



Fort Report

Mrs. Pearson, Principal

November, 2018



In November we anticipate changes in trees, weather and seasonal sports. Most often November is also the time when students and families notice changes in academic practices, too. Typically, this shift is reflective of data analysis that result in changes to instructional focuses for students. Also impactful are professional development opportunities and teacher goals. This Fort Report will give you a deeper look into the specifics of some of these practices and influences.

You likely have heard that all children participate in a reading skills assessment known as the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). Once all students have been tested, our reading department and Ms. Sullivan analyze and sort student data at the classroom and grade-wide level. Grade level data meetings are then held where our reading specialists and Ms. Sullivan explain the data and highlight trends in student learning and growth. Teachers dialogue about their individual student data and their focus of instruction based on their particular class's performance. Conversation around grade level initiatives occurs, too. The data, in addition to teacher input and student history, is used to identify which students are eligible and will receive supplemental reading services. The DIBELS is administered in the fall, winter and spring and, along with other data, helps to ensure we continue to serve the neediest students. More frequent monitoring of

student growth occurs, too. Progress monitoring assessments, formative assessments and observation are also important in helping teachers make use of our "walk to learn" model. Walk to learn refers to our practice of migrating students into other classrooms if the focus of instruction is better tailored to the specific needs of a student not generally in that classroom.

I-Ready is an on-line personalized math instruction and assessment program that holds lots of promise for boosting student learning and achievement in first and second grade. The i-Ready diagnostic test that was referenced in the October Fort Report has been completed in first and second grade. Teachers and students have been working hard to navigate this new program. The logistics of teaching students how to log in independently, find their targeted lesson and monitor their own performance is not yet in the rearview mirror but we're on our way. I-Ready staff have provided professional development to our staff and held a very informative post-diagnostic data analysis session. The i-Ready data will continue to drive our instruction and has incredible value in advancing our approach to personalized learning. Instructional changes that are likely outcomes and noticeable to students and parents/guardian may include a greater presence of focus-skill small group and individual learning.

Students enjoyed their first SMART assembly this month. SMART assemblies gather all students together for an entertaining and motivational presentation on aspects of our SMART Plan. Music, videos and skits are some of the ways that we that highlight and model SMART choices and behaviors for our students. Recognition of SMART students sends a subtle message that being SMART is both important and

easy. Based on a very enthusiastic audience, students will be looking forward to these each month.

And it is quite likely that November will usher in the addition of a seventh kindergarten classroom. Apart from moving a few classrooms, we do not anticipate any noticeable changes to any grade level beyond kindergarten. Schedule and traffic will remain as usual.



November is a busy calendar month in general which results in lots of interruptions to our school calendar. Please be sure to note no school and early release days right away as there are quite a few this month. And the PTO has plans for a Math Night and Movie Night so there's lots of opportunity for family engagement and fun, too.

I am letting families know that I am scheduled for a time sensitive and unexpected medical procedure that will keep me out of the building until January. Despite physical limitations, I hope to maintain an active presence from afar. Day to day and time sensitive matters will be handled by, Ms. O'Leary, our Assistant Principal. Provisions are in place for additional support to help her assume parts of my position while holding onto parts of her own. The Superintendent, Ms. Howard, will oversee the building and practices and check in regularly in my absence. I informed students of my situation. They have filled my heart with emotion and I already can't wait to come back.

Wishing you a wonderful November and sending you thanks for allowing me to be,

Your Partner in Education...

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- 11/6: NO SCHOOL/election day
- 11/12: NO SCHOOL/Veterans Day Observed
- 11/14: PTO sponsored Math Night/6:00-7:30
- 11/21: EARLY RELEASE
- 11/22-23: NO SCHOOL/Thanksgiving
- 11/30: PTO sponsored Movie Night/6:00-8:00

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