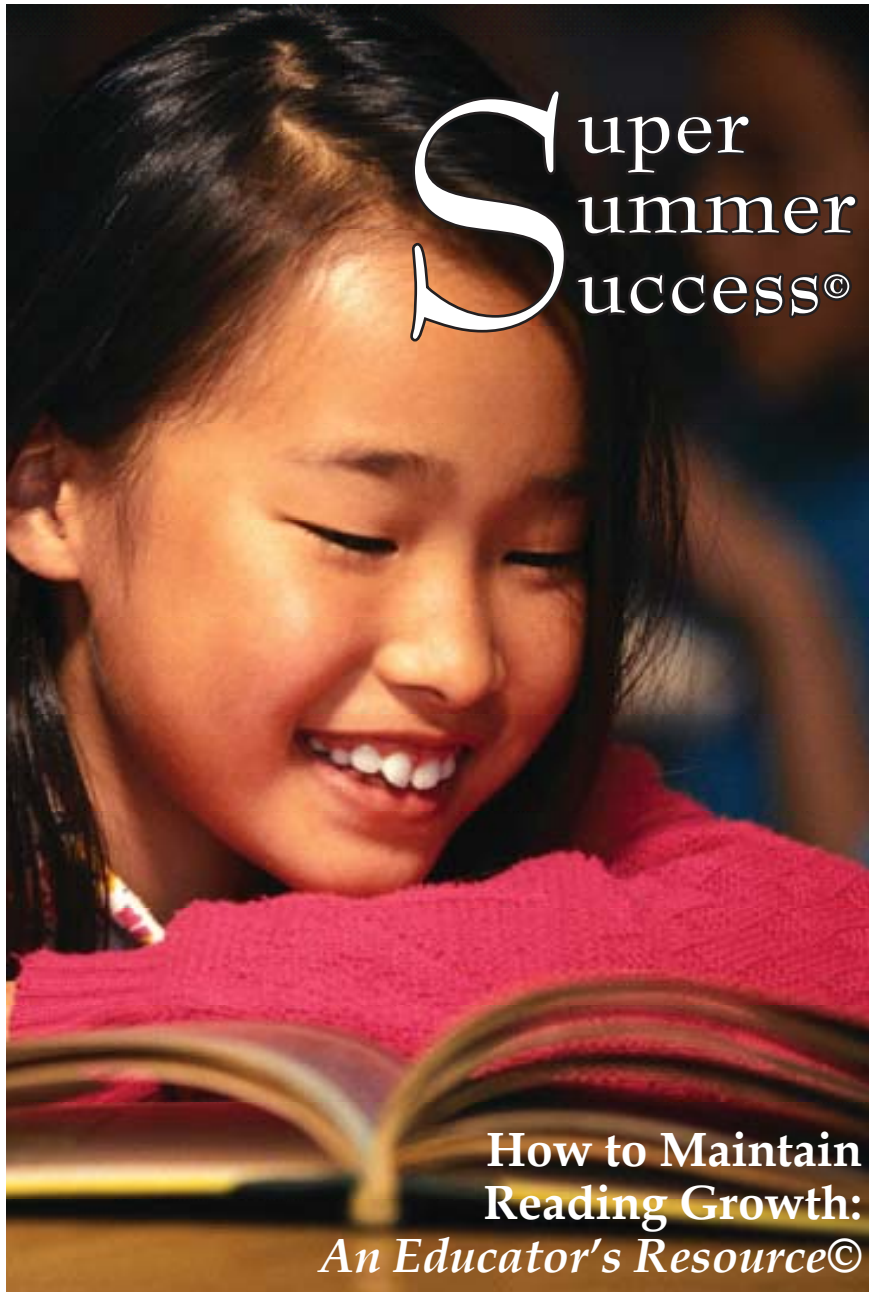


# READING



Super  
Summer  
Success®

How to Maintain  
Reading Growth:  
*An Educator's Resource*©

# Early Childhood



The goal of this brochure is to increase educators' awareness about the importance and benefits of developing a Super Summer Success Reading Program. This program is designed for all students but is especially beneficial for economically disadvantaged children and less able readers.

