



# The Parent Post

Parent Involvement, Title I

Volume VIII, Issue 4

Welcome to The Parent Post! This newsletter is published four times per year and sent home with students being served with Title I funds at Douglas County schools. These schools include Annette Winn Elementary, Beulah Elementary, Bright Star Elementary, Burnett Elementary, Eastside Elementary, Factory Shoals Elementary, Lithia Springs Elementary, North Douglas Elementary, Stewart Middle, Sweetwater Elementary, Turner Middle and Youth Villages - Inner Harbour Campus. For more information, please contact Patti Sullivan at (770) 651-2118 or email [patti.sullivan@douglas.k12.ga.us](mailto:patti.sullivan@douglas.k12.ga.us)

## Tips for Keeping Your Child Reading this Summer

By Kanesha Howard, Instructional Lead Teacher, Bright Star Elementary School

Summer is quickly approaching and most students are counting down the days to summer fun. In those days of fun, include reading. Research shows that students who do not read during the summer, suffer from summer loss. Students return to school with less knowledge than they ended the year. We do not want this happening to our students. Below, you will find some ways to encourage your child to read in an entertaining way.

- Set an example by reading yourself - Whether you are reading the newspaper, a magazine, or a book, set some time aside to read and model to your child.
- Visit the local library – The local library is the best place to find books of all topics. Most libraries have a summer reading program going on where students can read to earn prizes for FREE!
- Set a goal – Set a goal at the beginning of summer of how many books your child thinks he or she can read by the end of summer. Post the goal somewhere in your home as a reminder to keep reading.
- MyOn- Students will still have access to MyOn.com throughout the summer. If you are unsure of your child's login, ask the teacher. Use this web based program to encourage reading.
- Books of Interest – Allow your child to read books of interest. Your son may be interested in snakes, cars, and electric cars. Your daughter may be interested in animals, how things work, and princesses. Allow them to read books that may interest them and not something that is just required for school. Students are more likely to finish a book that they are interested in reading.
- Read Together – Set aside some time to read a book together. Each person taking a turn reading a page and discussing it can make reading fun and will be time well spent.
- Books Based on Movies – Read a book such as *Charlotte's Web* or *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and then watch the movie. Discuss how the movie and book were alike and different.
- Board Games – Play board games that encourage reading such as Boggle and Clue. Clue not only involves reading but increases reasoning skills and vocabulary.
- Don't limit reading to books – Allow your child to read magazines, newspaper articles, even the side of cereal boxes. Reading informational text, such as the newspaper, is something parents also should work on including during reading time.
- Research a New Place or Topic – Think of a faraway place you and your child would like to visit. Read and research information about the place such as the food, temperature, language, currency, and more. Maybe you are interested in learning about how to create an electric motor with things around the house. Learning about new things can make reading fun.

Make summer reading a priority in your household. Encourage everyone to take fifteen minutes a day to read. Reading not only increases your reading comprehension, it helps with reading fluency, vocabulary, and many other skills your child uses daily in a classroom. Help your child make summer gains not summer losses this year!

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# “School’s Out for Summer!”

By Dr. Carol Lobban, Instructional Lead Teacher, Turner Middle School

Although students of Douglas County will go off for summer break on May 26, parents are encouraged to keep their students’ minds active and engaged throughout this time because if students’ brains are not actively engaged in learning, the phenomenon known as learning loss will occur.

Learning loss occurs when students do not read, write, or use their critical reasoning skills throughout their summer vacation. During summer break the rhythm of instruction, which the student is accustomed is broken, so students are inclined to forget information previously learned; on their return to school in the fall, their teachers will be required at the beginning of the new school year to spend a considerable amount of time reviewing information taught the previous year. This loss of knowledge becomes even greater among students with special needs and those whose primary language at home is not English. The English skills of many of these English Language Learners (ELL) may experience some set back because they may not have adequate opportunities to practice their writing and speaking skills in English during their summer break (Cooper 2003).

## **Fun Ways to Prevent Summer Learning Loss**

Alas! All is not lost. There are several things that we can do to prevent this learning slide and propel students toward higher achievement. As parents we can create opportunities for our students to become meaningfully engaged in learning programs and activities that will provide academic assistance, stimulate learning opportunities, and discovery for them.

