is intended to provide inspiration on the court of life. Each rule contains wisdom from inspiring athletes and role models such as Nelson Mandela, Serena Williams, LeBron James, Carli Lloyd, Steph Curry and Michelle Obama. Kwame Alexander also provides his own poetic and uplifting words, as he shares stories of overcoming obstacles and winning games in this motivational and inspirational book just right for graduates of any age and anyone needing a little encouragement.

Save Me a Seat by Sarah Weeks, Gita Varadarajan.
Two boys - one white, one Indian American - gain strength from each other from afar as they struggle to navigate middle school, family, and friendships. Two boys - one white, one Indian American - gain strength from each other from afar as they struggle to navigate middle school, family, and friendships. Joe and Ravi might be from very different places, but they're both stuck in the same place: SCHOOL. Joe's lived in the same town all his life, and was doing just fine until his best friends moved away and left him on his own. Ravi's family just moved to America from India, and he's finding it pretty hard to figure out where he fits in. Joe and Ravi don't think they have anything in common -but soon enough they have a common enemy (the biggest bully in their class) and a common mission: to take control of their lives over the course of a single crazy week.

Undefeated by Steve Sheinkin.
Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team is an astonishing underdog sports story--and more. It's an unflinching look at the U.S. government's violent persecution of Native Americans and the school that was designed to erase Indian cultures. Expertly told by three-time National Book Award finalist Steve Sheinkin,
it's the story of a group of young men who came together at that school, the overwhelming obstacles they faced both on and off the field, and their absolute refusal to accept defeat. Jim Thorpe: Super athlete, Olympic gold medalist, Native American Pop Warner: Indomitable coach, football mastermind, Ivy League grad. Before these men became legends, they met in 1907 at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, where they forged one of the winningest teams in American football history. Called "the team that invented football," they took on the best opponents of their day, defeating much more privileged schools such as Harvard and the Army in a series of breathtakingly close calls, genius plays, and bone-crushing hard work.

_The Whiz Mob and the Grenadine Kid_ by Colin Meloy.

From the creators of the New York Times bestselling Wildwood Chronicles comes an original, humorous, and fast-paced middle grade novel about a band of child pickpockets--imagine The Invention of Hugo Cabret meets Oliver Twist. It is an ordinary Tuesday morning in April when bored, lonely Charlie Fisher witnesses something incredible. Right before his eyes, in a busy square in Marseille, a group of pickpockets pulls off an amazing robbery. As the young bandits appear to melt into the crowd, Charlie realizes with a start that he himself was one of their marks. Yet Charlie is less alarmed than intrigued. This is the most thrilling thing that's happened to him since he came to France with his father, an American diplomat. So instead of reporting the thieves, Charlie defends one of their cannons, Amir, to the police, under one condition: he teach Charlie the tricks of the trade. What starts off as a lesson on pinches, kicks, and chumps soon turns into an invitation for Charlie to join the secret world of the whiz mob, an international band of child thieves who trained at the mysterious School of Seven Bells. The whiz mob are independent and incredibly skilled and make their own way in the world--they are everything Charlie yearns to be. But what at first seemed like a (relatively) harmless new pastime draws him into a dangerous adventure with global stakes greater than he could have ever imagined.