## Six Books: Maintain Reading Growth!

Dr. Joan Firestone..... Oakland Schools Early Childhood Director  
Dr. Sandra Biondo..... Editor and Summer Reading Project Chair  
Ingrid Snyder..... Oakland Schools Early Childhood Literacy Consultant  
Tom Barnes ..... Oakland Schools Early Childhood Project Coordinator

### Summer Reading Project Members

Susan Baldwin ..... Huron Valley School District  
Carey Crocker ..... Clarkston School District  
Christine Devine ..... Birmingham School District  
Kathleen F. Kern ..... Birmingham School District  
Lyn Greely ..... Clarenceville School District  
Sandra Hudkins ..... Van Dyke Public Schools  
Laurie McDonnell ..... Clarenceville School District  
Trudi Motzenbecker ..... Troy School District  
Terry Pawl ..... Hazel Park School District  
Sheila Scovic ..... Rochester Community Schools

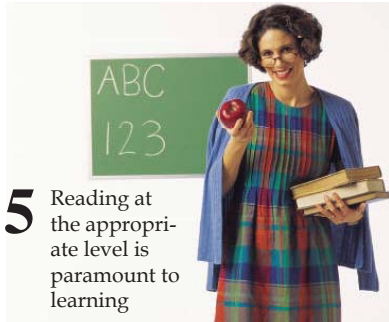
### Other Information

Call us at..... 1.800.64.Youth  
Visit us online at..... [www.oakland.k12.mi.us/earlychildhood](http://www.oakland.k12.mi.us/earlychildhood)

## Features



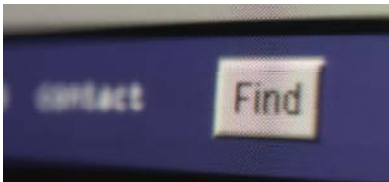
**3** Research in a nutshell ..... economically challenged students have very limited access to books



**5** Reading at the appropriate level is paramount to learning



**11** Looking at organizations and your community for funding possibilities



**18** Need resources? Go to the link below and explore the supportive information we have assembled in helping you develop your own SSS Reading Program.

Oakland Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, religion, or disability. For employment matters contact the Director of Human Resources at 248.209.2059. For all other matters, contact the Director of Legal Affairs at 248.209.2062 at 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48328-2736.

## READING

### Super Summer Success<sup>©</sup>

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**The article that inspired the Super Summer Success Program was “Bridging the Summer Reading Gap” by Anne McGill-Franzen and Richard Allington (2003). Permission has been granted by Scholastic for educators in Oakland County to reproduce the article for their review. See item #1 of the Super Summer Success (SSS) Resource Packet at the website below for a copy.**



## Six books!

Yes, that's all it takes. Research shows when students read six books \* at an appropriate reading level, they will avoid summer reading setback and maintain the

reading growth made during the previous school year. Sound too good to be true? It's not!

You have probably spent countless hours preparing lessons to meet your students' needs. You have likely worried in the middle of the night trying to figure out how to help some of your less able readers.

# Introduction 6 Books Maintains Reading Growth!

You have probably spent a whole school year administering and analyzing assessment after assessment to monitor progress, determine reading levels and plan next instructional steps.

How discouraging it is when the new year begins and you learn that by fall, in spite of all your work, some of your students have regressed from their end of year performance levels.

You certainly are not alone! You, as well as millions of teachers, truly CARE about the progress of your students - our future citizens.

*\*Six books for students who read at a 2nd grade independent reading level or higher, twelve books for mid 2nd grade reading level, and twenty books for students reading below a 2nd grade reading level.*



As flowers need continuous care to stay vibrant and alive throughout the summer months, so do less-able readers. Plants can't thrive for two or three months without attention; neither can our young readers!

Young students don't need Miracle-Gro®, a lot of money, or even teachers all summer long to maintain their reading growth. ■

What is needed is rather simple:

## *Six Books, One Summer!*

Read on to find out more...



