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Dear Westfield Families and Educators,

It is our district vision that Westfield Public Schools collaborates with our community to provide rigorous, inclusive educational experiences that promote academic, emotional, and social growth. In doing so, our students will become lifelong learners who are empowered with knowledge and skills for future success in college and career. This summer, Westfield Public Schools and the Westfield Athenaeum are partnering to offer our students the opportunity to participate in a Summer Reading Club. Research shows that reading during the summer may prevent a student from experiencing a reading lapse and help him or her to perform at higher levels the next school year.

The Athenaeum is one of Westfield's greatest assets, and it is our hope that this partnership will enable us to establish a sustainable summer reading program. Library cards are powerful. They enable our students to access literally thousands of print and digital resources for free. We encourage our students and their families to visit the library over the summer to access resources and participate in the many free programs and offerings for children and teens. Furthermore, the librarians at the Athenaeum will assist our students in selecting high-interest books at the right reading level.

Students will receive a Summer Reading Club log in their schools that explains the particulars of the program. The logs will also be available online. As part of the Summer Reading Club, the Athenaeum is hosting a Kindness Challenge for which students are encouraged to perform meaningful acts of kindness and to reflect upon how their acts have a positive effect on the community. We have drawn a connection between the Kindness Challenge and PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports). During the school year, many of our students use PBIS to cultivate a positive school climate and recognize and reward good behavior and effort. This summer, we challenge students to perform acts of kindness that will help to cultivate a positive climate in the community.

By participating in the Summer Reading Club, students will be eligible for prizes at the library throughout the summer and in their schools in the fall. The Summer Reading Club will host a kickoff event on June 23 from 10 am -1 pm for families on the Park Square Green. All are invited to enjoy our beautiful city and to celebrate reading!

I wish you a restful summer vacation. I hope that the books you read this summer will transport you to distant lands, introduce you to remarkable people—both real and fictional, help you to explore everything from historical time periods to undiscovered planets, and act as a source of inspiration!

Sincerely,

Susan Dargie
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

