

The Parent Post

Parent and Family Engagement, Title I

Volume X, Issue 2

Welcome to The Parent Post! This newsletter is published four times per year and sent home with students being served with Title I funds at Douglas County schools. These schools include Annette Winn Elementary, Beulah Elementary, Bright Star Elementary, Burnett Elementary, Chestnut Log Middle, Eastside Elementary, Factory Shoals Elementary, Lithia Springs Elementary, North Douglas Elementary, Stewart Middle, Sweetwater Elementary, Turner Middle and Youth Villages - Inner Harbour Campus. For more information, please visit dcssga.org or contact Patti Sullivan at (770) 651-2118 or email patti.sullivan@dcssga.org

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Family Engagement
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Education Even On The Coldest Days: Ways to keep your student engaged and learning over Winter Break

By Meagan Bowlick, Teacher, Bright Star Elementary School

Winter break is coming and the one thing on every parent's mind is.... What will I do with my child for 2 whole weeks? Breaks can still be learning opportunities for students just as a typical school day would be for them. There are a number of different educational activities that students can do to stay engaged and occupied while sitting at home over the break.

Read, Read, Read! Reading is what drives learning for students. Over the holiday season, students can read in many different ways to help strengthen their fluency, word recognition, retelling skills, and much more. Here are some ideas to make reading fun over the holidays: Let kids choose their own books and then talk about the books you're reading together, give a book as a present, read anything (Christmas cards) and read anywhere; read in bed, read by the fire, have a living room picnic, read books & sip hot chocolate, if traveling, take books with you, write THANK-YOU notes and have students read them back to you before mailing them, play family games that require reading like Apples to Apples or Boggle, What's Gnu?, Bananagrams, and Scattegories or read books on the App EPIC, on MyOn, or on a Kindle. All of these are excellent ways to get students reading and learning all at the same time.

Want to incorporate math over the holidays? While present-wrapping is pretty much a holiday season staple, the activity can also help young children build math skills. Help your child measure each gift, then determine how much wrapping paper will be needed to cover the present's surface area. Kids can measure and cut out the appropriate amount of wrapping paper, as well as any decorative elements, like ribbon. Not only will your child solidify their mathematical thinking, but you'll have your very own elf to help wrap presents. You could also get your student in the kitchen and have them measure out ingredients and help you bake those delicious holiday treats! Their love for math will grow as well as give you an opportunity to spend quality time with your child!

We can't forget science!! There's no better way to explore engineering principles than to start building! Gather up any number of household objects—plastic cups, popsicle sticks, LEGO blocks, straws—and start building. Encourage your child to record the height, shape, and size of each new creation, and then test the structure's ability to stand up against a younger sibling. If you're like me and want some suggestions for what to build and how to build it, Google is your best friend. The web is full of tutorials like a DIY light-up holiday sweater, or popsicle-stick truss bridge, or even a gingerbread house. Otherwise, find some funky materials, and let your child's creativity soar!



The holiday break can be a time for family, fun and celebrations, but don't forget to help your kids continue to learn. See the list below for app ideas for continued learning over the break. These apps can come in handy while you are traveling for the holidays! Enjoy!

Road Trip Education Apps



Animal Math Games
free; ages 4 and up; Amazon, Android, iOS



Preschool Math Games for Kids: free; ages 2-8; Android



Stack the States™: \$2.99, ages 9 and up; Android, iOS



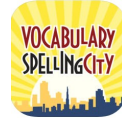
Kid Weather: \$1.99; ages 4 and up; Amazon, iOS



Fiete Choice: \$1.99; ages 4 and up; iOS



Science360: free, ages 12 and up; Android, iOS



VocabularySpellingCity: free; ages 4 and up; Android, iOS



Mad Libs: free; ages 9-11; Android, iOS



Scratch Jr.: free; ages 5-7; Amazon, Android, iOS



Duolingo: free; ages 4 and up; Android, iOS



NASA App: free; all ages; Android, iOS



Khan Academy: free; ages 5 and up; Android, iOS



Upcoming Important Dates

December 19	Semester ends
December 20-January 2	Student Holidays
January 3	Students return; 2 nd semester begins
January 4	Report cards issued, all levels
January 21	Student Holiday

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 <https://www.dcssga.org/> or scan this QR code to access the website with the resources listed.



Breaking It

Sacheen Cassy, Media Clerk, Annette Winn Elementary School

As a child, my parents always allowed me to travel and visit relatives in different states and countries. For most of my daughter's pre-college years, it wasn't as easy infusing fun and adventure into our school breaks. At some point, it dawned on me that perhaps we should find some things close to home since we could not always travel to New York and Florida to visit family. I began researching activities around the Metro Atlanta area, and do you know what I found...a host of family friendly, diverse and well-organized events. We had so much fun that I began inviting my daughter's school friends and we created some new traditions. Her friends would look forward to the events I would have on my "Family Break Calendar." The best thing about it is that it often cost only time (to research the events) and money for gas. On occasion, we would plan to eat at a nearby venue, but most of the time we would center our activities around snack bags or food available at the events and festivals. Our adventures also led me to take membership with many of the event venues and it has been like having a passport to ANYWHERE.

School Breaks are the perfect time to bring culture, adventure and travel to your family. "Breaking" on a budget is always a concern. Here are some tips to make your Holiday, Spring and Summer Breaks fun AND affordable!