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### **Bottom Line**

*Don't let your efforts and time go to waste! You have worked too hard throughout the school year to allow "summer loss" to happen to your students. You've planted the reading seed. Now keep it growing!*

# Research



in

## a Nutshell

Summer reading loss (also referred to as summer reading lag and summer reading setback) occurs when students return to school after summer vacation with diminished reading skills, presumably from a lack of adequate reading practice (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003, p. 9).

The scientific evidence of the accumulating impact of summer reading loss on the achievement gap is very compelling.

Summer reading loss is a bigger problem for economically disadvantaged students due to a lack of access to high quality and appropriate books.

Research indicates the reading achievement of low income students, as a group, typically declines during the summer months while the reading achievement of children from more economically advantaged families improves or remains the same. The reading performance of economically challenged children may decline as much as an average of three months between June and September.

It adds up! During the elementary grades, a summer loss of three months each year accumulates to a gap of 18 months by the end of 6th grade. By middle school, summer reading loss plus an initial achievement lag at the beginning of 1st grade produces a cumulative lag of two or more years in reading achievement, even when effective instruction during the school year is available (McGill-Franzen & Allington, 2001). Data available consistently portrays summer reading setback as one of the most potent explanations for the widening reading achievement gap between economically advantaged children and economically disadvantaged children across the elementary years.

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Other significant highlights of research on summer reading loss:

- The best predictor of summer reading loss or gain is whether or not students read during the summer
- The best predictor if students will read during the summer is whether or not they own books - access to books is a major factor
- Typically, higher income children own books and low income children depend heavily on schools for books to read at home
- Children need the “right” books - books that match their reading levels and their interests
- Lower achieving children are often asked to read grade level text which is frequently at their frustration level
- When students read as few as six books (second grade reading level and higher), they are likely to fend off summer reading loss and maintain the reading gains made during the school year (McGill-Franzen & Allington, 2003)
- The key to warding off summer reading setback is to find ways to get books into the hands of children during summer break
- Besides access to books, another key factor in stemming summer reading loss is motivating children to read the books



For more research highlights on summer reading loss and the effects on student achievement, see item #2 (*Highlights of Research on Summer Reading Loss and the Effects on Student Achievement*) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below. Research documents supporting the above items are also included in this document. ■



#### **Bottom Line**

*Put books in students' hands. Be sure children, especially from lower income families, have a supply of appropriate leveled books to read throughout the summer.*

# 2 Key Ingredients: Access & Motivation

There are two key factors important to the success of the Super Summer Success Program: Access to appropriate books and motivating children to read them.



## Ingredient #1:

### Access to Appropriate Books

Just as it is important to have books for children to read, it is also important to find “just right” books. Less able readers are often made to read books that are too hard, almost guaranteeing they will neither enjoy nor succeed at reading. Often, children will opt to not participate in voluntary reading.

Providing books at an **appropriate reading level** (not merely grade level) seems to be one of the first steps in encouraging voluntary reading (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003).

The Super Summer Success Program recommends students

read books at their **independent reading levels**.

Students at a second grade level or higher should have six or more books they can read. Students at a mid-second grade reading level should read at least twelve books and students reading below a second grade reading level should read at least twenty books **throughout** the summer.

It should be stressed that these twelve or twenty books be read on a regular basis (over and over again) during the summer - not read just once.

For additional information about how to determine a child’s independent reading level, titles of high interest books at each

reading level, or more general information about leveling, *see item #3 (Reading at an Appropriate Level) and #4 (Book Leveling Resources) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.*

## **Ingredient #2:**

### **Motivating Children to Read**

Besides providing access to books, another key factor in stemming summer reading loss is motivating children to read the books.

