

February 2020 Board Report

Assistant Principal/Coordinator

Alaska Effective Instruction Conference (Formerly Response to Intervention)

From January 24th to 26th I attended the Alaska Effective Instruction Conference in Anchorage. With the passage of the Alask Reads Act and the district's participation in the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant I chose to attend sessions focused on evidence-based strategies for developing early literacy. Those strategies are identified as print concepts, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The importance of developing oral language and auditory comprehension prior to moving on to letter and word identification was emphasized; a student must be a listener and speaker before they can become a competent reader and writer. Another focus was on where and how to appropriately intervene. For example, if a fifth grade student is reading on a second grade level, they should not be placed in a second grade program; instead they should be in the fifth grade program with remediation focused on the second grade skills (which would be phonics and fluency) that are impeding the students progress.

Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant Progress

Grants Manager Brian Kroschell and I were able to meet with other grant recipients and begin the planning stage on how to implement the grant. At this time the primary focus is on developing K-3 instructors (both certified and clasified) with effective early literacy teaching skills. A piece for teaching intervention strategies to teachers of students in grades 4-12 is also in development but is a secondary focus at this time. Over the course of the grant the goals are to; train up K-3 instructors into effective early literacy teachers, create students who are reading on grade level by 3rd Grade, and have teachers across all subject areas in grades 4-12 using and instructing language arts across the curriculum. However, the third goal will be difficut to accomplish while teachers are still providing reading remediation (or looking for startegies to provide content that doesn't require reading).

Lisa Kness Visiting Sites

Lisa Kness has begun providing services across the district. I am making it a priority to be at sites while she is there so that I better understand the interventions she is using and their effectiveness.

Port Alexander

Secondary:

As part of a financial literacy and leadership class, Port Alexander students are competing with peers across the state to create high performing investment portfolios.

Students installed multi-function a weather station.

Elementary:

Students have been enjoying STEAM challenges and enhancing their science vocabulary by doing at least one STEAM project a week. In one example students were given a Bucket Tower Challenge with many constraints. Their goal was to build a tower with a maximum of 20 straws, 36" of string, 36" of tape, and a bucket. The bucket had to swing freely. They could only use given materials, ruler and scissors. We've also been enjoying experimenting with the different phases of water. They played around with ice and salt to make ice cream; mixed the magical hydrophobic liquid, water, and Alka-seltzer to make fancy lava lamps!

Science isn't the only exciting thing they've done! They have been mastering their literacy skills through everyday aerobic phonics practice, daily sentence editing, and literature circles. Students are enjoying reading their delegated adventure books, enjoying their weekly reading roles, and enjoying mastering those comprehension questions. Everyone continues to work extremely hard all while giving it everything they've got!

Hyder

Winter is in full-swing in Hyder. They are enjoying regular physical education outings on cross country ski's and snowshoes. Thanks to some help from the town loader, a few sledding hills are on the playground that are a lot of fun during recess. All students have been ice skating and curling at the Stewart, BC ice rink, free of charge, thanks to the generous District of Stewart.

Music has become a welcome addition to the elementary curriculum with twice weekly singalongs, guitar/ukulele lessons (thanks to Dick Simpson) and recorder lessons (thanks Carol Dentin). Carol even surprised the students with brand new recorders & tuners! Another community member, Wes Lowe, has been sharing his artistic skills with us in a weekly art lesson.

Elementary students are continuing their weekly visits to the Stewart Public Library where the 6th graders are taking a havecoding class (VidCode) and the 2nd-4th graders

join a group of local homeschool students for library studies, games, puzzles and reading lots of brand new books.

Optional winter MAPS testing was completed by the elementary students and many of them are delving into the new programs by MySciLearn; Fast ForWord and Reading Assistant Plus. We are hoping these programs will be used at home to continue the reinforcement of reading skills 5-6 days a week.

Another positive in the elementary is the nearly 100% success rate in homework. Math Monday, Typing Tuesday, Wordy Wednesday, Silent Reading and FastForWord Friday have been enthusiastically embraced by the students and supported by parents.

After 4 months of using Reading A-Z with the 2nd-4th graders, they are showing fantastic data, increased fluency, and best of all more confident readers. The students started with “cold” reads in the 35-70 words per minute range and are now up to 150-175 words per minute in their “hot” reads. Very exciting! The students delight in their reading data that shows weekly progress on a colorful bar graph.

Congratulations to Hyder School high school students, 80% of the students made the SISD Honor Roll! High school students are finding great value in a customized personal finance course, where they’re learning about such things as how to set up their own business. They also started a health class this semester, which encompasses a variety of topics the students find value in. A few times in the evenings the high school students have also gone to Stewart, B.C. for open-ice curling night. None of the students have curled before, and this has been a fun, extra-curricular activity all have enjoyed.

Hyder School has received their first educational package from the Civil Air Patrol. They will be learning about electricity with a Snaptricity kit and will be learning about Amelia Earhart, Charles Lindbergh, the Wright Brothers and doing many aerospace activities.

The February community potluck is scheduled for Wednesday, the 26th at 5:00pm.

Naukati

It has been an adaptive first month back at school for Naukati staff and students. A schedule change and some new classes has been keeping them on their toes. The students have been engaged with multiple sports. Currently many archers are shooting

very well. The State Archery tournament is taking place on February 14th & 15. The middle school wrestlers are working and helping the Redtide Elementary wrestlers to do their very best. Two eighth grade wrestlers both placed 2nd in their weight classes in Petersburg. Way to go Tryston and Aticaz! They have a few more meets.

Upcoming Events: Dancing with the Spirits is coming to Naukati on February 17th. The 100th day of school is fast approaching in March. The Iditarod starts on March 7th.