



Issaquah School District community newsletter | July 2011 | Vol. 16 No. 3 | Learning locally, competing globally | www.issaquah.wednet.edu



Focus on summer learning

Activities so fun, kids won't even know they're educational!

Just because school's out does not mean students' brains are likewise on break—in fact, summertime is the perfect opportunity for learning. Without the formal structure of the classroom, students have some freedom to explore their world and put their knowledge to everyday, relevant use. To help jumpstart that process, Issaquah School District literacy, math, and fitness experts have compiled tips and resources for this edition of Focus. Whether families are sunbathing on the beach or stuck inside on a rainy day, there's always a link to learning!

Literacy

Something wonderful can happen during the summer months—students might just discover they really like to read, according to Emilie Hard, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Services. With freedom to choose whatever book they want, to go at a comfortable pace, and to have no responsibility for the content other than enjoyment, young readers feel empowered. To that end, here are the District literary specialists' summertime book recommendations sure to kindle or fuel students' passion for prose:

Kindergarten: "The Best Pet Ever" by Victoria Roberts, "A Bedtime for Bear" by Bonny Becker, "I Broke My Trunk" by Mo Willems

First grade: "The Elephant & Piggie" series by Mo Willems, "The Fly Guy" series by Tedd Arnold, "The Magic Tree House" series by Mary Pope Osborne

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Summer Learning

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Second grade: “Mercy Watson” collection by Kate DiCamillo, “The Diary of a Wimpy Kid” series by Jeff Kinney, “Geronimo Stilton” series by Geronimo Stilton

Third grade: “There’s a Boy in the Girl’s Bathroom” by Louis Sachar, “Frindle” by Andrew Clements, “Because of Winn-Dixie” by Kate DiCamillo, “Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing” by Judy Blume

Fourth grade: “Skeleton Creek” by Patrick Carman, “The Penderwicks” by Jeanne Birdsall, “Chasing Vermeer” by Blue Balliett

Fifth grade: “The Phantom Tollboth” by Norton Juster, “The Canning Season” by Polly Horvath, “The Tiger Rising” by Kate DiCamillo

Middle School: “Reflections on a Gift of a Watermelon Pickle” by Stephen Dunning, “Dogsong” by Gary Paulsen, “Where the Red Fern Grows” by Wilson Rawls, “Homecoming” by Cynthia Voigt, “Child of the Owl” by Laurence Yep, “Moon Over Manifest” by Clare Vanderpool, “Chains: Seeds of America” by Laurie Halse Anderson, “Found: The Missing Book 1” by Margaret Peterson Haddix, “The Gollywhopper Games” by Jody Feldman, “11 Birthdays” by Wendy Mass

High School: “Ship Breaker” by Paolo Bacigalupi, “Lock and Key” by Sarah Dessen, “The Hunger Games” by Suzanne Collins, “I am Number Four” by Pittacus Lore

Math

It all adds up—summertime vacations or hanging-around-the-house activities are rife with number connections, according to District math experts Leslie Nielsen and Krista Guenser. The best part of exploring mathematics outside the classroom is that students begin to see how the subject is not theoretical, but relevant to daily life. They suggest several fun math games over break:

Road-trip math: Use the distance signs, mile markers, and speed limits on the freeway to estimate distances and make up word problems, such as:

1. *If we are driving about 60 mph but have stopped for snacks and stretch breaks, what is our real average rate of speed?*

2. *If we keep going at an average rate of 50 mph, when will we be at our destination?*

Cooking Math: Use summer cooking projects as a chance to get familiar with fractions and time calculations:

1. *If a recipe makes a dozen brownies with 2/3 cup of sugar, how many cups of sugar for 36 brownies?*

2. *You want to make 12 popsicles and the recipe calls for 3 cups of orange juice, but you only have 2 cups—how many popsicles can you make?*

3. *If it takes 20 minutes to bake each batch of cookies, how long will it take to bake four batches?*

Construction math: Use kids’ love of building with scraps of wood, cardboard, and other materials to develop their sense of geometry.

Help your child build a paddlewheel boat and discuss the measurements and decisions you make as you go: <http://tinyurl.com/paddleboatgeometry>.

Build a stage for puppet shows complete with curtains and puppets. Have your child draw out the design with measurements before beginning so that it will all turn out just right! Hint: if you are running the saw, have your child “order” lengths of the pieces of wood in inches or centimeters. A few “orders” that come out too long or too short can increase accuracy of future measurements.

