Dear Parents,

This letter is to inform you about an exciting new opportunity that will be available to all Fort Thomas Independent school elementary students, at no cost to you, at the end of the month. Our staff has been looking at the current research on what is termed the “summer loss in learning” and the findings are pretty convincing. Research indicates the following:

- All young people experience learning losses when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer.
- On average, students lose approximately 2.6 months of grade-level equivalency in mathematical computation skills over the summer months.
- Some students can lose about 2 months of reading achievement.
- The international average of number of days a student attends school is 193 days. Fort Thomas Independent School students attend school for 177 days. If we are going to keep pace globally it is important for our students to be engaged academically over the summer months.

In an effort to assist parents in reducing the “summer loss of learning”, we have created Summer Steps for students in grade levels K-5. Each Summer Step journal consists of math, reading, language, and writing activities. The goal of the program is to have students work for about 15-20 minutes on skill based activities to keep sharp for the upcoming school year. The activities are designed to be a review of material from the past school year and have been pulled from our current reading and math series so they should be familiar to you and your child. This should also limit the time teachers have to spend “reviewing and reteaching” skills from the past year.

These journals also include a reading log to record time spent reading over the summer as we are encouraging students to read for 20 minutes a day. We are also encouraging you to make use of our computer software program called Renaissance Place. This site is a web-based math computation program (Math Facts in a Flash) for students. Included in this journal will be a letter with your child’s user name, passwords, and directions for this program. Goal levels for students are also included in the journal.

We hope that you will find these Summer Step journals to be a tool to help reduce the “summer loss of learning”. Students that complete their journals, and return them to school in August, will be allowed to attend a free movie night in August at the Performing Arts Center at Highlands High School. Classroom teachers will also use these journals at the beginning of the school year to review last year’s skills. We also encourage you to reward your child at home for their efforts in completing these activities.

If the copy of the Summer Step journal your child was issued is misplaced, a new copy can be obtained at Central Office for a charge of $5.

We appreciate your continued support!

Fort Thomas Independent Schools