- Perouse the internet by searching Convention and Visitor's sites. These often have events and activities for many of the Metro Atlanta counties.
- Check museums, the aquarium, movie theaters, show and sports venues. During the warmer months, many venues offer movies on the lawn and free movie viewings.
- Go directly to your town's event calendar.
- Look through the free publications that come in the mail or that you can pick up at many local stores.
- Venture on to researching some towns outside of the Metro Atlanta area.
- Talk to friends about some of the activities that they've participated in.

Your search will lead you to tons of family days, free preview days, free festivals, tastings, craft days and more. MANY of these events are FREE or within a reasonable budget. Some of the venues have free events for members. When creating your Family Break Calendar,

- Block off times that you know you will be unavailable. For example shopping or cooking times, visiting with out of town guests, hosting dinner or just general rest time.
- Spread your activities out along the break.
- Map your activities out and if two happen to be in a fair distance from each other or are related in theme or subject, plan those two on the same day.
- Make it fun for your kids by inviting a friend or two their age with you.
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
- Have your camera phone ready for those memories.

You are your child's FIRST and most consistent teacher. All in all, you'll provide exposure and valuable learning experiences for your family. The holidays are a good time to enjoy small productions and shows at some of the smaller theaters. Along our journey, some of my most memorable adventures were trekking through China (when the Terra Cotta Warriors came to town), touring Italy (for a DaVinci exhibit), were moved by Mummies from Egypt, searched for souls at the Bodies Exhibit, and globe-trotted to Greece to soak in the Trojan Horse. We've also tried some different foods and traditions by attending different craft and cultural festivals. These would also lead to us delving more into creating our own crafts or looking up recipes to try at home. Atlantic Station is also an awesome spot to soak in some free activities, window shop and have some good eats. Our journeys created many fond memories and along the way we've amassed photos, souvenirs, books and postcards. Interesting enough, something about our family outings would come up in classroom curriculum, in a book my daughter would happen to read or in conversation she would have with her friends. Who would have thought that we could have such memories with just a little bit of research and planning.

Being on break doesn't have to break your bank. Keep it simple, keep it going and HAVE FUN!

U P C O M I N G W O R K S H O P S

Parents of children being served with Title I funds may attend any workshop, regardless of location.

Annette Winn Elementary School Parent Resource Center
3536 Bankhead Highway, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-3100

Academic Parent Teacher Teams Meeting 2

Tuesday, January 22 and Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 6:00 PM
Grades K through 5 will meet with the parents of their child's homeroom to discuss data based on foundational skills they have chosen. They will then create and practice activities to work with their children at home and discuss goals for APTT meeting #3.

Beulah Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1150 Burnt Hickory Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-3300

Family Reading Night

Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 5:30 PM
Families will have a fun time learning reading strategies and games that will help them improve their reading skills. Come find a new book to take home to enjoy with your family.

Bright Star Elementary School Parent Resource Center
6300 John West Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-3400

Fall in Love with Writing

Thursday, February 14, 2019, scheduled during lunch times
Parents will be invited to learn about Informational Writing and Opinion Writing. Informational handouts will be provided to parents who attend this meeting. The testing coordinators will be present to assist parents with any personal questions they may have in regards to writing.

Burnett Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8277 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-3500

Diving into Data! Goals + Plans = Success

Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 5:30 PM
Students will share their progress on various assessments as well as progress on classwork this year with their parents. Students will lead the discussion using their data notebook.

Chestnut Log Middle School Parent Resource Center
2544 Pope Road, Douglasville, GA 30135
(770) 651-5100

Social Studies/International Night

Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 6:00 PM
Parents and students will have the opportunity to participate in games and activities and will learn important information about Social Studies and Internationalism. Come out and see what Social Studies and International Night is about!

Eastside Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8266 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-3800

STEMulate Your Mind (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)

Tuesday, January 22, 2019 at 5:30 PM
Families will participate in STEM activities as well as learn how STEM has an impact on the world that we live in.

Factory Shoals Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2375 Mount Vernon Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-3900

Social Studies Night/GMAS Information

Tuesday, February 26, 2019 at 5:00 PM
A moment in time to share historical events that have impacted our daily lives. Parents/families will also receive information about how to help their child become prepared for the Georgia Milestones Assessment.

Lithia Springs Elementary School Parent Resource Center
6946 Florence Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-4100

Academic Parent Teacher Teams Meeting 2

Monday-Tuesday, January 28 and 29, 2019 at 6:00 PM
Grades K, 1, 2 and 3 families will be trained to support children's academic goals by linking home and school learning.

North Douglas Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1630 Dorris Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-4800

Tech Talk and Internet Safety

Friday, January 18, 2019 at 8:30 AM
Parents will be given facts about internet safety and the proper use of technology.

Stewart Middle School Parent Resource Center
8138 Malone Street, Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 651-5400

Georgia Milestones Test Prep Meeting

Thursday, January 31, 2019 at 6:30 PM
Come out and learn important test taking tips and strategies for the Georgia Milestones Assessment.

Sweetwater Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2505 East County Line Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-4600

Technology Talk

Thursday, January 24, 2019 (grades K, 2nd and 4th) at 8:45 AM
Friday, January 25, 2019 (grades 1st, 3rd and 5th) at 8:45 AM
Sergeant Jesse Hambrick from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office will present information on how to protect your child from some of the dangers of social media. Mr. Darien Carruth, Instructional Technology Specialist, will demonstrate some of the great technology our students and teachers use every day! Learn how to use technology to help your child at home.

Turner Middle School Parent Resource Center
7101 Turner Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
(770) 651-5500

Science Night

Thursday, January 10, 2019 at 6:00 PM
Our Science night will afford parents an opportunity to view some of their students science exhibits, as well as, expose parents to some of the scientific concepts their students are learning in an entertaining and engaging setting.