

Roosevelt Barton Lee
Lincoln Burnett
LaFayette Harte Sutter
Burnett McKinley
Muir Powell Whittier



Reading First News

Long Beach Unified School District

Burnett Teachers Participate in Workshop Staff Development

Teachers at Burnett Elementary participated in a 6 hour professional development training on Effective Workshop Activities across grade levels. The training began with teachers doing professional reading on the 5 areas of Open Court Reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Grade levels were heterogeneously grouped so that teachers could share and collaborate, offering perspectives from different grade levels. After choosing and reading an article, they did a jigsaw activity to share the information among the members of their groups.

Coaches walked the teachers through the levels of implementation for getting Workshop up and running in the classroom. Next, the coaches presented Workshop activity demos from each component and various units. The coaches also discussed the need to help the students build their listening and speaking vocabularies as well as reading and writing skills. Coaches had assembled sets of pictures for vocabulary picture support. These sets were given, as needed, to teachers.

Teachers then had time to plan and develop at least one Workshop activity for each component. (Green, Red, Blue) The day concluded with everyone sharing his/her Workshop activity and how she/he planned to get it up and running the next week.

In preparation for this training the coaches bought plastic bins (3 per teacher) so completed activities could be organized in containers. Coaches had digital photos of exemplary Burnett teachers' Workshop Must Do / May Do Menu's. The teachers have Workshop managed well and the coaches included them as models in the presentation. The coaches also visited other schools for Workshop ideas and management of differentiated activities.

Coaches assessed the success of the training by reading evaluations given out at the conclusion of the training. Teacher comments were positive and the good collaboration among grade levels was acknowledged by everyone. Some comments were:

- "This was great because I was finally ready to hear how important Workshop is."
- "The activities modeled could be modified to target different needs for different students."
- "Thanks for the time to actually make the activities while the ideas were fresh in our minds."
- "Second grade teachers were really excited about using "Readers Theatre" to help develop fluency for their students-we talked about turning some of the Open Court stories and some of the decodable books into Readers Theatre scripts."

Reading First Coaches Meet Monthly

Coaches, the Reading First Coordinator and Content Experts meet at least once a month together in order to exchange ideas and support on-going Reading First Goals. Agendas for September, October, November and December included such topics as:

- Data Analysis & Reading First Goals for 2005
- Graphic Organizers & Comprehension Strategies
- Kindergarten Workshop Activities
- Making Every Minute Count
- Professional Articles
- Content Committee Reports
- Establishing Coaches Goals in Particular Areas and Grade Levels
- Reading Fluency
- Phonemic Awareness

A portion of each meeting is always available for coaches to present and share ideas that have been implemented with success at their school sites.

McKinley Elementary Features Weekly "Coaches' Corner"

Staff Development in snippets happens weekly at McKinley School. Each week the school bulletin features a "Coaches' Corner" column. Rather than a "don't forget to enter your OARS data" type article, they try to bring a teaching strategy to mind. A password in boldface type is written in the article, the key idea of the column. Teachers jot down the password and place it in the coaches' mailboxes. The password note is replaced by a tiny treat in the teachers' mailbox, much like a visit from the "professional development tooth fairy".

Former columns have touched on such topics as:

- Repetition to Build Automaticity
- Tongue Twisters for Teaching Variant Spelling Patterns
- The Power in Preteaching

Staff reaction to the column has been positive, and often starts professional dialogues.

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Sutter Second Graders Use the Power of Music to Share Favorite Stories



The second grade students at Sutter Academy enjoyed Unit 1 “Sharing Stories” so much that they discussed possibilities of sharing favorite stories with one another. They agreed on one particular story and talked about what would be the best way to tell everyone about the story, which they referred to as a magical tale.

