

June 1, 2010

Dear Parents of Rising Sixth through Twelfth Graders,

We count it a privilege to assist you in your children's education. Thank you for the role that you have played in making this such as successful year.

We highly encourage students to read over the summer because we know that reading is a key to lifelong learning. We also know that students succeed more easily in classes when they have strong reading skills. In addition, past experience has shown us that the students who do well on the reading or English sections of the SAT and ACT are not necessarily the students who earn A's, but rather the ones who enjoy reading and do so often.

In the past, ECA's English department has required that students read three books over the summer. However, given the summer demands and priorities of each family, this summer we will not require summer reading

but we will strongly encourage the parents to choose the best approach in fostering this love for reading. We encourage you to cultivate your child's interest by reading a book together as a family, by modeling (setting an example by your taking the time to read), by talking about books that you have read and enjoyed, and by providing time for your child to read.

All students in regular English classes in grades 6-12 will be asked to write/give a list of books read over the summer. In preparation for this, it would be a good idea for your child to keep a running list of books read so as not to have to rely totally on memory. These lists will not be graded, but will be collected in September. This change in the summer reading program will be on a trial basis and we will evaluate its effectiveness annually.

Students who are enrolled in Honors and AP English classes should have already been given their reading and writing assignments for the summer. These requirements must be met and approved for enrollment in Honors and AP English classes this fall.

Here are some tips and ideas on how to encourage your child/ren to read this summer:

- Read together as a family – choose a book that everyone would enjoy and read it aloud. This not only encourages reading but good family time, as well.
- Give computer time (Facebook, chatting) based on reading (for every half hour of reading you can have a half hour of computer or game time). Reading must be finished before computer is turned on.
- Encourage student to select three books they would like to read over the summer and bring those books along during vacation time, car trips, etc.
- Start a book club and have a group of kids come to your house and read the same book together and discuss. There are lots of helps online for starting a club like this.
- Set a goal of so many books to read as a family and then reward yourselves with some special activity.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. If you would like a copy of the previous summer reading requirements, please contact your child's English teacher. Enjoy your summer!

Beth H. Almack
Academic Principal