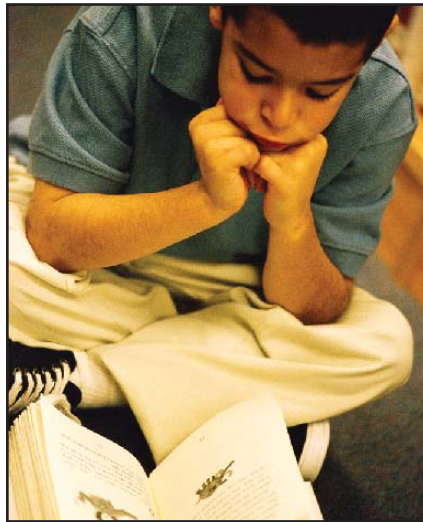
Students with less-than-successful reading experiences aren't as interested in voluntary reading as children with successful reading experiences. Motivating young readers is important. Helping students build positive experiences makes a difference.

Motivational tips include:

- Select books at students' independent reading levels
- Allow students to select some

of the books based on their own interests, *see item #5 (Student Book Wish List) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below*

- Develop ways to motivate students to read over the summer (e.g. reminders from teachers to encourage parent support and participation; keep track of their reading via a fun recording system; extend their learning by doing **simple** student-friendly projects; celebrate their participation in the fall, etc.) ■



### **Bottom Line**

*The data available consistently portrays summer reading setback as one of the most potent explanations for the widening reading achievement gap between economically advantaged children and economically disadvantaged children across the elementary years.*

# Getting Started Checklist A Plan for Success!

## VIP Very Important Project

When starting a new program, a clear vision and a detailed road map leads to greater participation by staff, parents and students. Review the following checklist to help you get started with the

Super Summer Success Reading Program. For a full page format of this checklist see item #6 (Getting Started Checklist) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### Purpose

Develop goals and objectives for the program such as:

- Educate parents and students on the importance of summer reading
- Provide students with appropriate leveled books to read during the summer
- Motivate and encourage students to read on a regular basis during the summer

### Plan & Timeline

Generate a timeline to plan and implement the various components of the project. Possible items on the list could include:

- Writing a project plan
- Gaining approval
- Finding funding sources
- Securing personnel
- Designating intended audience
- Determining the number of books needed
- Matching students to texts
- Buying or securing texts
- Packaging texts
- Notifying parents of project
- Educating parents and students on project
- Disseminating materials
- Developing a "Reminder to Read" plan
- Implementing a reminder plan
- Developing a follow-up plan for when the school year begins;

for collecting books and gaining feedback from parents, students and personnel. *See item #7 (Planning Worksheet of Task/Person Responsibilities) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.*

### **Support**

Share the plan and review the research on the importance of summer reading with administration. Secure approval and funding. Share the plan with staff and elicit input.



Finalize the plan based on administrative and staff feedback, available resources and personnel.

### **Personnel**

Consider how many people will be needed to plan, implement and maintain the summer reading project. Develop a “To Do” list and assign people tasks. *See item #7 (Planning Sheet of Tasks/Person Responsibilities) of the SSS Resource Packet at the web site listed below.*

### **Funding**

Buy or gain access to the number of books needed (e.g. number of students times six books for 2nd grade reading levels and above, number of students times twelve books for mid 2nd grade reading level, or number of students times twenty books for students reading below a 2nd grade reading level). Develop multiple ways to gain financial support to pay for the program. *See Possible Funding*

*Sources on page 11.*

### **Audience**

Determine the number of students who will be participating in this initiative. Start small! Select a grade level or targeted students based on the amount of funding and/or books available for the project.

### **Reading Levels**

Identify interest areas and appropriate reading levels for

each student in the project. See “2 Key Ingredients” on page 5 and items #3 (Reading at an Appropriate Level) and #4 (Book Leveling Resources) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### **Books**

Match books to children. Each child should have a sufficient number of books at his or her independent reading level that can be read throughout the summer. Strive to find the right match for each child’s reading level and interest areas. See item #8 (Possible Book Recommendations) and #9 (Sources for Books) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### **Distribution**

Develop a distribution or check out system. See item #10 (Check-Out Book Forms) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### **Organize**

Package the material for each participant (e.g. durable, colored bag labeled with SSS sticker).

