DEAR FAMILIES,

Congratulations on another successful school year! Below are some updates and ideas from our department to help you and your child to have a happy and healthy summer vacation. We look forward to seeing you in August!

GISD STUDENTS BRING HOME THE GOLD WITH SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Special Olympics Texas (SOTX) started in 1969 and recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. Today, Galveston Independent School District is fortunate to have PE instructor Alvin Garlow as its head coach for SOTX. Coach Garlow recruits volunteers to help coordinate facilitate and motivate athletes with disabilities to be the best they can be through sports. With eight years’ experience as an SOTX head coach for GISD and vast knowledge of scholastic sports programs, Coach Garlow is an invaluable asset to local students and the community he was born and raised in.

Local Gulf Coast Athletes are currently preparing to compete in the 12th annual Spring Classic Track and Field event held on April 22 at Robert E Lee High School in Bay Town Texas. GISD is represented by students from intermediate and secondary campuses who are known by their official team’s name, the “Galveston Tornadoes.” In order to participate, students must be enrolled in GISD and pass a physical examine every 3 years. Students eligible for the 23-24 school year can look forward to competing in bowling in the fall, basketball in the winter, and track and field next spring. Athletes willing to invest the time and effort will get an opportunity to earn an official letterman’s jacket thanks to generous donations from the Rotary Club and Coastal Community Church.

The SOTX program is made possible through the hard work of amazing volunteer coaches like Alvin Garlow, Emily Wallace, Mignon Stanley and Anthony Howard. These pillars of inspiration
A POSITIVE SUMMER EXPERIENCE FOR BOTH PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The transition from the school routine to summer routines is often difficult for children with disabilities such as Autism, intellectual disabilities, or mental health issues. The structures within the school environment help support these children throughout the school year. When summer arrives often there is no real structure in the day to day lives of our differently abled students. This can cause tantrums, melt downs, anxiety and oppositional behavior. In order to support your child emotionally and behaviorally, it is important to continue to have some structure to those long summer days.

Beth Arky of Child Mind Institutes, suggests some tips for implementing structure in your child's summer days. The first is to continue with bedtime routines and a set time for bed. Adjusting by an hour in the morning and at night is okay, but it is best to maintain the same schedule throughout summer. When August rolls around, slowly begin adjusting it back to the school time schedule.

Another way to maintain structure is to talk to your child about upcoming plans, appointments, or trips. Look at a calendar, make it visual, read and talk about it so your child knows what to expect. Let your child be a part of some decisions. Help them to count down the days on a calendar. These are familiar things teachers do to prepare children for changes at school.

Also, scheduling play dates is very important to keep children on track in summer, especially if they do not have siblings or relatives close in age to socialize with. Socializing is a big part of the school environment. Children need to engage with peers to continue to grow socially at the same rate as their peers and be prepared to engage in the school environment during the next school year.

Limiting screen time is very important. Children routinely get outside during the school day and have access to physical education classes or sports. They should do the same in the summer months. Plan regular activities they enjoy that do not require the internet, iPhone or video console. Sunshine and physical activity is important to their mental health and well-being as much as their physical health.

Lastly, have clear expectations for your child. Incorporate a reward system for positive behavior and maintain consequences for poor behavior. Help your child recognize when they have done a good job by using a sticker chart, verbal praise, or small reward. You can also utilize a check chart for chores that you expect your child to complete. Young children can do simple chores to help such as matching socks, putting away items or feeding the family pet. Chore charts make it fun for them as well.
Give your children time to adjust but keep major routines in place to help keep them on track. Expect some difficult times but be patient. With consistent routines and expectations you and your child can have a wonderful, fun-filled summer break.

**EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Developing strong early language and literacy skills are foundation for future learning and success. In fact, studies show that reading aloud is a primary driver of young children's early language development.

1. **Make reading a part of your daily routine.** Establishing a routine helps ensure that reading is part of your daily schedule, such as at naptime and bedtime. It also creates times during the day that both of you can look forward to.
2. **Ask your child questions.** As you read to your child, make the experience interactive by asking him questions, such as "What do you think will happen next?" "What was your favorite part of the story? Why?"
3. **Read with passion!** Using inflection and maintaining the same highs and lows in your voice at the same point in a story helps your child begin to remember the words.
4. **Reread your child's favorite books.** By age 3, children can complete sentences in familiar stories. Read her favorite books over and over to help her learn through repetition.

Excerpt from https://www.startearly.org/post/12-tips-to-boost-early-literacy/

**SCREEN TIME AND CHILDREN: HOW TO GUIDE YOUR CHILD**

Screens are everywhere! What's the big deal? How much is too much?

