Dear Parents,

Every season is a season to say “thank you.” This time of year, we take a special opportunity to honor those people who do so much to ensure an excellent education at Island Creek Elementary. To all of those who are the lifeblood of our school, our secretaries, volunteers, and instructional staff, thank you. It is all about people, and you make us special.

SOL tests begin in earnest this month. The test schedule is provided below; please help us by avoiding any unnecessary absences during your child’s scheduled testing. Here are a few test taking tips, perhaps most important, help your child relax, keeping testing in perspective, the most important thing of course, is just to do your best.

- Get plenty of sleep the night before the test.
- Eat a healthy breakfast.
- Arrive at school on time.
- Think positively, “I can do this!”
- Relax. You are prepared and ready.
- Listen carefully to the directions.
- Look over the entire test before beginning.
- Read the directions carefully.
- Answer the easiest questions first.
- Mark your answers neatly.
- If you change your answer, erase it completely.
- Use the process of elimination if you do not know the answer.
- Check and reread your work before turning it in.

You are your child’s number one achievement cheerleader. I am confident our students are well prepared. (As an aside, children are often concerned that their promotion to the next grade is tied to their SOL performance, it is not.)

Remember, it is a journey, not a destination.

Thanks you for being our partners in education!

Susan Z. Owner

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**SOL SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, May 7th</td>
<td>3rd Grade Language Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 8th</td>
<td>3rd Grade Language Arts</td>
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<td>Wednesday, May 9th</td>
<td>4th Grade Language Arts</td>
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<td>Thursday, May 10th</td>
<td>5th Grade Language Arts</td>
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<td>Friday, May 11th</td>
<td>6th Grade Language Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, May 14th</td>
<td>3rd Grade Science</td>
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<td>Tuesday, May 15th</td>
<td>5th Grade Science</td>
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<td>Wednesday, May 16th</td>
<td>4th Grade Social Studies</td>
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<td>Thursday, May 17th</td>
<td>6th Grade Social Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, May 18th</td>
<td>3rd Grade Social Studies</td>
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<td>Monday, May 21st</td>
<td>make ups</td>
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<td>Tuesday, May 22nd</td>
<td>4th Grade Math</td>
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<td>Wednesday, May 23rd</td>
<td>5th Grade Math</td>
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<td>Thursday, May 24th</td>
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<td>Friday, May 25th</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3:00-4:00 Drama Group (Set Design &amp; Cast)</td>
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<td>7pm PTA Mtg., Library</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:40 1st Gr. Field Trip to GMU</td>
<td>3:00-4:00 Chess Group Mtg.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:15-1:30</td>
<td>3:00-4:00 Drama Group (Cast, Program, Publicity, Technology)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:40 6th Grade Panoramic Picture</td>
<td>3:00-4:00 Chess Group Mtg.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00-4:00 Drama Group (ALL)</td>
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<td>3:00-4:00 Drama Group (ALL)</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY NO SCHOOL</td>
<td>9:00 -10:15 Full Band Rehearsal</td>
<td>9:00 -10:15 Full Band Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:00-4:00 Drama Group (ALL)</td>
<td>3:00-4:00 Strings Assembly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7-8pm STRINGS CONCERT, CAFE</td>
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**SOL TESTING ALL MONTH**

(SEE SCHEDULE PAGE 1)

**TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK ~ CHILD NUTRITION EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION WEEK**
√ Check-it Out
at the
Library

Library Happenings
It has been a busy and fun time in the library this month:

♦ Mrs. Fay’s class, in a special project, learned about haikus, concrete poems, cinquains, and two word poems. They are a talented group of writers. Ask them about the class poem they wrote about their teacher. It will be on display in the library on Pictures & Prose night.

♦ Mr. Morris’s class, in another special project, learned more about atlases, online databases, reference books and nonfiction books as they did research for a story book that each of them are writing.

♦ Third graders are using library resources to see if they can solve a Fribble Mouse mystery, The Secret of the Silver Key.