Beach Math: Look for patterns and symmetry in shells and sea life! Make picture-book drawings and classify what you find.

Draw imaginary sea creatures that have similar patterns or symmetries. Find multiple shells or stones and create your own patterns.

Take measuring cups and spoons to the beach (or sandbox) and experiment with relationships between the volumes and talk about them or represent them as math equations.

For example, if you experiment and find that it takes 6 scoops with a 2/3 cup measuring cup to fill a 4-cup container, you can represent that with $4 \div 2/3 = 6$. Make predictions and discuss different ways to figure out the problem before trying.

Math sites and resources for exploration: *The Math Forum*—problems and puzzles for all grade levels and Ask Dr. Math: www.mathforum.org

Figure This—a series of fun and engaging high-quality math challenges: www.figurethis.org

The Issaquah School District math website: www.issaquah.wednet.edu/academics/core/math/

Health and fitness

With a little imagination, there will be no excuse for the dreaded “I’m bored!” summer mantra. Individually or in groups, this is the time for students to get outside and gain lifelong fitness habits. The Surgeon General recommends at least 60 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most days for children. Luckily, our Puget Sound region offers an abundance of fun fitness alternatives—even when it’s raining—that require little skill level and few resources, according to District P.E. experts Kris Coleman and Tracy Schellberg. So what are you waiting for—get out there!

Individual or with a friend: Try geocaching—this real-world outdoor treasure hunting game requires players to use GPS-enabled devices to discover a hidden container. Learn more and download a phone app at: <http://www.geocaching.com>.

Take a bike ride on many of the local bike trails and paths: www.kingcounty.gov/transportation/kcdot/Roads/Bicycling.aspx.

Challenge yourself—see how many times in a row you can hit a tennis ball against a wall, make a basket, or keep a soccer ball in the air with your feet.

Hopscotch, jump rope, run through the sprinkler, track your steps around the neighborhood with a pedometer, have a water balloon contest, play ping pong or badminton, try out new cheer moves, or toss a baseball around.

Group: Go for a hike: <http://tinyurl.com/Hikelssaquah>

Organize a big game of hide and seek or a skateboard contest. Hold a dance with your friends in the garage.

Don’t forget the old favorites: basketball, baseball, volleyball, soccer ...

Rainy day: Practice online yoga: www.myyogaonline.com/videos/

Time yourself to see how long it takes to touch every wall in the house.

Play balloon volleyball.

Do one pushup, sit-up, or jumping jack every time you hear a certain word on television (“Bieber”?).

Set up a scavenger hunt.

See how long you can balance on one foot, then the other, then while holding different objects.



Unique paths to their diplomas

Congratulations to the 1,105 graduates in the class of 2011 who accepted their diplomas in June. A bright and unlimited future awaits, thanks to their hard work and dedication from kindergarten (hey, scissor skills are a stretch!) through senior year. While every graduate has a unique story of perseverance and inspiration, here is just a brief snapshot of their various journeys:

Josue Lopez, Skyline



When Josue Lopez arrived in the Issaquah School District as a freshman with gaping academic holes, the only marks he was increasing on his permanent record were in the discipline

category. A lifetime of moving back and forth between Mexico and Texas with his single mom had left him unmoored as he once again had to start over in a new community with

nothing to his name. But then something happened to turn around Josue's life forever...

Ribicca Mamuye, Liberty



Every year for over a decade, Ribicca's family members entered their names into a national lottery in their native Ethiopia hoping to "win" one of the few spots to emigrate to

America. When it finally happened, Ribicca had a culture shock discovering things were much different here than expected. She seized the opportunity to expand not only her worldview but that of everyone at Liberty High School ...

Isaac Robinson, IHS



Isaac Robinson began his time at Issaquah High as an unhappy, awkward and uncertain freshman. By the time of his graduation, he had transformed himself into a popular, athletic, outgoing student with a

reputation for kindness to everyone and a guy who always does the right thing—not just the cool thing ...

Jordan Tucker, Tiger Mountain



Coming off a stint in a juvenile lockdown facility and straight into supporting herself at 16 made Jordan Tucker a prime candidate to drop out of high school. But understanding

teachers, incredibly hard work, and a life-changing personal experience turned Jordan

into a passionate leader—and voracious reader—at Tiger Mountain, willing to fight the odds for a much brighter future for herself ...

