DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

THE PARENT POST

FACILITATING FAMILY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

VOLUME XVII, ISSUE 4 - MAY 11, 2026

Welcome to The Parent Post! This newsletter is published four times per year for students and families of the Douglas County School System. For more information, please contact Patti Sullivan at (770) 651-2118 or email patti.sullivan@dcssga.org

SUITCASES AND SCHOOL SKILLS: TURNING SUMMER TRAVEL INTO A LEARNING ADVENTURE

BY SHONTAL HARRIS, TEACHER AND FAMILY ENAGEMENT CONTACT, FACTORY SHOALS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The summer travel experience has tremendous potential to provide equal opportunity for creating lifelong learning opportunities for elementary children. Instead of thinking of travel as a time away from school, families and teachers can intentionally include literacy, math, science and social studies in all aspects of their travels. For children grades K-5, learning from travel creates curiosity, develops real-world connections and makes memories since their experiences are active and memorable in nature. Research demonstrates that experiential learning increases a student's engagement level and enhances their understanding, specifically when they reflect and use new knowledge. This article represents different ideas for using summer travel as an extension of classroom learning in a fun, meaningful, and organized way.

🧳 Learning Before You Go: Building Background Knowledge 🧳

- Conduct research about your destination; its topography, climate, customs/traditions, tourist attractions, etc.
- Gather materials (books, videos, etc.) about your destination.
- Keep a journal (to write down predictions and questions you want answered on your trip).
- Use maps to research and record how you will get there.
- Use mathematics to estimate distance, travel time, and travel expense.
- Create a packing list (demonstrate your ability to organize and write).

🚗 Learning on the Go: Turning Travel Time into Learning Time 🚗

- Engage in road trip games (license plate math, word hunts, I Spy)
- Practice math facts or counting games (color of vehicles noticed)
- Listen to audiobooks or educational podcasts while driving
- Track the route of the road trip via map or GPS, identify and discuss what the road signs mean
- Ask your child questions about their surroundings ("What do you notice?" "What do you wonder?").

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

🌍 Learning at the Destination: Real-World Connections 🌍

- Take a trip to museums, zoos, parks or other historical places.
- Look at and read signs, brochures and information panels.
- Watch and record the new things you see in the world around you.
- Explore nature and take a look at plants, animals, ecosystems etc.
- Practice writing descriptions of what you see in your surroundings.
- Ask questions and make real-life connections.

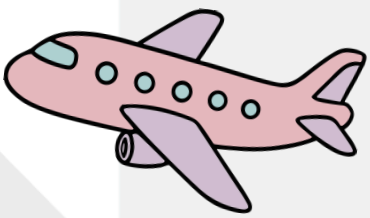
✍🏼 Reflecting After the Trip: Strengthening Learning ✍🏼

- Write about your journey and create a scrapbook with photos and captions, and tell your family and classmates what you learned.
- Answer the trip related questions you asked before going on the trip.
- Compare your expectations for the trip versus what you learned.
- Create a poster/presentation for your story.

🎯 Practical Tips for Families and Educators 🎯

- Only do activities that are fun (15–30 minutes).
- Balance learning and relaxation.
- Ask questions that will make students ask questions; stimulate curiosity.
- Bring some easy-to-use tools with you (journal, pencil, and book).
- Use a digital tool or mobile apps as part of the activity for additional engagement.
- Focus on real-world connections instead of worksheets.

Summer travel is an excellent way for elementary students to be able to learn in the real world, in an educational environment, and with other kids, all at the same time. Families will have the knowledge and the experience to support the development of their child's education through pre-trip activities, interactive travel techniques and experiences, and post-trip reflection activities. This is all backed up by instructional strategies that are founded on research (active learning, making connections, and engaging students). By travelling while learning, curiosity is developed, independence is created, and exploration becomes an infinity for each student. When your child returns to school, they bring back not only memories but also strengthened skills and deeper understanding.