♦ Second graders are learning about library resources to see if they can solve the mystery of Mr. Crumb’s Hobby.

♦ First graders are learning about story elements, comparing and contrasting, and the difference between fiction and nonfiction.

...Stay tuned for library happenings in other grades

Library Books Due: June 4th
It is hard to believe but the end of the school year is drawing to a close. All student library books need to be returned to the school library no later than Monday, June 4th!

6th Grade Book Club
The last meeting of the school year is May 17th at 7:30am in the library. We are reading Turnabout by Margaret Haddix. New members are encouraged to attend!

You can access the library catalog from home: http://libcat.fcps.edu/uhthin/cgisirsi/x/0/0/57/49?user_id=429WEB

May
2007

Library Staff:
Jill Woodall,
Librarian
Debi Poole,
Library Asst.

Upcoming Events:
✓ Pictures & Print:
June 7th
✓ Kingstowne Public Library Visit:
June 11th
LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Calling all 5th – 8th grade girls - parents and teachers, too!

Place: Towson University   Date: Saturday June 2 2007
Time: 11:00am to 4:15pm

The Science Festival features
• An inspiring talk by astronaut Jan Davis - payload commander for STS-85, where she deployed and retrieved the CRISTA-SPAS payload, and operated the Japanese Manipulator Flight Demonstration (MFD) robotic arm.
• Workshops for girls, which can be given by local veterinarians, astronomers, microbiologists and more
• Workshops for parents and teachers on ways to support girls’ interests in science
• A street fair with booths, hands-on activities, food, and music

Visit: [http://sallyridefestivals.com/07towson0602/register.shtml](http://sallyridefestivals.com/07towson0602/register.shtml) or Call: 1.800.561.5161

Advance registration is required

Summer Program Information

Summer programs are available for students who will complete grades K-11 during the 2006-2007 school year. Summer programs include opportunities for students to strengthen the skills and knowledge required for the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests and for middle school Promotion Benchmarks. Enrichment opportunities in academic areas are available as well as extended day programs, camps, and online courses.

The summer school booklet, *Encore 2007*, will be mailed to families whose children attend Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). *Encore 2007* will also be available at every Fairfax County public school, public library, other FCPS administrative offices, and online in March. Fees, transportation, dates, eligibility, and registration procedures vary by program.

Summer school dates for general summer school for 2007 are available:

- Elementary School  ————  July 9, 2007 - August 3, 2007
- Middle School———  July 9, 2007 - August 8, 2007
- High School-----------------  July 9, 2007 - August 9, 2007

The locations for summer school are available at [http://www.fcps.edu/news/summer/locations.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/news/summer/locations.htm).

Information about summer programs offered by camps, schools, colleges, and universities nationwide and abroad is also available at [http://www.fcps.edu/suptapps/summeropportunities/ProgramSearch.cfm](http://www.fcps.edu/suptapps/summeropportunities/ProgramSearch.cfm).
Coffee House

Mrs. Markon’s students participated in a “Coffee House” one evening in April. Students shared writing and prose that they have been working on in class. The event was a great success!

SCA Book Drive

The SCA has collected seven boxes of books to send to South Africa. Island Creek students have already collected an impressive 130 pounds of books which the SCA will pay to ship to South Africa. Thank you for encouraging your kids to donate books that they are ready to part with. We have quite an impressive selection.

The last day for sending in books is May 10th.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT

We are looking forward to the 2007-2008 school year! In next week’s take-home packet, we will be sending home a “Parent Input Form”. Please fill it out and return it to the office as soon as you can. The form will help us as we work to form the classes for next school year.
Reinforcing Learning

Be creative to keep your child learning all summer long

Kids should have fun in the summer. But if summer is all play and no work, learning can slide. Encourage your child to spend a few minutes each day refreshing her skills. You can:

- **Let your child be an expert.** Challenge her to become the family consultant on something, such as gardening. Help her learn as much as she can. Check out library books. Look for videos or DVDs. Go online. Give her a notebook for taking notes.

