

Coffee with the Principal – March 22, 2013

Here are the general topics and information shared at the meeting.

- 1) I was planning on showing some recent data from English Language Arts, Math, and the SRI assessments but I was missing a cord to connect my laptop to projector. The OUSD benchmark exams in ELA and Math help to determine students' progress throughout the year and if intervention is needed. The OUSD benchmark exams are multiple choice and untimed.
- 2) Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) is used to monitor students' lexile levels. A lexile level is derived from students reading a passage and answering comprehension questions. Students in grades 2-5 took an on-line version of the SRI for the first time this year. 2nd grade teachers felt the results didn't reflect students' reading levels as accurately because it was the first formal test the students have taken in their school career, and the on-line aspect was challenging. The data shows the growth of our students from the first to the second round.
- 3) The number of students not hitting benchmark in ELA and scoring lower lexile levels in the SRI brought to our attention a need to research more into reading disabilities, in particular, dyslexia. The staff participated in professional development back on Feb. 1 introducing the idea and we are considering plan to implement something school-wide. Teaching strategies that target students with dyslexia benefit all students. This discussion is in the beginning stages.
- 4) Enrollment – We talked about the enrollment for the fall. The number of students enrolled is a big determining factor of the school budget. We need to have close to 420 students to maintain the current number of teaching staff. That is one of the reasons why we sent home the notice regarding students returning next year. We have to monitor enrollment numbers. At this point, we can't determine if we will have 3 or 4 kindergarten classes, or 3 or 4 1st grade classes. There is a possibility there will be a K/1st combination.
- 5) PTA Programs – we are currently reviewing programs and prioritizing funding for next year. The process is as follows: 1) Receipt and organization of proposals; 2) Review and ranking by teaching staff based on student need; 3) Final recommendation by Leadership Team; 4) Review and decisions by Prioritization Committee (composed of SSC, PTA, and staff members).
- 6) Enrichment – we also talked about the GATE program and what we are doing for our high-achieving students. There is no funding for GATE students but by offering Spanish, Vocal Music, Art, Instrumental Music and Library/Computer, we are providing enrichment for all students.
- 7) We also talked about the Common Core Standards. These are a change from the current state standards that teachers use to guide their teaching. We have been discussing these throughout the year, as OUSD is making the move to adopt them in Fall 2013. The Common Core Standards are being adopted state-wide, and by most states in the country. To find out more about the Common Core, here is a link with more information: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

Disclaimer: I didn't take notes on the questions/answers asked at the meeting, so this is my best recollection. There will be one more "Coffee with the Principal" this year. Right now it's schedule for May, but I might try to push it possibly into April. Stay tuned.

Beth Rhine