It's hard for parents to monitor everything their child is watching on a television or video screen, and not all screen time is bad. While some screen time is educational for children, *too much screen time* and regular exposure to *poor-quality programming* has been linked to:

- Obesity
- Inadequate sleep schedules and insufficient sleep
- Behavior problems
- Delays in language and social skills development
- Violence
- Attention problems
- Less time learning

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following based on age:
- **Children under 18 months**- screen time is discouraged
- **Children ages 18 to 24 months**- high quality and educationally based screen time with an adult present
- **Children ages 2 to 5**- no more than one hour a day of high quality, educationally-based programming (avoid using screens as pacifiers, baby sitters, or to stop tantrums)

**Playtime is much more valuable** for a young child's developing brain than watching screens. Children are more likely to learn when they interact and play with parents, siblings, and other children or adults. Instead of screen time-

- **Engage in imaginary play** (playing with cars, dolls, kitchen sets, playdough, etc.)
- **Follow your child's lead** and talk about what they and you are doing while playing.
- **Sing songs with finger play** (*The Itsy Bitsy Spider, The Wheels on the Bus, Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*).
- **Read books or talk about the pictures** in a book and act out the story

**Setting limits for older children**

Establish clear rules and set reasonable limits for your child's use of digital media. Consider these tips:

- Encourage unplugged, unstructured playtime.
- Create tech-free zones or times, such as during mealtime or one night a week.
- Keep screens out of your child's bedroom and consider requiring your children to charge their devices outside of their bedrooms at night.

**Encouraging digital literacy**

At some point your child will be exposed to content that you haven't approved and devices without internet filters. Talk to your child about the situations that could occur and the behavior you expect. [What Should I Teach My Child About Safe Online Behavior?](#) is a great article that covers the basics.

Encourage your child to think critically about what they see on their screens. Ask your child to consider whether everything on the internet is accurate. Does your child know how to tell if a website is trustworthy? Help your child understand that media are made by humans with points of view. Explain that many types of technology collect data to send users ads or to make money.

To ensure quality screen time preview programs, games and apps before allowing your child to view or play with them. Organizations such as [Common Sense Media](#) has programming ratings and reviews to help you determine what's appropriate for your child's age. Better yet, watch, play or use them with your child.

An excerpt from the staff at the [Mayo Clinic](#).
that it is estimated that 1 out of every 5 Americans have dyslexia? Dyslexia is the most common learning disability found in students. Dyslexia is known to profoundly affect reading, writing and spelling. But, with proper identification and intervention, we can reduce the percentage of students reading below grade level! To find out more about what GISD offers for dyslexia, look at the following link!

https://www.gisd.org/departments/special-educationsection-504/dyslexia

Research has discovered that **Phonological Awareness** (the ability to work with sounds in spoken language) is the biggest indicator of reading success. Phonological begins developing before formal schooling even begins!

Watch this quick video from the Center for Effective Reading Instruction and The International Dyslexia Association to see what you can do to help with Phonological Awareness.


**THE IMPORTANCE OF SUMMER READING**

The research is clear that **children who don’t read during the summer can lose up to three months of reading progress** and that loss has a cumulative, long-term effect. Reading Rockets provides a **Summer Reading List** to find great books kids will enjoy during the long, lazy days of summer from ages 0-12.

**Need a book?** Take a trip over to the Rosenber Library.

**ROSENBERG LIBRARY**

The **family-friendly Children’s Department** is located on the 1st floor of the Rosenber Library and welcomes children of all abilities, focusing on birth through the end of 6th grade.

The Rosenber Library has something to offer to everyone – especially teens! They have hundreds upon hundreds of manga and graphic novels, every Dungeons & Dragons rulebook and campaign, and all of them are free to use and check out! They have regular programs – from D&D sessions to video games and virtual reality to anime clubs – and if you just need a place to chill and charge your phone, they can do that too.
The Young Adult Library Leaders — Y.A.L.L. for short — is the Library’s group for middle and high school students who want to help improve and promote teen services in the Library by helping develop and implement programs for young adults, enriching the young adult collection, and making the Library a teen-friendly environment.

The Computer Lab The Computer Lab is open to all Rosenberg Library Patrons. Hours of availability are Monday, Friday – Saturday, 9:00 am to 5:45 pm; Tuesday – Thursday, 9:00 am to 7:45 pm. Use of the Lab is free, subject to the Computer Use Policy. Services available at the Computer Lab include printing, FREE computer classes, and a MakerSpace for 3D printing (appointment needed).

Did You Know? The Rosenberg Library has recently launched a new app which provides visitors with an audio tour via their mobile phone. The app can be downloaded for free in the Apple Store or Google Play. It can also be accessed via the web at rosenberglibrary.oncell.com. The tour includes nine sites around the Rosenberg Library property at 2310 Sealy Avenue in Galveston. Be sure to check it out next time you visit the Rosenberg Library or just enjoy the audio tour from the comfort of your own home.

How do I get a Library card?

Events Calendar

BRILLIANT SUMMER MATH ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS (THAT DON’T FEEL LIKE HOMEWORK)

Here are some simple summer math activities that will keep your kids from being bored (and keep them learning!).

Board Games that Practice Math
Have a family game night with one of these board games.

- Monopoly
- Life
- Tri-Fact-A
- Payday
- War (with a plain deck of cards)
- Yahtzee
- Sequence
- Blokus
- Geoshapes
- Quirkle

STAY HEALTHY THIS SUMMER!
Youth up to 21 years old who live in Galveston or attend Galveston schools are eligible to receive free medical and mental health care at the The Teen Health Center. Summer hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday at Ball High School and Moody Early Childhood Center only.

For more information or to make an appointment, please visit www.teenhealthcenter.org

UTMB FIND HELP

Use FindHelp to search for free or reduced-cost local resources. When health issues throw you a curveball, find financial assistance, food pantries, medical care, housing, transportation, job training and other types of support.

GISD SPECIAL SERVICES

Summer Hours
(May 30-July 27)
Monday-Wednesday, 7:00am-5:45pm
Thursday 7:00am-5:30pm
Closed on Fridays