



Coronado K-8

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Amphitheater School District Governing Board
FROM: Gerad Ball, Principal
RE: Governing Board Principal's Report
Date: November 17, 2015

The Amphitheater School District values of creativity, respectfulness, and achievement have influenced Coronado K-8's school improvement plan. These three values seem to resonate well in our plan, so I would like to discuss elements of our improvement efforts associated with them. It's worth noting that these efforts and plan components are created with input from our PTO, Site Council, and Leadership Team. These groups met with administration late in the previous year and early in the current and discussed the areas most needing improvement.

Creativity should permeate the core subjects. Writing is certainly one of the cores where creativity can grow, and our current writing goal fits well into our school plan. Our elementary teachers have spent this and last year learning how to implement and use the Lucy Calkins Writing Workshop approach. Students are more proficient, descriptive, and creative in their writing. Creativity, of course, also thrives in electives, clubs and competitive activities. Coronado is sometimes referenced as a "music magnet" school because our music class choices are so numerous and our staff well experienced. General music, band, choir, orchestra, percussion, guitar, and steel drum classes give students an extensive creative outlet. Our school plan addresses these classes by constantly reinventing how they are scheduled throughout the day. By doing so, we can make sure they do not conflict with core classes. Another creative endeavor is Odyssey of the Mind. This program has grown in the past few years at Coronado. We have set a schoolwide goal to field teams and travel to the World Finals Competition. Coronado has a great selection of coaches and we have made arrangements to assist with travel funds and support in the event that students advance to World Finals. Of course, there are many more areas where creativity develops beyond these highlights.

AdvancED data showed us that students often feel their peers need to show more respect at school. Rather than feel disheartened, Coronado stakeholders set a goal to improve climate and increase respectfulness. Specifically, it was decided that we would work to teach and celebrate our Cougar Pride and Kind Cougar programs. Cougar Pride (Respectful, Responsible, Kind, Cooperative, and Proud) is promoted daily on the announcements. In addition, students may earn a Paw Pride recognition slip and have their name read on the announcements. Teachers work to use Paw Pride in conversation with students. "Are we all showing respect as we listen?" Paw Pride has been useful in establishing a common language of respectfulness. Coronado is also a Kind Campus and celebrates Kind Cougars. We established a tone when we installed our Be Kind mural on campus. This carried

over into our kindness challenge. First, we recorded 500 acts of kindness and now have challenged ourselves to 5,000.

Reading, writing, and math achievement are key components of our ALEAT (Arizona LEA Tracker) plan and, therefore, are critical to our school plan. Achievement data (MAP, DIBELS, DRA, AIMS, and grades) are examined by the faculty early in the year; in a data meeting attended by all certified staff members. Our data meeting goal is to examine the proper placement for each child. As we work with our students, we often find that attaining growth in our K-8 math achievement is a challenge. One of our current goals is to raise achievement by extending the elementary math time to at least 90 minutes and to offer double math classes to students struggling in middle school. Ongoing professional development and planning time have been written into our plan and into the PD (professional development) calendar. Reading achievement is somewhat easier to address. However, we did set a lofty goal this year. It was decided to teach K-2 and 3-5 reading on unified schedules. Our primary and intermediate students, as two groups, learn to read in 90 minute blocks aligned within groups of three grades. This allows for students to work across grades. Writing, mentioned previously, is a key element in the school plan, and writing achievement is on the rise. Title I funds were used to purchase the materials to present writing workshop lessons and to hire an in-house trainer for teachers. The professional development model used to change how we teach elementary writing has brought much higher writing achievement to students at Coronado. An important lesson learned this year is that the PD model used with writing could be used in other areas and should be considered.

In closing, it is important to mention that Coronado is driven by values and a school plan that is shared with stakeholders. At the core of the plan is improving reading, writing, and math. However, we have more objectives that are also supportive of the District's values.

I hope the memorandum was helpful and informative.