See items #11-#13 (Book Packaging Options, Bookbag Labels, and Book Program Labels) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### **Educate**

Create innovative ways to educate parents and students on the importance of reading over the summer. See item #14 (Parent Letter) and #15 (Parent Brochure) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### **Reminders**

Develop a plan to remind parents and students to keep reading throughout the summer. See item #16 (Sample Reminder Post Cards) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### **Keep Track**

Develop a simple plan for parents and students to keep track of their reading frequency. See item #17 (Monitoring Forms) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.

### **Evaluate**

Provide different ways for parents,

students and personnel to give feedback on and suggestions for the Super Summer Success Reading Program. *See item #18 (Parent and Student Follow-Up Surveys) of the SSS Resource Packet at the web site listed below.*

**☐ Thank You**

Send thank you notes to staff, parents, administrators and volunteers who helped organize and support the Super Summer Success Reading Program.

**☐ Celebrate**

Prepare a special celebration in the fall for children who successfully participated in the Super Summer Success Reading Program.

**☐ Share**

Share your plan, successes and challenges with the Summer Reading Project Committee from Oakland Schools ISD. Your ideas and feedback will help with future development. *See contact information inside the front cover page of this booklet.* ■

**SIX BOOKS**

Yes, that's all it takes! Research shows when students read six books at an appropriate level, they will avoid summer reading setback and maintain the reading growth made during the previous school year. Sound too good to be true? It's not!



*Official sponsor of the Summer Reading Project*





# Possible Funding and Book Resources

Research indicates children should read at least six books\* over the summer to maintain reading skills achieved during the school year. The main goal of a quality summer reading project is to place “just right” books in the hands of every child.

## Possible Resources

- District or building funds
- Title I funds
- At-risk funds
- PTO/PTA funds
- Fundraisers
- Returnable bottle/can drive
- Grants (check with district or ISD grant coordinator for options)
- School book drive
- Book fairs or book club points
- Pledges from a Read-A-Thon
- Donations from service projects: Scouts, church groups, service organizations, National Honor Society, etc.
- Special fund-raisers from grocery stores, department stores or restaurants
- Store fund-raising programs

\* See page 5 for specific information on the appropriate number of books (6, 12 or 20) based on each student's independent reading level.

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## Places to Get Books

- School libraries
- Classroom libraries
- Reproducible books
- Reading Is Fundamental or RIF (via International Reading Association) provides free books to qualifying schools
- Thrift stores, garage sales, resale shops and libraries or organizations that have used book sales
- Purchase from less expensive sources or distributors that give educators a discount
- Book companies' year-end sales
- Online downloads (free internet books)
- Local library - books on a loan basis
- Donations from local businesses or corporations *See item #9 (Sources for Books) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below.* ■



### Bottom Line

*"Children need to read outside of school. Research shows the key to stemming summer reading loss is finding novel ways to get books into the hands of children during the summer break." (McGill-Franzen & Allington, 2001)*

# Introducing

## Super Summer Success to Parents & Students

### Getting Started - Spread the News!

The following are suggestions for introducing and motivating parents and students to participate in the summer reading program:

- Develop a theme to promote the school program
- “Kick off” activities for students and parents such as:
  - ◆ In-school assembly
  - ◆ Evening parent meeting
  - ◆ “Freebie” reminder items (magnets, bookmarks)
  - ◆ Winners of a student contest perform the skit or rap song they created about the SSS program (can also videotape the performance and show it at spring events like ice cream socials, music programs, school fairs, and spring conferences etc.)
  - ◆ Guest speakers on the importance of reading
- Phone calls to parents
- Personal letter from teacher, principal or superintendent, *see item #14 (Parent Letter) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below*
- Display of student created posters promoting the program
- Postcard, flyer or brochure advertising the SSS program, *see item #15 (Brochure) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below*
- Note in year-end report card
- Article in school or district newsletter
- Cassette or CD commercial for parents to listen to in the car
- Local school TV and radio stations
- News flash in community paper (send a media release) ■