"SUN"SATIONAL SUMMER ACTIVITIES

BY MICHELE ANDUZE, ESOL TEACHER, EASTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Summer break is just around the corner! The teachers and students are so excited for this time of year, so that we can all regroup, relax, and recharge! As a parent, this may be a time of enjoyment as you spend more time with your kids, or a time of hectic chaos as you are working and the kids need some structure to keep that chaos organized.

Provided below you will find some suggestions for daily/weekly activities. Your family might like to try some, or all, to help keep your children motivated and engaged in LIFE throughout the summer. This allows the break needed from school, but also promotes creativity, self-awareness, and responsibility-all very important life skills.

Regroup

Connect as a family: picnics, trips to the park, visit historical sites
Build Meaningful Relationships: hang out with family you don't see as often, set up playdates and meet ups for your children with their friends (you may make a grown-up friend as well!), help your child experience YOUR culture through books and experiences
Summer Camps/Clubs: Many camps cost money, but some things, especially offered by churches-like VBS, Vacation Bible School-are *free*.

Relax

This is a great time for kids to be kids! Many activities fill time and help with skills necessary to be successful in school and life. Some of these activities are also quiet, which is always needed!



- Coloring, drawing, painting
- Tactile play with bubbles, water, or sand
- Puzzles-puzzle books (brain games) or jigsaw puzzles
- Playing with play-doh
- Writing/journaling
- Building/creating-legos, magnatiles, forts, jewelry, etc.
- READING (inside, outside, in the car, on vacation, when at work with parents)
- Visit the library (storytime, crafts, games, movies, etc.)
- A walk in the neighborhood or park
- Limited and monitored screen time (children can EARN screen time by engaging in other activities listed anywhere in this article).

Recharge

What does your family value and enjoy doing together?
Do it! Teach your child(ren) how to do it on their own, especially things like cooking, baking, and cultural dances. Board Games and puzzles provide togetherness but independence as well.



Seashell frame summer



continued on page 4

continued from page 3

What is your child's passion? What fuels him/her and they want to do it ALL the time? Cooking...drawing...editing...building (legos)...singing...acting...running...cleaning...planning (parties, trips, dinners)...going on adventures...learning about a specific topic (space, dinosaurs, etc.)



Get OUTSIDE! Enjoy the sunshine safely!
Swimming, hiking, walking, playing with neighbors (soccer, water sprinkler, kick the can, hide and seek, kickball)

Check out these websites to help keep your child engaged and thinking during the summer:
If you want to and are able to purchase new books to entice reading
Scholastic Book clubs If your child's school or teacher participates, you can connect with them and they earn free books that students get to enjoy.

Douglasville Parks & Rec offer Summer Camps and Activities:
Douglasville Parks & Rec

Public Libraries are a great way to find fun and *FREE* activities including story time for ALL ages and special events with crafts and movies. https://pines.georgialibraries.org/ Douglasville Library is closed for renovation, but Lithia Springs and Dog River Libraries are open! Plus, your child gets a PLAY card by using his/her 6 digit lunch number and can check out books. Villa Rica has a library as well, but the PLAY card is for Douglas County libraries only.



SUMMER



Douglas County

TITLE I PARENTS: YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!



The Douglas County School System Title I Department is in the process of reviewing and revising the district's Parent and Family Engagement Plan. This plan will establish the district's expectations for parent and family engagement and how the district will carry out the federal and state parent and family engagement requirements. Parent input into the revision of this plan is requested and required. To review the draft version of the plan and to provide input, please scan the QR code or follow the link.

FY27 Title I Parent Engagement Input

DCSSGA.org
THE STANDARD *of* EXCELLENCE

20 minutes of reading every day!

DOUGLAS COUNTY LOVES LITERACY

Coming soon...

3 Million Minute Reading Challenge

Read all summer and log your minutes through Beanstack! This summer reading challenge will begin on May 16th and end on July 31st!



RESOURCES FOR PARENTS OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

The Douglas County School System has posted new resources for parents of English Learners on our website. Our goal is to provide effective outreach to parents of our English Learners and to assist them in being involved in their child's education. Please visit our website **here** or scan this QR code to access the website with the resources listed.