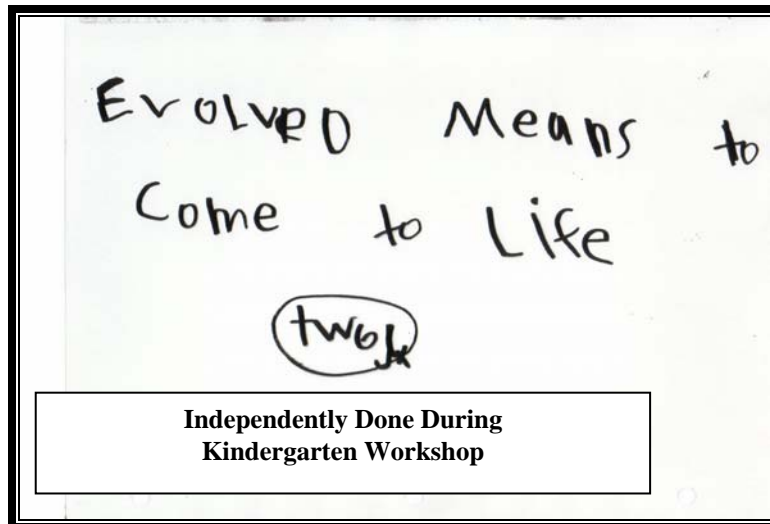
The students brainstormed many different ways they might tell others about the special story: Should they read it to them? Write a summary? Draw pictures? Have a puppet show? After much discussion the students decided to produce and act out the story through music!

Each student had a special part. Some were choral readers, some read the dialog, and some were actors. One of the teachers provided the music by playing his guitar and everyone, including the principal, were singers.

The students expressed that the best part of all was knowing that through music they could share many wonderful stories in a unique and magical way.

Reading First Coaches Form Study Group

Eight coaches, Lisa Yarak, Ryan Ung, Sherry Nieto, Kim San Jose, Sue Berstein, Sara Kovarik and Kate Pekar have formed a study group. They chose “Bringing Words to Life” by Beck, McKeown & Kucan as the focus book to read and discuss. As part of the Vocabulary Committee, these coaches are using this opportunity to develop more knowledge and background on the subject. That will lead to future trainings they will do to support teachers at their school sites.



Independently Done During Kindergarten Workshop

Striving for Best Practices...

- The RSP teacher at Burnett Elementary, through collaborating with the literacy teachers in the classrooms he supports, is finding ways to bridge some of the activities he does with his students to what they are doing in the classroom.
- Students at Burnett are incorporating articles, pictures, photos, realia and books brought from home and connected to the unit theme, to add to the concept/question board. Their teachers as well are using themselves as a contributing member of the concept/question board, by modeling what they bring from home to add to the board.
- Muir kindergarten teacher, Francis Ampudia, dedicates his Wednesday nights at the Muir Parent Center to providing classes for Bilingual/Spanish parents based on his observation of the needs of his children during Open Court instruction. Helping parents to understand how they can help their children with literacy instruction at home, bridges the home school connection in a meaningful way.
- Lincoln coaches have trained teachers in APE (accuracy, pacing, expression) and embedding fluency into their language arts block. As well as practicing APE in Workshop with student feedback, they are now incorporating activities that facilitate the practice of increasing the number of words per minute the children can read. Sand timers are used as one way to monitor student progress. Teachers are using the Oral Fluency Rubric as a tool to gather strengths and needs data on each student.
- All Burbank teachers are participating in a 3 hour training on using assessment data to develop differentiated activities to be used during Workshop.

Monthly Open Court Support Trainings Provided for All Teachers

More than 250 teachers a month are taking advantage of the Open Court Monthly Support Trainings being offered to all K-5 teachers. The trainings are grade level specific and address different focus topics each month.

In December, the Kindergarten teachers assessed samples from student independent writing journals to evaluate in terms of Phonemic Awareness indicators. Over 200 district writing samples were displayed and discussed after rubric scores were given to each sample. First and second grade teachers addressed some in-depth specifics of Preparing To Read (Green section). Third grade focused on Clues Problems & Wonderings, Comprehension Skills & Strategies and Handing Off.

The Support Trainings will continue to be offered through June.