

WHA Elementary
School Board Report – November 2024

1. We have had two face-to-face training days for LETRS. LETRS stands for Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling.

The first training was spent discussing three theoretical models: The Simple View of Reading, The Four-Part Processing Model and The Reading Brain. We completed a reading simulation activity that reminded us why learning to read can be so difficult for our students. We reviewed how speaking is natural, but reading and writing are not and how language and literacy are related. Finally, training concluded with learning what the brain does when it reads.

The second training was spent diving into the developmental phases of early reading, the broad subtypes of reading difficulties, the importance of screening tests, and using assessment data to differentiate instruction.



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3. Julie and I attended our monthly District Literacy Lead Community of Practice at Sourcewell on October 23rd. We dug into Fastbridge reports, specifically looking at the subtests that measure components of word recognition (phonological awareness, decoding, and sight recognition), discussed screening for characteristics of Dyslexia and reporting on our literacy plan, jigsawed research articles on Dyslexia, including an overview of Dyslexia, learning more about Dyslexia and the brain, and social emotional problems related to Dyslexia, and networked with other districts to share celebrations and wonderings/challenges regarding the READ Act.
4. School social workers, Indian Education, and Administration had our monthly Attendance Review Board meeting on October 28th. This meeting is a collaborative effort with Leech Lake Truancy and Cass County Truancy. Districts are encouraged to establish a School Attendance Review Board pursuant to Minnesota Statute § 260A.05. At this meeting, we look at student attendance data and referrals of truant students with a discussion on appropriate next steps with regard to intervention and services.
5. I attended my annual elementary school principal's association legal conference on October 29th. We started the day with a division meeting and then spent the remainder of the day discussing laws that are in place that are affecting elementary schools and topics that are possibly going to be brought forward during upcoming legislation.
6. On November 5th I attended Catalyst Coaching for School Leaders at Sourcewell. At this training, we learned strategies for effective coaching and communication when working with adults. In 2017-2018 I was trained as an ENVoY coach. Catalyst replaced ENVoY and uses some updated language and strategies. I have had training since 2017-2018 with our teaching staff, but the training on November 5th was specific to school leaders.
7. During our early dismissal time on November 6th, elementary teachers worked with Jackie Bruns to dive into Fastbridge reports to determine next steps in their instruction based on the data. This will help them with classroom interventions and it will help them prepare for parent/teacher conferences so they can use the data to speak to student strengths and areas for continued growth.



8. On November 6th I had the privilege of sharing with our teaching staff that the elementary certified in Level 3 of High Reliability Schools! Level 3 certification means Walker Hackensack Akeley Elementary School has created a "Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum," which requires schools to create a single curriculum that is taught by all teachers. The High Reliability School (HRS) program was created by Marzano Resources to help transform schools into organizations that take proactive steps to ensure student success. Using a research-based five-level hierarchy, along with leading and lagging indicators, educators learn to assess, monitor, and confirm the effectiveness of their schools. Schools must collect data and validate their performance to climb

each level of the hierarchy. Certification is determined by Marzano Resources analysts in cooperation with school data teams. This is a BIG deal and I am very proud of the hard work our staff has done. This does not mean the work is over, but certification is recognition and who doesn't like a little recognition?! We took time to celebrate on November 8th in the morning of our in-service day before our afternoon LETRS training.

Student enrollment as of 10.31.24 = 301 (Down 5 from last month. Most are due to relocation)

Pk = 18

Kindergarten = 46

1st Grade = 38

2nd Grade = 39

3rd Grade = 49

4th Grade = 58

5th Grade = 53