

# Mercier Literacy News



Angelique, a kindergartner at School 9, traces a letter while hearing the letter sound pronounced.

## iPads Enhance Learning

### Mercier students learning to use new technology while reinforcing skills

Thanks to the Maxion Family Fund and a B.M. Feinberg Grant for Immigrant Education, the Mercier Literacy Program has purchased three new iPads, along with applications for use in classrooms.

“(The iPads) are another tool that adds to students motivation,” said kindergarten teacher Toni Kiddie. “Any time a student can get instant

feedback as provided through individualized technology, learning is reinforced.”

Mercier Director Katie Paxton-Johnson adds, “Kids can access interactive leveled books, play sight word and interactive phonics games.”

“The iPads are also a great tool for teachers to use in our student assessments, making them more fun,” she said.

## Yoga, Musical Theater, “Brain Gym” Enrich Rigorous Summer Program

Summer just got a lot more exciting for city schoolchildren in the Mercier Literacy Program, where they will attend yoga, physical education, musical theater and library classes once per week, in addition to their regular reading and writing workload.

“With the budget cuts this year, city schoolchildren are not going to have the access to the fine arts they were getting in school,” said Mercier Literacy co-Director Katie Paxton-Johnson. “And for some



children, the only access they had to the arts was during the school day. So we want to provide that over the summer.”

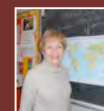
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*Once you learn to read,  
you will be forever free.”  
-Frederick Douglas*

## WRITER'S CORNER



*"One spring night Yazmin was in her bed dreaming about her garden... When she woke up she went outside to check out the flowers in the garden. The flowers were dead because she didn't take care of them. How is she going to decorate her cake if the flowers are all dead!*

*..... Yazmin decided to paint them red and blue. Then she got the flowers cut and put them on her cake and decorated it. She took the cake to her party and ate it with her family."*

--Azmeriza (Grade 2)

## Summer Reading Program Enrollment at All-time High

The Mercier Literacy Program is expanding its free, daily literacy instruction to a second site in the city of Rochester this summer, and doubling the number of spots at its current site.

"We will open our School 9 program up to 200 children this summer," said Co-Director Katie Paxton-Johnson. She said they will be serving almost twice as many children there due to the high demand this year.

"We are also adding a second summer school site at School 46. We have hired 8 teachers who will serve 75 children there," Paxton-Johnson said.

The children will attend Mercier Literacy daily throughout July, from 9 a.m. to noon. School 9 has

busing all lined up, along with breakfast and lunch for every child. Program officials hope to have busing and meals at School 46 as well.

Mercier Literacy Program will also provide the same intensive literacy instruction to children at Rochester Childfirst Network, on South Avenue in Rochester.

"The demand for high-quality, research-based instruction with proven results is always increasing," said Co-Director Rosanne Kulikowski.

"Our goal is to one day allow every child in the city of Rochester access to the Mercier Literacy Program," she said.



## Urban-Suburban Pen Pals

For the past several months students in the Mercier Literacy Program at School 9 have been corresponding with suburban peers from Quest Elementary School in Hilton.

The kids have been exchanging letters, photos,

drawings and even videos of themselves, their friends and their schools.

Teachers are planning a culminating event where the kids can meet in person. Stay tuned for photos in our next newsletter!

## Teacher highlight, Toni Kiddie



**Education:** Baldwin Wallace College (BS in Elementary Education), Nazareth College (MS in Reading)

**Teaching experience:** Mrs. Kiddie began her career in Berea, Ohio. After moving to New York she spent time home with her children before returning to teaching at Victor Central Schools. She retired in 2009 after 27 years in the district as a reading and writing specialist, grade 4 and 6 teacher, Language Arts coordinator, and mentor teacher.

**Personal:** "My husband and I live in Victor where I enjoy walking the trails with our dog, walking into town and being close to the library. When I am not substitute teaching, tennis, golf, traveling to see our five grandchildren and cooking keep me busy."

**What do you like best about working for Mercier Literacy?** "Teaching for Mercier is a wonderful part of my week as I am enjoying seeing our kindergartners become readers and writers. It is fun co-teaching with Mrs. Johnstone who knows five and six year olds well and adds such a good feeling to learning. It is a privilege to be part of such a worthwhile program."

### New Classes (continued from page 1)

Phys ed teacher Jennifer Forsey will work with kids learning sight words and word patterns using kinetic movements.

"'Brain gym' exercises will stimulate the brain, and increase focus and stamina," said director Rosanne Kulikowski.

"Music teacher Tricia Van Auken will work with students to increase literacy skills using rhythm, chorale singing, and chants," she said.

Van Auken will also help the children prepare for "reading

theater" and writing performances.

In yoga class, children will move through animal poses and learn about breathing, relaxation and meditation with teacher Carol Beatty-Nowacki.

School 9 librarian Celeste Wilson will open the library at that school twice a week, teaching children how to use media effectively.



Having the special classes breaks up a long day of intense instruction, said Paxton-Johnson. The kids arrive at school at 9:00 a.m. and stay through noon.

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## You can help a child attend Mercier this summer

The Mercier Literacy Program uses research-based instructional practices and proven curriculum to strengthen reading and writing skills in some of our city's poorest children.

We provide free, high-quality, instruction to low-income, struggling students in grades K-6.

Most kids in Rochester will lose ground in reading and writing over the summer. However, one hundred

percent of children in our summer program will maintain reading levels, and ninety percent will make gains.

You can help a child in Rochester have the best summer of his or her life.

Please visit our website [www.mercierliteracyprogram.org](http://www.mercierliteracyprogram.org), or call 424-3338 to learn how you can sponsor a child, and help him or her return to school this fall ready to learn.



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To our supporter