

Final Accomplishment Highlands 15/16

Goal #1:

District-wide implementation of the writing workshop model in grades kindergarten thru five.

1) To provide a predictable structure for writing instruction across all grade levels.

All teachers have been providing dedicated time to Writer's Workshop in their classrooms. Our K-2 students are actively engaged in teacher-directed mini-lessons, independent writing, and teacher conferencing for a minimum of four days each week. Teachers are utilizing the resources of *Writing Pathways* and Lucy Calkins' *Launching the Writing Workshop* to plan and implement predictable writing routines for students, lessons that have target goals, and that include opportunities for individual conferencing with the teacher. Additionally, peer writing partners are used throughout grade levels so that students can share their writing and identify the elements that they are currently working on.

2) To align writing instruction to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts and Literacy (incorporating the Common Core Standards).

During Professional Development at the district level and school-based, teachers collaborate to plan units and lessons that are aligned with Frameworks and Common Core Standards.

3) To improve student ability in the writing process with the three purposes of writing as defined by the Common Core Standards (opinion, informative/explanatory, narratives).

To date, the first unit of Narrative Writing has been completed and students are now moving forward with the second unit of either opinion or informative writing. A pre and post on-demand assessment of the narrative writing process has revealed improvement across the grade levels with specific emphasis on the Structure of Writing, which includes the categories of effective leads, transitions, endings, and organization. Conferencing with students allows teachers to focus on any one specific area of weakness within the structure of writing and to use effective questioning strategies for improvement.

Final: The implementation of the Lucy Calkins's Writer's Workshop Model in grades K-5 has been extremely successful in all classrooms. Teachers report that students were invested in their writing; their stamina for writing has shown great improvement, as have their skills in writing narrative, persuasive, and informative writing pieces. Classroom teachers have followed, with fidelity, the structure of lessons, the time dedicated to writing, and have remained committed to their collaboration in planning lessons and in scoring student work. Additionally, all teams have reported that they have met the goals outlined in Student Learning Goals and Professional Practice Goals. With careful review, they have also identified key areas for added emphasis in Year Two of implementation.

Goal #2:

To implement a Language Based Learning Program for fourth and fifth grade students where highly effective instructional practices and strategies are employed to promote student growth in literacy.

1) To access and deliver, through ongoing professional development, the most appropriate research-based instructional practices and strategies that will support students identified with a Language Based Learning Disability.

The Language Based Learning Center for fourth and fifth grade students is currently staffed with one teacher, two teacher assistants, and includes the speech and language services for those students whose IEP requires it. The LBLD classroom teacher, assistants and the speech pathologist have monthly consultation time (one full day) with a Landmark Outreach Consultant who observes instruction and provides feedback in the Language Based Classroom and in the regular education setting. To date, the LBLD teacher has focused on the structure of the classroom, teacher-directed instruction, independent work time, materials and resources, writing instruction, and the connection between the Language Based Classroom and the general education classes. In addition to the Landmark Outreach consultant, an experienced LBLD teacher collaborates weekly with the LBLD classroom teacher to plan lessons, identify goals and objectives for students, and to assess the effectiveness of instruction and student progress. The general education teachers who provide instruction in math, science, and social studies actively collaborate and plan with the two aforementioned consultants so that strategies and materials in the homeroom are aligned with those used in the LBLD classroom. All teachers and teacher assistants were involved in Professional Development during the Summer 2015. The classroom teacher attended two additional trainings; one summer institute at Landmark and a two day Visualizing and Verbalizing Training in October. Most recently, professional development (district) was held for all elementary special education teachers. The focus of that workshop was how to best identify students who would benefit from a LBLD classroom and was facilitated by Dr. Mary Tatem.

2) •To gives and analyzes various assessments to document student growth and to determine their progress in meeting benchmarks in literacy.

