

## From the Superintendent's Desk

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With only one week remaining in the school year, are your students ready for summer reading? Maybe that seems far-fetched after working hard all year in school. But, they don't want to see their reading progress slide during these next three months of summer. So, what can you do? Here are a few tips for parents to get their youngsters interested in summer reading.

### Tap into your child's interests to get them hooked on reading

If you were to ask me what my interests are, I'd answer, "sports, music, and animals." I've always enjoyed reading interesting autobiographies/biographies about famous people (e.g., Michael Jordan, Lou Gehrig, Arnold Palmer, Neil Young, Bruce Springsteen, etc.). However, during the past few months, I have been hooked on Susan Wilson novels (e.g., The Dog Who Saved Me, A Man of His Own, The Dog Who Danced, and One Good Dog). Now I'm reading Two Good Dogs. What's the common denominator in all these books? How'd you guess—dogs! When I get the chance at night before bedtime, I can't wait to pick up the book I'm reading and start reading it again. Whether it's an addictive book series, comics, or even a blog, use the knowledge you have as a parent of your child's interests to get them interested in reading. Besides, summer is a great time to catch up on reading that maybe they didn't have time to do during the school year.

### Help your child access reading materials

When was the last time you visited the local library, checked out the latest books on the shelves at Wal-Mart, or stopped into a Barnes and Noble bookstore? Make some time to stop into these places. Glance through the shelves—even pick up a book(s) and do a little skimming of the back cover or read the introduction to the book(s). Struggling readers may want to check out audiobooks for family car trips. There's also such a thing as audiovisual read-along websites, too. These can be terrific ways to expand your student's mind during the summer months.

### Getting parents and families involved

Classroom teachers and school librarians should be able to recommend a list of summer readings. Parents can sweeten the pot by offering reading incentives as they track their child's reading progress over the summer (i.e., "you read x-number of books and you get a movie pass to a movie theater, a day at the beach/pool, a shopping trip to La Crosse or Madison, etc."). Kids may want to read more when they know that mom and dad will spice things up with some fun reward.

### Make summer reading “social”

As your child reads over the summer, have them invite friends over to your house and have them talk about the books they have read/are reading. This is a great motivator to keep them reading. It’s also a clever way of helping the shy kids stay social outside of school. Older kids can start reading book clubs on Facebook. Did you know there are Facebook Bookshelf apps? (e.g., [RIF Book Zone](#) and Goodreads).

I’m sure kids and parents will have plenty to do this summer. Why not make reading one of those fun activities that you encourage your child to do!