

Reading First News

Long Beach Unified School District

Volume 1, Issue 4

April/May 2005



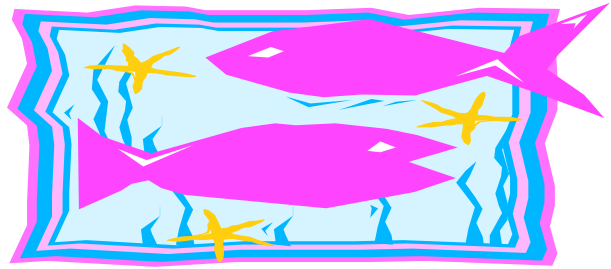
McKinley Teachers "Dig In" to Workshop Opportunities

McKinley Kindergarten teachers recently spent a Reading First funded release day taking a closer look at creating targeted learning opportunities for our students during Workshop. The day started with team building activities in which teachers learned more about their colleagues. Then, taking a look at the data, they brainstormed about the documented areas of students' strength. They also looked at areas to be assessed at the end of the year. Teachers shared wonderful ideas from Open Court which specifically target these areas. They know the skills are taught throughout the program, but as one teacher commented, "it's just so helpful to **dig into** the index to locate specifically where!"

Following a yummy pot luck lunch, with goodies provided by the teachers, the McKinley kindergarten teachers traveled to the Instructional Materials Workshop. Trish and Laurie, those masterful instructional leaders, had created instructional materials which specifically targeted areas of student need. Activities which foster practice of phoneme segmentation, rhyming, letter recognition, and writing were appreciated by all. Trish and Laurie had prearranged the supplies, enabling teachers to create classroom activities they could put into use the very next day! All agreed that the time spent traveling to the IMW was time well spent.

Trish and Laurie, thank you for all your hard work in making the McKinley Kindergarten Release Day a big success!

Sutter Kindergarten Students



"Dive in to Marine Life"

Sutter Kindergarten students enjoyed a day at the "ocean" when the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium visited our campus recently. The students were excited to see the various species of marine life because we had just finished our Open Court unit "By The Sea". Students were treated to this special field trip to the ocean without leaving our campus. Teachers from the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium provided hands-on demonstrations and specimens of ocean animals for our students to study and enjoy. One of our goals while studying the unit "By the Sea" was to expose our students to oceans and ocean-related topics and our visitors provided us with a wonderful opportunity to enhance our learning and love of the ocean!



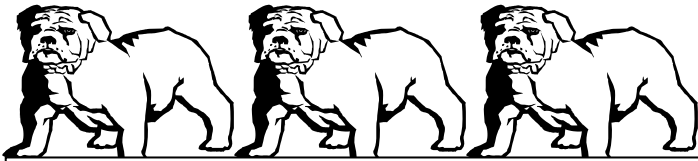
Reading First Schools *Roosevelt Barton Lee Whittier Lincoln Burbank Muir Sutter Burnett Powell McKinley Lafayette Harte*

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Kindergarten Concept / Question Board

"Red, White, and Blue"





Bulldog Buddies: A Peer Tutoring Program that Works Well At Harte!

"I think that Bulldog Buddies is a fun way to help kids learn to improve their reading, so they can pass their first grade Benchmarks!" Fifth grader Jasmyn Morrow's comment is a reflection of how Bret Harte students feel about the "Bulldog Buddies" peer-tutoring program offered at our site. "Bulldog Buddies" is a no cost program that begins in March and ends in June. Bulldog Buddies offers our first grade students an opportunity to work with fifth grade students on reading strategies for 15 minutes a day using SRA Open Court Decodable Books, Level 1.

Here is how it works! In February, the fifth grade students are given "tutoring" instruction in decoding and comprehension strategies with a goal of teaching the fifth grade students how to sound like teachers when they work with the first graders. The fifth grade students are also trained to give corrective and positive feedback to help encourage the success of their first grade buddy reader. Each month the first grade students are selected by their teachers to attend tutoring. The selected first grade students come to the program for three consecutive weeks. First grade students are matched with fifth grade students daily which creates thirty groups of one-to-one tutoring. Each fifth grade class comes once a week, so every fifth grade student has multiple opportunities of being a tutor. First grade teacher Ms. Valerie Capella stated, "Our students feel special when they work with the big kids." Bulldog Buddies has created a family atmosphere amongst our students. It has given our fifth grade students a strong sense of responsibility. Mrs. Jodee Fidel, 4/5 teacher, explains, "This program gives older students a chance to be leaders and reach out to the first grade struggling readers. The fifth graders know reading is succeeding and they want first graders to feel empowered by being good readers." The program brought amazing results last year. By June, our first grade retention list decreased by 87%. In addition, 73% of last year's buddy readers improved their reading by one whole Benchmark level! Bulldog Buddies has taught our students to become both readers and leaders! "Bulldog Buddies" is a peer-tutoring program that works!



