TO: Notre Dame Families

FROM: Notre Dame English Department

DATE: May 3, 2013

RE: **SUMMER READING**

Dear Families:

The Notre Dame High School English Department believes that summer reading complements our curriculum and benefits our students by providing challenging, interesting reading opportunities that stimulate the intellect and the imagination. Like athletes training in the off-season, students need to exercise their developing minds in the summer months to ensure that their reading, analysis, and critical thinking skills continue to develop. Additionally, summer reading sets the academic tone and expectations for the upcoming school year.

Each Notre Dame student is required to read TWO (2) books over the summer. The English Department has selected one nonfiction book for all students in Grades 9-12 to read, providing an opportunity for fruitful, cross-curricular, community-wide discussions. Each student will also read one fiction book as assigned for his or her appropriate 2013-2014 English class. **Please see the following required summer reading handout for further details.**

**For our school-wide nonfiction selection, all students in Grades 9-12 must read Melanie Kirkpatrick’s *Escape from North Korea: The Untold Story of Asia’s Underground Railroad* (ISBN: 9781594036330). All students must be prepared to bring a copy (print or electronic) of it to class for the first couple weeks of school in August as a means of reference for class discussion and assessment.**

To ensure that students go into the summer with this book in hand, we are very fortunate to be able to order *Escape from North Korea* for your child through Notre Dame for a significant discount. All families wishing to order the significantly discounted *Escape from North Korea* through Notre Dame, please send a CHECK (made payable to NDHS) for **$15.00** by **Monday, May 13**. Please ask your child to deliver the check to his/her current English teacher.

Families should make arrangements to acquire the fiction selection via a local library, book store, or online vendor. Students will be assessed on both books during the first weeks of school.

We encourage the Notre Dame community to make reading a family activity. Feel free to join your students in their learning process by reading these books yourselves and engaging with them in dialogue.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. On behalf of the English department, I wish you a wonderful summer and look forward to working with you and your children next year.

Kindly,

Elizabeth Wheeler, Chair

English Department

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