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CATHOLIC SCHOOL

June 13, 2019

Dear Parents,

Welcome to summer! I hope your first week was peaceful, relaxing, happy and healthy. Research supports the notion that when students do not remain engaged in reading, writing and math activities over the summer, they generally lose skills. We also know how much students benefit from all the other non-academic activities and experiences they have over summer. We know that non-academic experiences expand their horizons; they increase students' perspectives, improve their vocabularies and generally increase their knowledge base. Students benefit greatly from play and positive social interactions. Our hope is that they can *also* remain engaged in using core academic skills in ways that appeal to them, as they will be more likely to voluntarily practice the skills.

In a nutshell, this is what we *strongly recommend*. Students who remain engaged are advantaged versus those who take nine weeks off from reading, writing and math. Below this information, you will find myriad resources to support you in this effort should you need them.

Kindergarten 2019-2020:

Please remember the overarching goal: to keep them engaged while keeping it FUN.

- Please continue to read to your child for a minimum of 15 minutes each day. This is so important! If your child has begun reading, then please allow him/her to continue to read to you, alternating between your reading to your child and your child reading to you!
- Encourage your child to write or attempt to write in short increments each day – consider drawing and labeling pictures, or writing wish lists (grocery lists, activity lists, vacation idea lists) – every opportunity to practice writing the sounds in words is good!
- Students are accustomed to using starfall.com and <http://pbskids.org/games/all-topics/>. On these sites you will find more activities across the curriculum than you could ever need.

- Incoming kindergartners should know all their letters and letter sounds. This makes a big difference for them in the fall. If you ask them to give you a word that starts with a particular sound, they should be able to do that. Please continue to find fun ways to reinforce letter identification (upper and lower case letters) and letter sounds. Below is a link to a web site where the author has collected 90+ fun and simple activities for reinforcing letter identification and letter sounds.

<http://www.learnwithplayathome.com/2012/08/the-z-of-learning-letters-90-ways-to.html>

- Please take time each day to reinforce math concepts in everyday life. Find opportunities for your child to count objects at home and identify numbers they see when out and about. This link has some ideas to help:

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/all-ages/math>

1st and 2nd Grade 2019-2020:

Reading: Your child should read at least 15 minutes/day (1st) or at least 20 minutes/day (2nd). Choosing books using the DRA level as reported by your child's teacher is a good way of finding "just right" books. (See book list link below.) The most important thing is that your child just keeps reading daily!

Math: Have your child visit firstinmath.com. An admirable goal is to earn 100 stickers a week. Stickers are earned for correctly solved problems. They accumulate quickly! Your child's log-in* information for **First in Math** was sent home earlier in the year and most students accessed the site regularly. Your child's first goal should be mastery of addition and subtraction facts. After that, they can let their curiosity lead them! First in Math log-ins are valid through July 31st.

**New students will receive their FIM login during the first few weeks of school.*

Writing: Find a way to have your child write about things that excite him/her and have your child write often, daily if possible. Summer journals are great as are creative story writing and letter writing. If these go over like lead balloons, consider requiring that requests for summer activities be made in writing. Does your child ask to go to Great Wolf Lodge or Six Flags? Does he or she want to go somewhere special during summer vacation? Your response can be, "I'm going to need to see that in writing; then I'll consider it." What is it, specifically; that they are requesting? Why are they making that particular request? Require them to use descriptive language. Incoming first graders can write a minimum of four sentences; incoming second graders can write a minimum of six. Both should consistently capitalize the first word in each sentence and use end marks correctly. Sight words should be spelled correctly, and all other words should be spelled phonetically. They can do it! Even incoming kindergartners can begin to write the sounds they hear in words.

Most importantly, take this time to enjoy and truly appreciate the beauty of God's creation, time with each other, and the opportunity to share God's love, every day. Have a blessed summer!

Warmest regards,

Lauren

Additional Resources:

Follow any of these hyperlinks to find many, many more links for free summer learning resources for children of all ages.

- **Ideas for young readers (a great way to search by age, interest, level, etc.)**

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/parent-child/books-to-explore-together>

- **Book list for finding books at your child's DRA level (Developmental Reading Assessment):**

<http://tveclib.pbworks.com/w/page/40338762/Leveled%20Reading%20Lists%20for%20DRA%204-16>

- **Inspiration for summer journal prompts:**

<https://www.journalbuddies.com/prompts-by-season/summer-writing-for-kids/>

http://journalbuddies.com/category/journal_prompts_journal_topics/

<http://www.pinterest.com/divrchk/kids-summer-writing-prompts/>

- **"15 Online Summer Camps to Keep Kids Busy (and Learning) While School's Out"**

<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/15-online-camps-fill-kids-summer-with-learning-adventures>

- **"Fun and Free Summer Learning Resources"**

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/summer-learning-resources-matt-davis>