Harte Students Participating in "Bulldog Buddies"

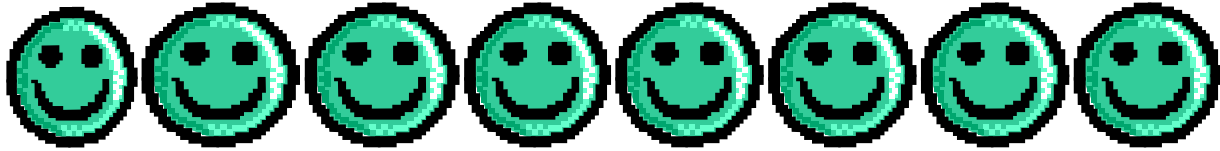


Lee Coach Shares "The Joy of Kindergarten!"

A few of my kindergarten students were standing outside the cafeteria earlier than their usual time. I asked them why they were here so early? One of them replied. **"Don't you remember Ms. Bernstein, its Open Court House tonight!"**

Well we know what we have ingrained in their brains.

Muir Shares Third Grade Open Court Success Stories



"I came into this program kicking and screaming about Open Court!" states Muir Third Grade Teacher, Joanne Trupp. Ms. Trupp shares her successes from her students daily. She set high expectations early in the year, but she strongly believes her students came with the knowledge of the Open Court components and procedures that were taught and established the previous year. Students used the Language of the Discipline from depth and complexity for vocabulary strategies, comprehension strategies, the Concept and Question board, Clues, Problems, and Wonderings, etc. They also knew the expectations during Workshop time and fluency practice. "My students are readers!" she adds. "They came in knowing what to do during fluency practice." "They use the comprehension strategies during reading and even share by thinking aloud the strategies that they are using." In order to keep students focused on individual goals, she conferences with every student and goes over the individual OARS student report after each assessment. This report is also sent home to the parents. As a result, Ms. Trupp has observed her students become successful and proficient readers and writers.

Mrs. Nikas, Muir Third Grade Teacher utilizes the Workshop Planning Sheet from Tier II training and really looks at student data to support her students during Workshop. She closely monitors this planning sheet and keeps track of students' growth. When you walk into her classroom during Workshop, it is evident that Workshop routines and procedures are established. Her students are homogeneously grouped and are working on appropriate activities to support their appropriate learning needs.

In the beginning of the year, half of her students were reading below grade level. She even received four students reading at the End of Grade 1. Through intensive, highly structured small group instruction, she focuses on pre-teaching or re-teaching the week's reading selection and reinforces the comprehension strategies and skills. During comprehension practice, she encourages her students to highlight the evidence from the text.

As a result, 98% of her students are now reading at grade level or above. Her class started with an OARS average of 50% in comprehension of students reading in the Strategic Level or below. By the End of Unit 6, her whole class reached the Challenge Level earning a 100% in Comprehension. **BRAVO!**

Barton Models Collaboration At it's Best

On May 17 Barton held grade level collaboration meetings to share insights about our students and our program. We met with the teachers of the students in the grade preceding our own, as well as the teachers that will receive our students next year. Two sessions of one hour each were held to discuss the "flow" from one grade to another. Teachers shared expectations and concerns.

Teachers Comments....

* "It was **great to meet face to face and share concerns**. It gave us a 'heads up' for next year so we can get on it right away!"

* "Having a **chance to communicate with the adjacent grade level to share ideas** was very helpful."

* "I enjoyed **being able to meet and discuss expectations of the incoming class**."

* "I'm **better able to prepare students for the next grade level** because I've heard their concerns and needs."

* "It **verified and validated my feelings**."

* "The sharing was **awesome!**"

* "We're a big school with a large staff. It helped me to get to know my colleagues better, and **address the needs of our students**."

