With the theme, “Around the World in 20 Days,” Perkins County Schools’ summer school session is providing students the opportunity to practice skills and stay involved in their subjects over the summer break.

The group, which includes up to 27 students from kindergarten to fifth grade, meets Mondays-Thursdays from 8-11 a.m. for a total of five weeks. A three-week session ended Thursday, June 24 and another two-week session will begin July 11.

Last summer was the first time in several years that summer school was offered, and funded through stimulus funds. School superintendent Tobin Buchanan felt the program should continue this year, with support from the district.

Each week, students arrive in the “airport” (music room) to check in and pick up their boarding pass to a new continent. They place jackets and articles from their pockets in a basket to be “scanned” for security.

As soon as everyone is seated on the “airplane” in labeled seats arranged like those on a real airplane, the students hear the pilot announcing takeoff, with the use of a Promethean Board and computer. They can see the luggage being placed on board, clouds out the window and can watch the plane “land” in a different country.

They have already “flown” to Asia, Mexico, Australia, and plan to visit Africa and India during the last two week session. Guest speakers, items from the country, stories, movie clips, snacks and food tasting are just some of the fun.

Groups of students then split up and rotate to four centers to work on math, reading, science/social studies, and writing, and are given the opportunity to spend time on specific needs with a teacher.

Students and staff return to the “plane terminal” for a closing activity of ethnic music that matches the country, quiet reading or review of new words and concepts learned that day.

Included in the curriculum are several field trips to the library for the summer reading program and book checkout.

The group has also participated in a community service project, painting the door of Meadowlark Gallery with a patriotic theme.

Summer school director is Sally Shiers. She is assisted by paras and teachers Cheri McCormick, Sandy Prante, Michelle Snyder, Penny and Shayne Hite, Beth Carrig, Diana Daley and Tandy Overstreet. Student volunteers are Alissa Overstreet and Michi Prante.