June 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We all know that summer reading is an important part of our goal to help every student see reading as enjoyable and useful. As a school district, we want to encourage your student to read and we want to assist your family in selecting books and magazines of high interest.

The Cheshire Public Schools does not mandate required titles or authors unless a specific high school Advanced Placement syllabus requires it. Instead, we encourage students to select topics and authors of high interest to them. Parents should use their children's individual reading levels, prior reading experiences, attitudes toward reading, and their interests to select the “just right” books for each child.

As in past summers, we are providing you with a list of authors that may be of interest to your child. These lists are organized by grade, genre, and topic. In addition to books, we have also included a few magazines and web sites. It is our hope that students and parents will find this list a useful starting point for selecting enjoyable, interest-based books and magazines for summer reading.

The summer reading lists for each grade level can be found on your school and our district webpage: http://www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/district-departments/curriculum--instruction/summer-reading

To foster summer reading, the Cheshire Public Schools require all current Grade 1-8 students to read at least three books between the end of June and the beginning of school in late August. Primary grade students are encouraged to read more books, and to reread familiar stories to develop their sight word vocabulary.
In addition, students must complete a log or list of all books they read during the summer. The Governor’s Summer Reading Challenge Log can be printed from the following website:


This log or list should be given to classroom or homeroom teachers when students return to school. We ask parents to add their signature to this log or list at the end of the summer. We will submit a tally of books read by each grade level to the Connecticut State Department of Education.

**Students entering Grade 1 through Grade 6:** In the fall, classroom teachers will conduct book sharing and "book talk" opportunities that allow students to discuss their books with their teachers and peers. Teachers will also ask students in Grade Two and higher to write a short response about one of their summer book choices. Teachers will provide students with feedback about this writing activity. Any interested student will also receive a summer reading certificate.

**Students entering Grade 7 and 8:** Students should read, highlight, and take notes as appropriate. They should be encouraged to use their active reading strategies (i.e. asking questions about the author’s purpose; anticipating what will happen next in the text; thinking about the author’s craft; making connections between their own interests and questions and text content; and clarifying confusing parts of the text), with at least one of the books they read this summer. They may use Post-it Notes or a reading log. Students may be asked to use these notes and/or describe their reading strategies in a written assignment when they return to school in the fall.

**Students entering Grade 9 through 12:** Students are invited to join a book club hosted by a staff or faculty member at CHS. Students will receive a list of books and activities from their English teachers, and the list will also be available on the CHS library website. Sign-ups must be completed by the last day of school, June 24th, and book clubs will meet either during the summer or in the first weeks of school. Feel free to contact Megumi Yamamoto, English department chair myamamoto@cheshire.k12.ct.us, or Amy Balisciano, reading specialist abalisciano@cheshire.k12.ct.us, for more information.

We ask parents to support and monitor their children's summer reading. Reading a few pages a day, every day, for 10-20 minutes, produces better results than waiting until the middle of August to begin. Students in grades K-3 also benefit from frequent "read alouds" by their parents. Parent participation in book selection assures that each book won't be too hard or too easy, especially for younger children. It also assures that the book's theme and content is age appropriate and respects the family's values and interests.
Summertime provides a wonderful opportunity for parents to support their children's lifelong reading habits and encourage children to find lots of great books that grab their attention and spark their imagination! Frequent opportunities to read, listen to someone else read, and talk about books improves a student’s vocabulary, understanding of literature, and knowledge of nonfiction topics. Family conversations about newspaper stories, magazine articles, and recreational reading also encourage positive attitudes toward reading and support the transfer of learned reading strategies. Here are some suggestions to help your children engage in summer reading on their own, and make it fun for the family too:

- Set a regular time each day to read.
- Create a refrigerator reading graph and award a sticker for each book read.
- Have a family book sharing night once a week.
- Plan regular visits to the public library.
- Share and discuss newspaper or magazine articles on current events topics.
- Rent or see a movie version of a book children have read – compare how and why they liked one more than the other.

We wish you a wealth of wonderful reading opportunities and a restful summer. Your continued support with summer reading is appreciated! Please call the Office of Curriculum and Instruction (203-250-2439) or your child's school to ask questions or to share your comments. We encourage you to visit the Cheshire Public Library this summer. The librarians there are looking forward to helping all of Cheshire’s students find and choose many memorable reading selections.