- **Sneak math into everyday life.** Let your child help with shopping and cooking. She can plan a menu, use a budget, measure ingredients—and do lots of taste-testing too! If you’re going on vacation, use a map to measure distances. Calculate the cost of gas. Determine how long the trip will take.

- **Go on local field trips.** Is there a museum or zoo you can visit? How about a local festival? What outdoor activities can you enjoy together? Keep in mind that one of the most interesting places to see is a parent or guardian’s workplace!


Discipline

Positive approaches equal cooperation

Parents often tell children what not to do. “Stop!” “Don’t do that!” But discipline also requires teaching children what they should do. Try to:

- **Reinforce behaviors you like.** “Terrific! You started your homework by yourself!”

- **Compliment your child in front of others.** “You should have seen Beth at soccer practice!”

- **Praise other kids who role model good behavior.** “Thank you, John, for asking politely.”

- **Keep directions short.** “Julia, bedtime.” Wordiness is confusing and can lead to arguments.

- **Make requests statements, not questions.** “Have your chore done by six o’clock.”

- **Wear a head of time about changes.** “We’ll turn off the game in two minutes.”


Growing Up

Prepare for teen years now

Many kids don’t wait until adolescence to start acting up. They test the limits in little ways now. Take these preventive steps:


- **Solve problems.** Practice brainstorming and decision making. Help your child evaluate pros, cons and consequences.

- **Increase positive influences.** Encourage participation in organized activities like sports teams.


Screen Time

Balance your child’s video games and summer fun

Video games can be fun, but too much screen time keeps kids from exercising, reading and socializing. Here are some tips:

- **Agree on reasonable limits.**

- **Enforce new rules.**

- **Provide fun alternatives like books and crafts.**


Building Responsibility

Teach responsibility with money through allowances

Giving kids an allowance teaches money management. But not if you dictate their every purchase. Go ahead and let your child buy some useless items. He’ll learn as much from his mistakes as he does from his successes.
Helping Children Learn®
Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

May 2007

QUESTION & ANSWER

How can parents encourage summer writing?

Q: As a child, I spent many summer hours keeping a journal and writing stories. How can I encourage my child to try these activities?

A: Mention that summer is a perfect opportunity for young writers. It gives them time to think, daydream, choose the right words and make revisions—all with no pressure from school! You can also:

- **Buy your child a journal.** Look for a cool notebook that will make him want to write. He might pick a special pen, too.
- **Keep paper handy.** Story ideas are everywhere your child goes! For example, if there’s an elderly man at the bank with bags of coins, maybe he could be the main character in a mystery.
- **Give opportunities to write for a purpose.** Are you visiting another town this summer? Have your child write to the Chamber of Commerce to learn about things to do.
- **Point out inspiration.** A colorful sunset may inspire a poem.
- **Publish writing.** With your child’s permission, send stories to family members and friends. Or make a collection to give as a special gift.
- **Read together.** One of the best ways for writers to improve is to read!

PARENT QUIZ

Are you fostering summer learning?

Summer is a time for you to help your child grow and learn. Answer the following questions yes or no to see where you stand on summer learning:

1. Did you register your child for a local summer reading program?
2. Do you look for things to do in the newspaper with your child?
3. Do you turn the TV off on some nights and read together as a family?
4. Do you encourage your child to start a collection over the summer?
5. Do you play games with your child that involve math and reading?

How did you do? Each yes answer means your child will continue learning throughout the summer. For each no answer, consider using that idea from the quiz to change your answer to yes.

BUILDING CHARACTER

Focus on helping others

Helping others teaches compassion and boosts self-esteem. Plan your family’s summer community service projects now.

Assess the amount of time you can give, and then find a project in your community that matches your child’s abilities and interests—like working in an animal shelter or soup kitchen. Talk with your child about why it’s important to help others. After volunteering, ask her what she learned.


BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Look for signs of stress

It’s easy for children to get stressed at the end of the year. Your child may be over-scheduled if he:

- Is forgetful.
- Picks fights.
- Overeats.
- Has headaches or stomachaches.

If he exhibits these signs, help him prioritize. Remember, homework comes first!


Make compliments specific

Kids need praise to develop self-esteem. But too much praise can sound meaningless. Make sure your compliments are genuine and specific. Instead of “Good job,” you might say, “Your room looks great. I like the way you organized your sports stuff.”


Sea creativo para mantener a su niño aprendiendo durante el verano

Los niños deben divertirse en el verano. Pero si el verano es todo juego y no trabajo, el aprendizaje puede venirse abajo. Ahí se a su niño a pasar unos cuantos minutos cada día refrescando sus habilidades. Usted puede:

- **Dejar que su niño sea un experto.** Únete a que se convierta en el asesor de la familia sobre algo, como jardinería. Ayúdelo a aprender tanto como pueda. Saquen libros de la biblioteca. Busquen videos o DVDs. Conéctense en línea. Déle un cuaderno para tomar notas.

- **Incluir las matemáticas en la vida cotidiana.** Deje que su niño ayude en comprar y cocinar. Puede planear un menú, usar un presupuesto, medir ingredientes y dar muchas probaditas también! Si van a ir de vacaciones, usen un mapa para medir las distancias. Calcule el costo de la gasolina. Determinen cuánto tiempo requerirá el viaje.

- **Hacer viajes de estudio.** ¿Existe un museo o zoológico que puedan visitar? ¿Y qué tal un festival local? ¿Qué actividades pueden disfrutar juntos al aire libre? ¿Recuerde que uno de los lugares más interesantes de ver es el lugar de trabajo de los padres o tutores?


**LA DISCIPLINA**

Los enfoques positivos igualan la cooperación

Los padres a menudo les dicen a los niños lo que **no** deben hacer. “¡Detente!” “No hazas eso!” Pero la disciplina también requiere enseñar a los niños que deben hacer. Trate de:

- **Reforzar los comportamientos que le gusten.** “¡Estupendo! ¡Empezaste a hacer tu tarea sólo!”

- **Elogiar a su niño en frente de otros.** “Debías haber visto a Beth en la práctica de fútbol!”

- **Alabar a otros niños** que dan el ejemplo de buen comportamiento. “Gracias, Jaime, por preguntar con cortesía.”

- **Dar direcciones cortas.** “Ana, hora de acostarse.” La palabra es confusa y puede conducir a discusiones.

- **Hacer las peticiones** en forma de afirmaciones, no en forma de preguntas. “Termina tu tarea para las seis.”

- **Advertir con anticipación** lo referente a cambios. “Apagaremos el juego en dos minutos.”


**CRECIENDO**

Prepárese ahora para los años de la adolescencia

Muchos niños no esperan llegar a la adolescencia para empezar a dar guerra. Prueban los límites de manera pequeña ahora. Tome estas medidas preventivas:

- **Manténgase conectado.** No permita que los horarios atormentados se interfieran con el tiempo de la familia. Cenaran juntos, harán tareas, leerán en voz alta, den paseos. Jueguen juegos, compartan los pasatiempos.

- **Resuelvan los problemas.** Practique plantear ideas y tomar decisiones. Ayude a su niño a evaluar los pros, contras y consecuencias.

- **Aumente las influencias positivas.** Fomente la participación en actividades organizadas como los equipos de deportes.


**TIEMPO DE PANTALLA**

Equilibre los juegos de video y la diversión de verano

Los juegos de video pueden ser divertidos, pero demasiado tiempo de pantalla impide a que los niños se ejerciten, lean y socialicen. Aquí tiene algunos consejos:

- **Decidan** los límites razonables.

- **Haga** que se cumplan las reglas nuevas.

- **Proporcione** alternativas divertidas como los libros y las artesanías.