# RE M I N D E R

## Ideas to Keep Students Reading Throughout the Summer



- Bookmark with program logo and reminders, *see item #19 (Student Reminder Bookmarks) of the SSS Resource Packet at the website listed below*
- Distribute refrigerator reminder magnets
- Mail postcards every couple of weeks, *see item #16 (Reminder Postcards) of the SSS Resource Packet at the web site listed below*
- Send reminder notes
- Email reminders
- Make phone calls (teachers, principal, volunteers, etc.)
- Host a “Read and Feed” or “Read In” - bring books, enjoy a treat and read
- Luncheon at school - bring your books with you
- Place articles in district/school newsletters and local newspapers
- Display student created and commercial posters with program logo
- Encourage local parks and recreation centers, counselors and camp counselors to remind students to read
- Run Super Summer Success news flashes via local media (radio and television)
- Advertise on billboards, airplane banners and skywriters (solicit corporate or local sponsors) ■



## Laurie McDonnell's 3rd Grade Class

Join Laurie on her journey of implementing the Super Summer Success Reading Program!

### Getting it Started!

To kick off the program, Laurie collected a large assortment of books from her classroom library. Some of the books were donated, some were purchased at garage sales and others were obtained from book sales. She also purchased books in which the students showed interest. At the end of the school year, Laurie felt she had a sufficient variety to fulfill the needs of her students.

In order to place the correct books in the hands of each child, the books needed to be leveled. Three parents volunteered to level the

For \$15.00, Laurie sent reminder postcards.

books. They placed colored stickers along with a written letter on each book by simply looking the titles up in a resource book (i.e. *Matching Books to Readers*). The books were sorted to make selection easy for the children.

After DRA testing in the spring, Laurie was able to direct students to books at their independent reading levels. Each child selected six books and filled out an index card with his/her choices. There were many options and areas of interest from which to choose. Each book had a bright pink SSS sticker on it for easy identification. The books were placed in a special package with the student's name on it and another label with SSS in

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bright pink. A “Reminder to Read” bookmark was also included.

To motivate the students, Laurie had a class discussion about the importance of practicing for sports, dancing, singing, or other activities in which they wanted to excel. The discussion ended with sharing the importance of practicing their reading throughout the summer. Students then went back to their seats and designed posters to hang up in their bedrooms as reminders for practicing to read.

Parents were informed about the SSS through an end of year letter. The letter stressed the importance of maintaining the skills students worked so hard to acquire and that SSS was an effective way to keep their skills sharp. The letter also reinforced that the children should be reading every day and at an independent level.

### **Reminder Ideas**

During the summer, Laurie sent three postcards to her students. The first two were friendly reminders to keep reading along with some information about her own reading.

The final postcard was a reminder to bring the books back the first week of school and get an ice cream treat for participating.

All children returned their books and completed a simple survey. Most children replied that they read their books and enjoyed reading during the summer. A parent survey also showed that many of the children needed encouragement to read, but as a whole, parents had positive comments about the program.

Laurie felt that this was a worthwhile project. The importance of reading was a focus throughout the year and continued throughout the summer: a message for both students and parents.

- Laurie’s two key ingredients to success were **access** to appropriate books and **motivation** to read them!

*For an additional case study about a Title I targeted group, see the SSS Resource Packet item #20 (Title I SSS Case Study PowerPoint) at the web site listed below. ■*

# The Last Line

## Summer Reading Makes a Difference!



If summer vacation lasted for only a week or two, this wouldn't be a problem. But most schools close for nearly three months during the summer.

For many children, this long summer vacation can detrimentally affect their learning and achievement when they return to school in the

fall. It may not seem like much, but losing a few months' worth of achievement each summer adds up over the years and can ultimately have a huge impact on students' performance.

The summer vacation period corresponds to roughly one-third of an academic year. Children, especially our economically disadvantaged students, need to read over the summer. Can you imagine if teachers didn't have students reading at all during their first three months of school? Educators would never dream of it! So why are we allowing it to happen during June, July and August?