### **Take a Virtual Tour**

Parents and high schoolers can take a virtual college tour together of universities and colleges that the high schooler may have an interest in. Without leaving the comfort of their home, students can get a feel for a college using sites such as ecampusTours, YourCampus 360, and YouTubeEDu from the convenience of their couch. These free sites provide 360 degree virtual tours of college campuses, provide prospective students with insights and images of the school by including photo galleries and blogs posted by former and current students, provide answers about courses that are offered, dining hall options, and extra-curricular activities.

### **Visit the Public Library**

The public library is a good source for providing learning activities for students. Students will have opportunities to check out books and other materials. In addition to reading to each other, you and your student may also record stories that you have created for one another. These may be played back as bedtime stories or by a babysitter when parents are out. Parents can involve their students in literacy activities such as reading an article from a magazine and then engaging in discussions on these articles.

### **Go on a Field Trip**

Field trips also provide opportunities for students to learn. There are several museums in Atlanta such as Fern Bank, High Museum of Art, Museum of Design Atlanta, and Jimmy Carter Library and Museum, which will provide students with great learning opportunities. However, if leaving the county is prohibitive, the Douglas County Museum of History and Art will be a viable alternative. The public libraries in Douglas County are also inexpensive venues for planned field trips for the family. Each of the three Douglas County Libraries will host a range of summer programs, for students of all ages and grade levels. These will include poetry reading, magicians, storytelling, movie matinee etc. After engaging in these activities parents and students can hold discussions about their field trips, create a comic book about their trip, draw pictures, write paragraphs, create a story, write a play and act it out during family night.

### **Make learning a family affair**

Math facts, spelling, and other procedural skills are very susceptible to being forgotten if they are not practiced; therefore including their use in family game nights is essential. Parents and their students could create their own board game using math facts, or compete to see who can repeat a specific time multiplication fact faster and without error. Some ideas include “ball toss” where a ball is tossed to each child and the parent asks a question about a multiplication fact, the child to whom the ball is tossed responds and quickly throws the ball back to the parent. Parents could also teach about measurements and fractions by involving their students in cooking activities. Parents could have students measure and convert weights, temperature etc. while they cook a meal together. Another activity could include reading a novel, creating a family book club, and then the family watches the movie to the book. Parents and students could then compare and contrast the movie version with the novel, citing evidence from either novel or movie to support the similarities or differences.

The majority of the multi-syllabic words in the English language are made up of prefixes and suffixes added to a base word. A list of these and their meanings can be found in a dictionary or online. Use these to create flash cards by putting the prefix,

affix on one side and the meaning on the other and then have your student guess the meaning. You could also have your student use these prefixes or suffixes to identify new vocabulary words and their meanings. Other vocabulary games that could be considered adding to the family game night include Taboo, Scrabble, and crossword puzzles. These practices will develop students' fact retaining and inference making skills.

### **Target specific skills**

Summer is the perfect time to have students work on the subject areas in which they experienced the most challenge during the academic year. Parents should set aside 10 to 30 minutes a day to assist their students on challenge areas. Make use of free resources available online, as well as, teacher supply stores. These will provide you with an assortment of learning materials, workbooks, and games to reinforce or strengthen students' skills. Parents could assist their students to work on material that offer self-quizzes and stories that are of high interest to the student.

### **Play school with your children.**

During the summer break parents can have their students work on two to three math problems daily. This could take the form of a daily math challenge, or the parent and the student could take turns in being the teacher, while working with other students or by themselves. These daily math activities could include workbooks, chalkboard, colorful chalk etc.

### **Write creatively**

Your students' written language skills can be enhanced through the creative writing process. Creative writing is not only fun, but it also builds their imagination. Each week you could have your student write a creative paragraph. You can assist your student by providing a topic on which to write. You could also enhance this activity by having your student use a thesaurus to change any simple over used words they have included in their writing to more vibrant and exiting words. Afterwards depending on the age levels, parents and students could play dress up and act out some of these creative sketches.

