



## Bridgeport Public Schools

*For Immediate Release*

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### **Westport Country Playhouse Artistic Director Tazewell Thompson to Read at Cesar Batalla School**

*Thompson to read to 400 students on Monday, Oct. 22*

**Bridgeport, CT – October 19, 2007** – Tazewell Thompson, Artistic Director of the Westport Country Playhouse, will visit fourth and fifth grade students at Cesar A. Batalla School on Monday, Oct. 22 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Thompson will read Virginia Hamilton’s book *The People Can Fly* to an audience of 400 students.

“Reading has always been, and continues to be, my favorite thing to do. Outside of the theatre, and relationships and breathing, reading is absolutely a necessary part of my life,” Thompson said. “It is my pleasure, my responsibility, to share, pass and carry on my great love and passion for books and the adventurous world of reading with others, especially children.”

Thompson became Artistic Director of Westport Country Playhouse in January of 2006. In his first season, he directed *On the Verge* in a co-production with Arena Stage; the world premiere of the musical revue *Jam & Spice: The Music of Kurt Weill*; his own play *Constant Star*; and his song-filled adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, which will return in 2007. Previously at the Playhouse, he directed *The Old Settler* and *The Immigrant*, and as an actor he appeared in *Checking Out* (1976). This season he directed *Mary’s Wedding* and the world premiere of playwright-in-residence David Wiltse’s *Sedition*.

Jim Ford, a Fairfield resident and School Volunteer Association (SVA) volunteer reader at Cesar Batalla for the past eight years, was the impetus behind Thompson's invitation to the school. Ford is a retiree who seeks to encourage other retirees and businessmen to join the ranks of volunteers sharing their talents and experiences with Bridgeport's public school children. Thompson's visit to Cesar Batalla School will be a prelude to the SVA Read Aloud Day, which will be held on Wed., Oct. 24.

*The mission of the Bridgeport Public Schools and its supporting community is to graduate all students "college ready" and prepared to succeed in life. For more information about Bridgeport Public Schools visit the website at [www.bridgeportedu.com](http://www.bridgeportedu.com).*

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