DCSSGA.org

THE STANDARD of EXCELLENCE

SIMPLE (FREE!) WAYS TO PREVENT THE "SUMMER SLIDE"

BY CARRIE KELLER, HEALTH MONITOR AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CONTACT, BILL ARP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Summer is a time for families to rest, explore, and recharge. But it can also be a time when students lose ground on important academic skills. This is known as the "summer slide." The good news is that there are many fun, low-cost ways to keep students engaged and sharp all summer long. Below are two of our favorite suggestions for elementary, middle, and high school.

Elementary School

1. Read Every Day: set aside 15–20 minutes for daily reading. Let your student choose books they enjoy. Visit your local library for free options and fun programs. Ask your student simple questions about the story to build understanding (who, what, when, where, why, and how).
2. Practice Math in Real Life: Use everyday moments to reinforce math skills. You can count change at the store, measure ingredients while cooking, or talk about time and schedules. These quick mini-activities use valuable life skills to strengthen number sense and practice arithmetic.

Middle School

1. Keep a Summer Journal: encourage your student to write in a journal a few times each week. They can reflect on their day, write stories, or respond to prompts you create together. Writing helps maintain language and thinking skills. If your student struggles to get their thoughts down on the paper, talk through their ideas first, help them make a short list of their ideas, and then encourage them to write them out in complete sentences.
2. Explore Learning Online: use free educational websites and apps to keep their learning fresh. Many offer short lessons in math, reading, and science. Set a goal of 20 minutes a few times a week. Keep sessions short and focused so they do not become a burden to you or your student.

High School

1. Read with Purpose: encourage your student to read books, articles, or news that match their interests. Ask them to summarize what they read or discuss key ideas. This builds critical thinking and comprehension using real-world information that piques their interest.
2. Set Personal Learning Goals: have your student choose a skill to develop over the summer. This could be writing, coding, or learning a new language. Free resources and tutorials are widely available online. Track progress weekly and celebrate when they achieve each goal.

Summer learning does not need to feel like school! Keep activities light, flexible, and fun. Consistent practice helps students return to school feeling confident and ready to learn.





DOUGLAS COUNTY
LOVES LITERACY



SUMMER READING
2026
Pop Ups!

June 8, 2026
Douglas County School System
11490 Veteran's Memorial Highway
Douglasville, GA 30134



Meet the WGRLS Bookmobile!



June 22, 2026
Youth Innovation LAB
8828 Gurley Road
Douglasville, GA 30134





July 13, 2026
Fairburn Road Senior Center
6287 Fairburn Road
Douglasville, GA 30134



July 27, 2026
Legacy Arena
9030 Highway 5
Douglasville, GA 30134



6-7 P.M.

Join us for our Summer Reading Pop-Ups! Listen to a surprise local celebrity guest read a favorite story, then jump into a fun hands-on activity related to the book! The first 25 families will walk away with a free book to keep!

Questions? Please contact Patti Sullivan at (770) 651-2118 or patti.sullivan@dcssga.org

2026

SUMMER MEALS

ARE AVAILABLE AT NO COST TO CHILDREN 18 & UNDER

At the following locations:

Service Site	Breakfast	Lunch	Dates
Beulah Elementary School	8:00-8:30 AM	11:30-12:00 PM	June 1-12 Monday-Friday only
Factory Shoals Middle School	8:30-9:00 AM	12:30-1:00 PM	June 1-12 Monday-Friday only
Stewart Middle School	8:30-9:00 AM	12:30-1:00 PM	June 1-12 Monday-Friday only
Yeager Middle School	8:30-9:00 AM	12:30-1:00 PM	June 1-12 Monday-Friday only
Douglas County High School	8:30-9:00 AM	12:30-1:00 PM	June 1-26, July 6- 17 Monday-Friday only



Greatness GROWS HERE

Fueling Georgia's Future
Georgia Department of Education School Nutrition

For Additional Information please call 770-651-2300.

This is an equal opportunity provider.