### **Prepare your student for the coming academic year**

Summer is the best time to have your students review their grades from the previous year and begin to work on the concepts that will be covered in the coming year. You could have your student do weekly reviews or pre-views of two to four lessons weekly. By visiting the school supply stores such as School Box, you can purchase workbooks related to students' upcoming grade level; many of these books have an answer key which parents will find helpful. The internet is another valuable tool to assist in this area. By going to Google and typing in a particular concept, parents will find notes and questions on their students' skill and grade level. Parents may also implement a reward system for their student for completion of these activities.

The above mentioned tips are many ways that you can strengthen your students' skills and prevent summer learning loss. Apart from the fun which can be derived from these activities, these activities may also serve to ignite your students passion for learning in the upcoming year as they will be more capable of meeting future academic challenges, which in turn will build their self-esteem and efficacy.

### References

Cooper, H., (2003). Summer learning loss: The problems and some solutions. Eric Publications, Washington, D.C.  
Cooper, H., Charlton, K., Valentine, J. C., & Muhlenbruck, L. (2000). Making the most of summer school: A meta-analytic and narrative review. MONOGRAPHS OF THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT, 65(1), 1-118. EJ 630 022.



# Your Input is Needed!

The Douglas County School System Title I Department is in the process of reviewing and revising the district's Parent and Family Engagement Policy. This policy will establish the district's expectations for parent and family engagement and how the district will carry out the federal and state parent and family engagement requirements. Parent input into the revision of this policy is requested and required. To review the draft version of the policy and to provide input, please scan the QR code or follow the link.

<https://goo.gl/Nr2GyA>



# Douglas County School System Food Service Department

## Serving No Cost Meals to the Community

The Douglas County School System Food Service Department is excited to announce details for their 2017 Summer Meal Program. This amazing program began in 2007 and provides nutritious meals to children who may not otherwise have access to such meals. School Nutrition serves summer meals at designated locations throughout the county. Breakfast includes an entree, 100% fruit juice and low-fat milk, and lunch includes a choice of an entree, vegetable, fresh fruit and low-fat milk. New regulations require that a student must select a fruit or vegetable daily when selecting options for lunch. The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 requires that the student be served a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. The new meal pattern standards include dark green leafy, red/orange, legume, and starchy vegetables offered throughout the week.

Any child under the age of 18, regardless of income status or enrollment in a summer school program, may eat breakfast and lunch at no cost. Adults are also welcome to eat but will be charged the adult price for breakfast is \$1.65 and the price for lunch is \$3.50 for guests and \$3.25 for staff. Exact change is appreciated.

The Seamless Summer Feeding Program is an extension of the National School Lunch Program. The USDA began the summer feeding program in an effort to combat childhood hunger. The summer feeding program provides an opportunity for children to receive a healthy meal when school is not in session. The summer feeding program is a great opportunity for families of all income brackets. Getting a lunch and breakfast at no cost for their children will save time and money for all parents.

The dates and times for the 2017 Summer Meal Program are listed below. The menu will be posted on the Douglas County School System website later in May. All of the meals must be consumed on site. If you would like more information, please contact Danielle Freeman at 770-651-2300 or visit the School Nutrition Department section of the Douglas County School System website.

## Summer Feeding Locations 2017

School	Dates	Days	Breakfast Times	Lunch Times
Arbor Station Elementary	June 5-June 22	Mon - Thur	7:30-8:00	11:40-12:00
Beulah Elementary	June 5-June 29	Mon - Thur	7:30-8:00	11:40-12:00
Bill Arp Elementary	June 5-June 16	Mon - Fri	8:10-8:30	TBD
Burnett Elementary	June 5-June 29	Mon - Thur	7:30-8:00	11:40-12:00
Factory Shoals Elementary	June 5-June 29	Mon - Thur	7:30-8:00	11:40-12:00
Chapel Hill Middle	June 5-June 22	Mon - Thur	8:00-8:30	12:10 - 12:30
Turner Middle	June 5-June 22	Mon - Thur	8:00-8:30	12:10 - 12:30
Douglas County High	June 5-July 14	Mon - Fri	8:10-8:30	12:10 - 12:30
Lithia Springs High	June 5-June 22	Mon - Thur	8:10-8:30	12:10 - 12:30
New Manchester High	June 5-June 22	Mon - Thur	8:10-8:30	12:10 - 12:30