Assessment is ongoing and varied and includes the following:

Rosner - Phonological Awareness
WADE - Decoding and Encoding
Road to Reading - Decoding
Words their Way - Spelling
Qualitative Reading Inventory
Fry Sight Word List
Reading A-Z Benchmark Passages and Books
Reading A-Z Fluency Passages
LAC (Lindamood Auditory Conceptualization

Daily/Weekly Informal
Word List reading (Wilson)

Dictation
Read Naturally
Great Leaps
LiPS Word Chains
Reading A-Z Books with comprehension packs
KidsA-Z.com recordings

Benchmark
End of Step Charting (Wilson)
Reading A-Z Benchmark Passages and Books
Reading A-Z Fluency Passages

Final: Success in the Language Based Learning Classroom is best identified by our students' improvements, their investment in learning, and by our staffs' commitment to building a classroom climate where each day is an opportunity to celebrate students' learning. Comprehensive reports have been prepared by the classroom teacher documenting each student's progress, the results of which have been shared with families throughout the year. The collaborative work of the school team and extended team of consultants is ongoing with discussions on the structure of the classroom, lesson content, connections between the regular education classroom and the Language Based Program, and the practices that best support student progress. The LBLD's team reflection included the addition of more components of the Lucy Calkins Writers Workshop Model into the teaching of writing skills to the LBLD students as this is the model the District has adopted in the general education classes.

3) To provide frequent two-way communication with families on both the learning in the Language Based Learning Program and on the progress of students

Communication with families is ongoing with:

- Parent Conferences
- Phone and Email Conversations
- Monthly Newsletters home from the LBLD teacher

Goal #3:

To introduce and implement Paws-itive Expectations, a program developed using the PBIS framework, to all Kindergarten thru Fifth Grade Students

1) A Kick-Off for Faculty and Students will be held in September 2015.

Paws-itive Expectations was introduced to Highlands in September 2015. The three major themes of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety were highlighted in a video filmed by DCAT starring staff and students. Banners were hung throughout the school and all staff was trained in how we would reinforce our expectations. Red Paws-itive Expectations tickets are given to students who demonstrate the expectations, and it was predicted that on average, several hundred would be given out daily.

2) Information will be shared with the Highlands Community to strengthen our home/school partnership and our goal of promoting and recognizing Paws-itive Behaviors at school.

Highlands' families received early notice of Paws-itive Expectations in newsletters. To further promote this initiative, the Highlands' video was shown at each of our Fall Open Houses. Feedback for the program was very positive.

3) Classroom and School Rubrics will be visible in the school; all staff will reinforce Paws-itive Behaviors and recognize the efforts of all students who help to build a respectful, responsible, and safe learning environment.

The original Paws-itive Expectations Committee of nine continues to meet to evaluate our progress and to make recommendations on how we can continue to motivate our students. Examples include:

- Gold Tickets are given out to students at Friday assemblies. Five or six are distributed weekly, any staff member who holds a ticket recognizes that student, and each student is awarded with signing the "Gold Book".
- During the month of February, students will have the opportunity to earn Gold Tickets for Paws-itive Behaviors in the lunchroom.
- For each month until June 2016, a different location in the school will be added as a place where students can earn a Gold Ticket and enter their signature into the Gold Book.
- Initial plans are underway for implementing lessons on Respect, Responsibility, and Safety in classrooms beginning September 2016.

Final: We have continued our emphasis on Paws-itive Expectations throughout the building and plan to continue again next year with our focus on respect, responsibility and safety at Highlands. There has been a noticeable impact on positive student behaviors; specifically, whole school assemblies, the cafeteria, and in classrooms. Staff report that students are motivated by the recognition that accompanies red and gold tickets and that combined with other reinforcements like "Role Model of the Day", "Top of the Chart", and "The Gold Book", this has been very successful. With that, this is a program that all staff contribute to – our teachers, our teacher assistants, and our specialists. For the coming year, we acknowledge how important it will be to re-energize students and staff with a new introduction to the program.