Summer reading set back affects millions of children each year in our country (RIF, 2005) - but it doesn't have to. By putting forth a concerted effort to halt summer reading loss and by designing an intervention that simply increases student access to reading materials over the summer months, this unfortunate reality can be averted!

Remember, just like plants in a garden, students can bloom and thrive all summer long and into the back-to-school September days. ■



# Web Resources

The SSS planning team developed several resources to provide additional information and assist educators with the implementation of the SSS Reading Program. The following items may be downloaded from:

[www.oakland.k12.mi.us/earlychildhood](http://www.oakland.k12.mi.us/earlychildhood)

- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Scholastic magazine article, "Bridging the Summer Reading Gap" by Anne McGill-Franzen & Richard Allington, table of context page | 11. View samples of "take home" book bags, p. 9                          |
| 2. Highlights of Research Information on Summer Reading Loss and the Effects on Student Achievement, p. 4                           | 12. Labels for the outside of the "take home" book bag, p.9              |
| 3. Reading at an Appropriate Level - operational definitions and background, pp. 6 & 8  | 13. Book Labels identifying "Property of XXX school/classroom", p. 9     |
| 4. Book Leveling Resources, pp. 6 & 8   | 14. Parent Letter introducing the program, pp. 9 & 13                    |
| 5. Student Book Wishlist Form, p. 6   | 15. Brochure explaining the program to students and parents, pp. 9 & 13  |
| 6. Getting Started, A Plan for Success Checklist (full page), p. 7  | 16. Reminder Postcards, pp. 9 & 14                                       |
| 7. Super Summer Success Planning Sheet of Task/Person Responsibilities, pp. 8 & 9   | 17. Monitoring Forms for students to log reading over summer, p. 9       |
| 8. Book Recommendations, pp. 9  | 18. Parent and Student Follow-Up Surveys, p. 9                           |
| 9. Sources for Books - online books, free, inexpensive or discounted books, publishers for leveled books, etc., pp. 9 & 12          | 19. Student Reminder Bookmarks, p. 14                                    |
| 10. Check-Out Book Forms to keep track of book distribution, p. 9   | 20. Title I SSS Case Study - Power Point Case Study #2, p. 16            |
|   | 21. SSS logo, clip art examples and button advertising the program, p.18 |
|   | 22. Check website for additional items ■                                 |
-

# About Oakland Schools

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Oakland Schools is one of 57 intermediate school districts (ISDs) established in Michigan in 1962.

ISDs are regional service agencies that offer support services to school personnel that are best delivered regionally, as measured by cost, size and quality advantages. Oakland Schools is an autonomous, tax-supported public school district governed by Michigan General School Laws.

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## Mission

The mission of Oakland Schools is to pursue equity and excellence in education through quality service and leadership.

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## Focus - *ISD*

**I**ncrease student achievement. **S**erve diverse needs of schools. **D**ecrease costs and increase efficiencies.

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## Early Childhood Team

The Early Childhood Department of Oakland Schools works collaboratively with schools, families and other social, health and related agencies to support the school success of all children from birth through eight years of age in Oakland County.



We provide professional development and consultation in a variety of areas for preschool and early primary programs including early literacy and writing, Early On®, Great Start, student safety and behavior.

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  - Ingrid Snyder, Early Childhood Consultant
  - Dr. Sandy Biondo, Independent Contractor
- 

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# SIX BOOKS



Cut here for  
free bookmark!



**Six books!** Yes, that's all it takes. Research shows when students read six books during the summer, at an appropriate level, they could avoid summer reading setback and maintain the reading growth made during the previous school year. Sound too good to be true? **It's not!** Don't let your efforts and time go to waste. You have worked too hard throughout the school year to allow "summer loss" to happen to your students. For supplemental information visit:

[www.oakland.k12.mi.us/earlychildhood](http://www.oakland.k12.mi.us/earlychildhood)

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Avoid “Summer Reading Loss”



**Read  
6Books!**

Will your students  
take the challenge?

Find out how inside!