**RESPONSABILIDAD**

Utilice mesadas para enseñar responsabilidad con el dinero

Dar una mesada a los niños enseña el manejo del dinero. Pero no es así si usted decide cada cosa que ellos compran. Así que permita que su niño compre algunos artículos inútiles. De esta manera, aprenderá tanto de sus errores como de sus éxitos.
¿Cómo pueden los padres fomentar la escritura de verano?

**P.** Como niño, pasé muchas horas del verano llevando un diario y escribiendo cuentos. ¿Cómo puedo animar a mi niño a intentar estas actividades?

**R.** Mencione que el verano es una oportunidad para que los niños expresen sus ideas y pensamientos a través de la escritura. Proporcione materiales de escritura como cuadernos y lápices, y muestre cómo puede incorporar la escritura en su rutina diaria.

- **Comprarle un diario a su niño.** Busque un cuaderno bonito que él disfrute escribir. Podría ser un plumón especial.
- **Tener papel a la mano.** Algunas ideas de los cuentos están dondequiera que vaya su niño: por ejemplo, si hay un anuncio en el banco con bolsas de monedas, tal vez podría ser el personaje principal en un cuento de Misterio.
- **Brindar oportunidades para escribir con un propósito.** ¿Vas a visitar otra ciudad este verano? Haga que su niño escriba a la Camara de Comercio para enterarse de las cosas que hacer.
- **Hacer notar la inspiración.** Una puesta de sol de colores puede inspirar un poema.
- **Publicar lo escrito.** Con el permiso de su niño, envíe cuentos a sus familiares y amigos. O haga una colección para darla como un regalo especial.
- **Leer juntos.** Una de las mejores maneras de que los escritores mejoren es leer!

---

**CUESTIONARIO PARA PADRES**

¿Fomenta usted el aprendizaje de verano?

El verano es una ocasión para que ayude a su niño a crecer y aprender. Conteste las siguientes preguntas con sí o no para ver dónde se halla en el aprendizaje de verano:

1. **¿Inscribió a su niño en un programa de lectura de verano local?**
2. **¿Busca cosas que hacer en el verano?**
3. **¿Apaga la televisión en algunas noches y leen juntos como familia?**
4. **¿Anima a su niño a iniciar una colección durante el verano?**
5. **¿Juega juegos con su niño que incluyan matemáticas y lectura?**

---

**Enfóquese en ayudar a otros**

Ayudar a otros enseña empatía y estimula la autoestima. Pense en proyectos de servicio comunitario de verano de su familia ahora.

- **Calcule la cantidad de tiempo que puede ofrecer, y después encuentre un proyecto en su comunidad que corresponda con las capacidades e intereses de su niño—como trabajar en un refugio de animales o en un comedor popular.** Hable con su niño de por qué es importante ayudar a otros. Después de que haya fungido como voluntario, pregúntele qué aprendió.


---

**Resuelve problemas**

**Busque señales de estrés**

Es fácil para los niños estresarse al final de año. Su niño puede estar programado en exceso si:

- **Es olvidadizo.**
- **Busca pleitos.**
- **Come en exceso.**
- **Tiene dolores de cabeza o dolores de estómago.**

Si muestra estas señales, ayúdelo a priorizar. Recuerde, ¡la tarea es primordial!


---

**Haga elogios específicos**

Los niños necesitan alabanzas para desarrollar la autoestima. Pero demasiadas alabanzas pueden parecer falsas. Asegúrese que sus alabanzas sean genuinas y específicas. En lugar de “Buen trabajo,” podría decir, “Tu habilidad se ve genial. Me gusta la manera en que organizaste tus cosas de deporte.”


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**Ayudando a los Niños a Aprender**

Editor: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.
Redactora General: Patricia Hodgdon
Redactora: Jennifer McGovern
Escribas: Susan O'Brien & Amanda Blyth
Directora de Traducciones: Michelle Beal-García
Asistente de Redacciones: Pat Carter
Ilustraciones: Macher & Mignella, Cherry Hill, NJ.
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