Read the rest of these seniors' inspiring stories at www.issaquah.wednet.edu

What will you remember about the Class of 2011?

Principal Mike DeLetis, Liberty: This is a group of young people without borders. They are diverse, and they each have their own unique outlooks and strengths. I know they will make a mark on the world in many different and wonderful ways.

Principal Lisa Hechtman, Skyline: They are active, creative, compassionate, questioning, friendly, inquisitive, philosophic, and they pursue excellence. We have had a number of "bests" this year—most coming from their diligence and their willingness to support each other.

Principal Ed Marcoe, Tiger Mountain: Our seniors have had to overcome numerous obstacles to arrive at this point, and for that I am extremely proud of each of them! I wish them the BEST!

Principal Paula Phelps, Issaquah High: This has been the class at the crossroads, on the cusp of the freshman campus transition and then the construction at IHS. Through it all, they have been incredibly positive, choosing to define themselves by their spirit and accomplishments rather than the upheaval of their physical campus.

District Updates

New annual District performance scorecard available online

The Issaquah School District has a newly released annual scorecard that will provide the community with a snapshot of progress in a variety of important student performance measures. To view the scorecard, click on "Governance Policies" under the "School Board" tab at www.issaquah.wednet.edu.

Current and future construction projects

Major construction will begin this summer at Liberty High, Maywood Middle, and Briarwood and Challenger Elementary—projects that will round out the 2006 bond. Looking ahead to the next decade of critical repairs and building, the District is in the process of forming a potential bond measure to go before voters in early 2012. A community committee has already evaluated facility needs and made a recommendation to the superintendent about what projects to include. The school board now has the final authority to refine the scope and determine the feasibility of running the ballot measure next year. To keep updated about ongoing construction and any future bonds, look under "What's Happening" at www.issaquah.wednet.edu. *Please note:* voter-approved bond dollars can only be used for capital improvements, not operational expenses such as class size or textbooks.



"Mad scientists" handed out bracelets at community events to raise funds for science curriculum.

State cuts District operations budget \$4.3 million

\$4.3 million—that's the annual loss to the Issaquah School District operations budget after state lawmakers once again cut basic-education funding this legislative session. To reconcile the deficit, the District will rely on a newly authorized and voter-approved bump in the maintenance and operations levy; decrease administrative, custodial, and other non-classroom service levels; increase operational efficiencies; draw on reserve funds; raise some fees for families; and continue to partner with community organizations such as the PTSA and Issaquah Schools Foundation. Because of these measures, class sizes will remain steady, and all teachers who had previously not been guaranteed a contract next school year have now been placed on the recall list.

Community steps up for science!

Thanks to an unprecedented community fundraising campaign, every elementary classroom will have new, cutting-edge science curriculum this fall. Under the guidance of the Issaquah Schools Foundation, PTSA, and local chambers of commerce, the campaign raised more than \$438,000 to offset a mid-year state budget cut that stripped the dollars the District had set aside for the adoption. Replacing a decade-old curriculum, the new inquiry- and application-based materials align with state learning standards and best instructional practices. The leaders of the campaign—who could be spotted around town dressed as mad scientists handing out green "Got Science?" bracelets—thank every community member who participated!

Points of Pride

A few of the reasons you have to be proud of your schools



Students create futuristic 'Polyhedrville'

Fourth-grade students in the SAGE highly capable program at Creekside and Grand Ridge elementary schools worked together the entire school year to answer a design challenge: Pretend it's 200 years in the future and create a community for one of Earth's last undeveloped areas. Thanks to persistence, creativity, and effective online communication, the students' finished project was so impressive that Sammamish officials put it on display at City Hall for two weeks. In

the ensuing celebration, the cross-school collaborators—who had been partnering only “virtually”—met each other in person for the first time!

IHS '07 valedictorian awarded Fulbright

Lauren Baba, Issaquah High's 2007 valedictorian, recently earned a prestigious Fulbright scholarship to study at the Centre for Aboriginal Health Research at the University of Victoria. Her research emphasis is on health outcomes for aboriginal populations in North America.

Liberty saves 603 lives

The final stats were impressive: Thanks to Liberty High's blood drives this school year, more than 245 students registered as donors, producing 201 pints of blood—enough to serve about 603 patients, according to the Puget Sound Blood Center.

Complete stories at: www.issaquah.wednet.edu/news/