



Home of the Otters!

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Update on Two Rivers Community School and AYP Status

As I familiarize myself with how North Carolina measures progress, I thought it would be a good time to share this information with the Two Rivers community.

As you may know, the No Child Left Behind legislation requires that all students be proficient in Reading and Mathematics by the school year 2013-2014. Progress toward that goal is measured by each state in the manner they devise and is referred to as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). North Carolina has chosen to create 2-3 year thresholds.

The assumption is that each district, school, and student will show some increased progress every year toward the goal of 100% proficiency by 2014. However, the measure that the state established moves in large chunks. For example, to make AYP in math in 2006-2007, 65.8% of students needed to be proficient (score of 3 or 4 on EOG), in 2007 - 2008 77.2% needed to be proficient: this is a jump of 11.4 points.

Conversely, the Reading test was new last year and the target score was lowered for the next three year increment when it will jump 30.8 points!

In analyzing our relative strengths and areas of need, I find that we are strongest in Reading. Though we can always improve in the area of comprehension and critical thinking which will impact performance in all area of education, we can shift our immediate focus to mathematics where we have a great need of improvement.

Our Reading scores are relatively

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3RD GRADE NEWS

Student led conferences completed – Thank you for participating in your child’s student led conference! They were proud to show off their schoolwork and what they have learned. Be sure to send in a letter that they can share with the class and I can put up on the class wall as encouragement to them in their learning.

Class book– I will begin a class book when the students return from Thanksgiving break. The book will be *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo. I have seven books, but need 2 more. Do you have a copy of that book that I can borrow for the class? As a field trip, or a class movie, I would like the students to see the new movie after we have finished reading the book. The movie comes out mid December after we return from Christmas break. If you choose to see the movie during Christmas break with your family, know that the students will have a chance to see it again after we finish the book in class. I am sure they would want to see it again!

The students completed learning about tale tales and creatively wrote their own tale, which you saw in their student led portfolio. Now they are beginning to learn about medieval tales and I am reading several classic stories to them. They will creatively write their own medieval tale as well.

Spelling – I am doing a pretest each Wednesday on the spelling words I send home each week, so that the words they don’t get correct they can practice with you at home. Then each Thursday, I give them their spelling test for the spelling words from the previous week I handed out that they have studied for over the week. This is in addition to the spelling book they have at school that they work on each week with new spelling patterns. My goal is help your child improve their spelling.

Homework – To simplify the number of folders going home, I will be sending homework home each Wednesday in their Wednesday folder, instead of every Monday. The students can turn in their completed homework on Tuesday. If they are done earlier, they can turn it in on Monday.

Heroes Expedition – When the students return from Thanksgiving break, they will work on completing their heroes expedition. Please have them bring in a 3- fold display board (found at Staples or Walmart,) which they can put their completed work on for presenting at their expedition. I plan to have their expedition done before Christmas break, unless we have snowy weather and miss a number of school days. Then they will do it in January.

Multiplication – I have been teaching the students multiplication using manipulatives, word problems, story and rhyme, flash cards, and memorization. I have given them two multiplication tests to assess what they have learned and what they still have to work on. Be sure to help your child solidify their multiplication facts. You may use the story and rhyme sheets that I have included to help them at home, which they learned in class. You may also use multiplication flash cards, which I use in the classroom as well. I will begin giving them 1 minute timed tests in multiplication when they return from Christmas break. The goal

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3rd Grade News (continued)

is have their facts in long term memory that they can quickly and automatically remember.

Author's Night – The next Author's Night at the Watauga Library is Thursday, Dec. 11th from 5:30 – 6:00pm. Sam Eagen will be the 3rd grade representative.

~ Mrs. April

From the Director (continued)

consistent and well above the state performance target. Our math scores vary greatly from grade to grade and in only one instance, Grade 7, did the scores rise above the state target.

It is also important to note that as a very small school, the number of students being tested at each grade is small and the range of student performance is quite broad as we have a wide range of student needs within each grade.

What are we doing to improve student performance in Mathematics and all tested areas? First, we needed information that was helpful. The state provides a score and no other data as to how each student performed on the End of Grade test (EOG). This does not provide us with anything to analyze in order to make a plan for improvement.

As a result, this school year, we put in place two assessment instruments that provide analytical data with which an improvement plan can be formed. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) has been given to all students Kindergarten through Grade 8. This has helped us provide reading instruction that is designed to help students grow in comprehension and critical thinking and not just focus on decoding (reading words).

To get information about needs in mathematics, we administered a normed assessment, the TerraNova. This data is helping us plan for individual and school improvement.

Enrichment activities are also in place to help. The Reading Patch, the Writing Clubs, and Junior Great Books will help improve comprehension and critical thinking. We will be offering family math and science nights in the second half of the year. If anyone is interested in offering an after school enrichment activity, especially in mathematics, please contact the school.

I will be scheduling an information meeting after the first of the year to go over specifics regarding the AYP results and the Annual School Report Card.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the staff and myself, I want to thank you for your support as we grow and become the school of excellence we all envision.

~June Gilch

KINDER NEWS

Kinders wish to thank the ASU music and theater teachers for sharing their talents with us during the months of November and December. Kinders learned about Jack Tales from our theater teachers and how to sing great songs and keep rhythm from our music teachers! We used our five senses and had wonderful times with our ASU theater and music teachers. Thank you Anna Ward and Liz Rose for sharing your students with our students!

Kinders will be very busy investigating how other countries use lights during celebrations in December. We will investigate how lights are used when celebrating Las Posadas, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Solstice and Three Kings Day. You can look forward to great crafts and artwork this month!

Please send in all pictures and/or picture money. Money for yearbooks is due as well.

Thursday, December 11, 2008 AUTHOR'S NIGHT at the Library 5:30 – 6:30 where Kylah will be our December Kinder representative!

~ Miss Vicki

BRAIN GYM® FOR HOMEWORK (CONT.)...

The following two moves are great to use when homework becomes stressful or frustrating. The calf pump relieves tension in the muscles along the back of the body, releasing the reflex to hold back, and increasing the flow of cerebral spinal fluid. Hook-ups stimulate both hemispheres of the brain and relax the central nervous system for clear thinking. Doing these together will help everyone establish a new place of calm.

Calf Pump

- Stand with one leg in front of the other with the toes pointed forward.
- Bend the knee of the front leg while pushing the heel of the back leg into the floor.
- Inhaling, raise the back heel off the floor.
- Exhaling, press the back heel into the floor for 8-10 seconds.
- Repeat three times. Change the position of the feet and do the same on the other side.

Hook Ups

- Part One- Sitting or standing, cross the left ankle over the right.
- Extend the arms in front of you with palms out and thumbs down.
- Cross the left wrist over the right, interlace the fingers and draw hands in and up toward the chest. Breathe deeply and relax.
- Part Two- Uncross legs and hands. Bring the fingertips of each hand together, continuing to breathe deeply for a minute.

~ Miss Cyndi

AUTHOR'S NIGHT

Thursday, Dec. 11.

Come and support our student authors!

5:30-6:00 Watauga County Public Library

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

- Wednesday, December 17th - FULL DAY OF SCHOOL
- Friday, December 19th - Early dismissal at 11:30. NO AFTER SCHOOL CARE WILL BE PROVIDED.