September 2, 2014

Dear 2nd grade Parents,

It won’t be long until you hear about “The Daily 5” and the “CAFÉ Menu”, so I wanted to give you a quick overview of this literacy framework, developed by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser, so that you’ll know what your child is talking about. The Daily Five is a way of structuring the reading block so that every student is independently engaged in meaningful literacy tasks. These research-based tasks are fun, engaging, and have big impacts on student reading and writing achievement. Each day, the students will receive 2-3 whole group reading strategy lessons. In between these group lessons, the students will work independently on one of the “Daily 5” tasks for 15-20 minutes. During this time, I will provide focused, intense instruction to individuals and small groups of students. Here are the Daily 5 components:
• Read to Self: The research continually shows that the very best way to become a better reader is to practice, practice, practice! Your child will read books at his/her “just right” level each day, practicing reading strategies from the CAFÉ menu. Reading is FUN!

• Read to Someone: Reading to someone helps develop reading fluency and comprehension, and it’s FUN!

• Listen to Reading: Listening to reading helps children develop reading fluency. It also allows them to access texts that they can’t read independently yet. And of course, it’s FUN!

• Work on Words: Working with words helps children become better spellers and writers. Your child will learn about word families, practice high frequency ‘sight’ words using play dough, stamps, tiles, and whiteboards, and work on Fundation words. Working on words is FUN!

• Work on Writing: Just like it takes practice, practice, practice to become a better reader, it takes practice, practice, practice to become a better writer! During Work on Writing your child will work on writing of their own choice. We will also have a separate Writer’s Workshop in the day to work on specific forms of writing.

The CAFÉ menu is a collection of highly effective reading strategies that the students will be taught to use, to help them become better readers. They are organized into four goals:
• C is for Comprehension: “I understand what I read.”
• A is for Accuracy: “I can read the words.”
• F is for Fluency: “I can read smoothly, with expression.”
• É is for Expanding Vocabulary: “I know, find, and use interesting words.”

During individual conferences, I will listen to your child read, help him/her pick a reading goal, and suggest a reading strategy that will help. I will provide coaching on how to use the strategy, and then meet back with your child at a later date to see if he/she has been able to use the strategy. Your child should be able to tell you exactly what goal he/she is working on: “I am working on my accuracy”, and his/her strategy: “I am looking for small words inside big words to help me read new words”. Research shows that when students know exactly what they need to work on, and why, they are much more successful in meeting their goals!

Throughout the year, I will send home strategy sheets to help parents use some of the same teaching language I use at school. I hope these strategy sheets will help your child be actively engaged during nightly reading at home.

I hope that this brief introduction to the “The Daily 5” and the “CAFÉ Menu” has been helpful. If you have any questions, please feel free to send a note in your child’s agenda/folder, and I will do my best to answer them.

 Sincerely,

Mrs. Jensen