

June, 2011

Dear Families of Incoming Fifth Graders,

As you know, over the past two years, the elementary schools have approached reading instruction in a new way. Through Readers' Workshop, we have seen tremendous growth in our children's reading. Now it is vitally important for us to sustain the reading momentum of the school year over the summer.

We know that most children lose a significant amount of learning over the summer, and the best way to prevent that "summer lag" is through regular reading experiences. We want reading to become a habit, a ritual children look forward to each day. We are already thinking ahead to the community of readers we will build next year, and we want kids to talk with each other, to find books they love, and to share their reading experiences. We are asking for your help and support in sending that message. Summer vacation is the perfect opportunity to relax and enjoy reading just for pleasure!

It is our expectation that all of our students will read, and write a response to, **at least three books** during the summer months. They have two options for their responses - either by answering questions on paper or by posting to our summer reading blog. Instructions are attached to this letter. We ask you to please help and encourage your child in achieving this goal. In the fall, we'll come back together as a community of readers - after spending the summer finding great new reads that we can't wait to share! Every elementary school teacher will be asking children to share their summer reading experiences and to "sell" their favorite summer reading books to the rest of the class.

All of our students have spent a great deal of time this year learning to select "just right books." These are the books that best support their growth as readers (neither too easy nor too difficult). Our expectation is that children will choose "just right" books to read and share in the fall. With the support of their teachers, children have made lists of books they want to read. We have posted a list of suggested titles on our district's website, [www.bsd-ri.net](http://www.bsd-ri.net), in case your child is still undecided about what to read. Lists of suggestions are also available at our local libraries and on our summer reading blog. **Please note that incoming 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are expected to select at least one of their summer reading books from the RICBA book list, which is included with this letter.**

We look forward to hearing all about your summer reading experiences when we return in September. Have a happy, healthy, book-filled summer!

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