

Winter Benchmarking in Progress

We're currently in the midst of winter benchmarking with Fastbridge and STAR, and so far we're receiving some extremely positive results! Third grade has completed benchmarking, so I've summarized their results below.

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| <u>Reading</u> <i>Mrs. Tucker & Mrs. Burks both had Median Growth Percentiles of 83</i> | 82% of students were at the 25th %ile or better 73% were at the 40th %ile or better | 57% of students made better than average growth <i>Median Growth Percentile was 56</i> | Average Grade Equivalency is 3.7 (growth of 0.8) Average Percentile is 60th (growth of 10) | 45% of students have a Grade Equivalency of 4th grade or better 23% have a Grade Equivalency of below 3rd grade |
| <u>Math</u> <i>Mrs. Tucker & Ms. Moellenbrink had Median Growth Percentiles of 67 and 60, respectively</i> | 78% of students were at the 25th %ile or better 69% were at the 40th %ile or better | 56% of students made better than average growth <i>Median Growth Percentile was 61</i> | Average Grade Equivalency is 3.5 (growth of 0.8) Average Percentile is 55 (growth of 12) | 36% of students have a Grade Equivalency of 4th grade or better 27% have a Grade Equivalency of below 3rd grade |

In speaking with teachers during grade level meetings, we're really excited about the trends we're seeing! Compared to last year's results at the same time, we're leaps and bounds ahead. For Reading last year at this time, 57% of students were above the 40th percentile (compared to 73% this year). Teachers are attributing this largely to the direct instruction of phonics skills for these students, with a new phonics program in Kindergarten and CKLA since first grade. We anticipate continued growth in reading due to this shift, and we're thrilled that we're starting to see it really shine! Likewise in Math, we're at 69% of students above the 40th percentile, compared to 58% of third graders last year.

IASA & Raising Student Achievement Conference

Thank you so much for allowing me to attend the IASA Joint Conference in November and to join the group of teachers and instructional coaches at the Raising Student Achievement Conference earlier this week. Sallie Anderson & Brittany Wrigley both attended the conference on a scholarship from our ROE, and Kortnie Cooper and Heather Davis attended as well. We look forward to using and sharing the information gleaned at these conferences with staff. I found myself referencing things I'd learned several times since I've been back, and I am eager to read more over break and determine how we can introduce some of those concepts to our larger system. A few standout presentations/ideas:

- Todd Whitaker's ideas on classroom management and hiring/retaining the best staff (*What Great Teachers Do Differently*)
- Cathleen Beachboard's ideas on improving school climate, sense of belonging, and student achievement through hope (*The School of Hope: The Journey from Trauma and Anxiety to Achievement, Happiness, and Resilience*)
- Using AI in the classroom (specifically for teachers to save time and increase critical thinking skills in students)