

PTA Parent Coffee Meeting Minutes: 11/3/14

Early learning

Attendees: Mr. Gruebel, Mrs. Shinn & Mrs. Edgar (reading specialists) and 12 parents

Student Assessment

- Reading specialists
 - Mrs. Shinn: grades 2-4
 - Mrs. Edgar (grades K, 1, and 5th) is new to CES (previously at Broadneck ES). Has been with the county for more than 20 years.
- DIBELS (reading assessment) given to 1st and 2nd grade students this fall.
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment:
 - Assesses reading, dexterity, science, social studies component
- 1st and 2nd graders were also given Fountas and Pinnell (F&P)
 - Gives reading levels and helps teachers identify individual instructional materials
 - Independent level
 - Instructional level
 - Frustration level
 - Identifies strategies students are using and the ones they are not using
 - Teachers can use information to form 'strategy groups' to help students who are making similar types of errors (miscue analysis)

Fountas and Pinnell

- Mandated for every AACPS school for K-2nd: early reading focus
 - Will be given in fall and spring
 - Typically was a reading specialist's tool and now used by teachers in order to bring those strategies into the classroom
 - During 2 hour early dismissal days, teachers are receiving training
- Gives a more complete picture beyond DIBELS assessment
- Teachers do the assessments one on one with students.
 - Teachers had substitutes, reading teachers pushed in to teach class so teachers could do assessments
- Students begin by reading a word list to identify a starting point, next they read aloud a leveled book. Teachers listens as students read aloud for strategies students are and aren't using. Do they correct their own mistakes as they read, etc? Listen for fluency/accuracy, speed, etc.
 - Can identify students' strengths and areas that need improvement
 - Helps teachers determine which types of reading materials are appropriate for instruction

- Students can be divided into different groups that have similar needs (in reading level, similar strategies they need to work on, etc)
- Teachers will share results, reading level, etc during parent conferences in November
 - Parents should ask questions, determine what might be needed at home, etc
- This information will travel with a student if they move to another AACPS school
- Downside: teachers had to receive training which took time;
- Role of Reading Specialists: anyone not reaching benchmarks may be eligible for reading intervention
 - Parents are notified by the 1st quarter of the school year
 - Students are given an opportunity to show growth in the classroom before a reading intervention is put in place.
 - Reading intervention groups are seen daily in addition to classroom reading groups provided by the classroom teacher
 - Oversee intervention groups within classrooms
 - A resource for students, teachers, and parents
 - Progress monitoring of students occurs every two weeks
- F&P results also identify advanced readers and provide teachers with a level for instruction. Instructional materials are selected to meet the needs of those students
- Suggested to read aloud to students of ALL ages
 - Provides a model of fluent reading, allows the child to hear mistakes and self corrections
 - Hearing intonation (strengthens comprehension): can get the 'movie in the mind'/visualization
 - Have siblings read aloud to each other
 - Provides an opportunity for the reader to model think alouds (self questioning, rereading, making predictions, etc.)
 - OK to read higher level books to students: they are exposed to rich vocabulary, higher level content, provides a model of strong writing, etc.
 - Books on CD are great for the car

Parents asked for suggestions for books for children?

- Fountas and Pinnell has a website which can provide the level to familiar titles
- Libraries are familiar with this Fountas and Pinnell book leveling and are happy to help families find "just right books" for each child

What are suggestions for helping students with comprehension?

- Tiered questions.
 - What are 3 things they remember?
 - Follow-up to that question (see list of questions attached)

- Defend your answers: present a different point of view and defend it with text evidence
- Can do this with TV shows or movies: follow-up questions
- Turn it around: Read aloud to them and then have your child ask you questions

New curriculum emphasis on ‘Information Text’

- Flyers, informational text/resources about a person or a place
- Work that into what you do with your children: If you are going on a trip, have your child go on the internet and research the topic
- If your child plays soccer, have them look up a rule that came up (‘high interest’ things for them)
- Have them look up and find out what time the movie is that you are going to
- Have a grandparent read aloud to a child over the phone, Skyp. Each of them has a copy of the same book. They take turns reading a page to each other.
- Find out what your child is into
 - Look at the article in the paper on the Ravens game, etc
- “Reading is reading!”
- There is the ‘learning in reading’ but also the ‘love of reading’ that should be fostered

When and why did AACPS change to letter grades in 2nd grade?

- Mostly parent pressure to switch from CD, PR system to A, B, C, D letter grades

Why didn’t all receive interims?

- They are required for a grade of C or below
- One time last year all students got one. Due to a “Green School” initiative, parents are encouraged to use Parent Connect to monitor grades

“Failing means you are still growing.” You’re not there yet. Helps children learn to persevere.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melissa Wanner