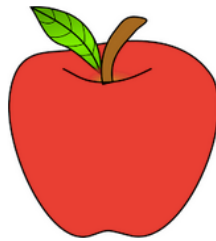


Title I Parent Handbook



North Mahaska Community School
2021-2022

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It is the policy of the North Mahaska Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Nicole DeBoef, Elementary At-Risk Coordinator, 2163 135th Street, New Sharon, IA 50207 at 641-637-4041 or at deboefn@nmwarhawks.org.

Dear Parents,

Here we are ready for a new school year!! Going back to school for your child means new friends and new learning experiences. To make these experiences really count, your child needs reinforcement at home. Studies show that children who receive positive help from home will score several months, maybe even a grade level or more, above the level they would achieve without that help.

It is very important that a child's learning should always be a happy time, a time that they will look forward to sharing with you. Parents, please remember a little help from home goes a long way toward your child's success later on in life.

We are looking forward to meeting you and helping to make this year an exciting one for your child and you.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Livezey and Mrs. Thoreson

Teacher's Credentials

Lindsay Thoreson: B.A. in Elementary Education, Reading Endorsement, English Language Learner Endorsement, Master's Degree in Education, Reading Specialist Certification.

No Child Left Behind Requirement Parents'/Guardians' Rights Notification

Parents/Guardians in the North Mahaska Community School District have the right to learn about the following qualifications of their child's teacher: state licensure requirements for the grade level and content areas taught, the current licensing status of your child's teacher, and baccalaureate/graduate certification/degree. You may also request the qualifications of an instructional paraprofessional who serves your students in a Title I program. Parents/Guardians may request this information from the Office of the principal by calling 641-637-4041 or sending a letter of request to the Office of the superintendent, 2163-135th Street, New Sharon, IA 50207.

The North Mahaska Community School District ensures that parents will be notified in writing if their child has been assigned to or taught by a teacher for four or more consecutive weeks who is not considered highly qualified.

Title I Information

Title I Staff

The Title I teachers for grades K-6 are employed by North Mahaska Community School District. Title I is supported and assisted by Great Prairie Area Education Agency personnel. Working hours are Monday through Friday during school hours.

Students are identified as possible participants for Title I Reading from the results of the ISASP, District-Wide Reading, Marie Clay Hearing and Recording Sounds Testing, FAST, and the Wonders End of Unit Testing. Teacher recommendation is also a factor for possible identification of students in need of Title I assistance.

The Title I Reading programs follow the schedule of the regular school day and term. Students' skill deficiencies are targeted through intensive one-on-one or small group instruction. The amounts of intensive instructional time may vary according to each circumstance.

Student Progress Reports are made to parents at conference times, mid-term of each quarter, and end of each quarter. Parents are invited to participate in all meetings, projects, and activities.

Parental Awareness of Student Progress

Parents of each child in the Title I reading program receive a letter in the fall. It informs the parent that their child is eligible for the Title I program and will begin receiving instruction unless the parents notify us that they do not want their child included in the program.

The parents will be invited to parent-teacher conferences to discuss and provide input about their child's reading. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's Title I class.

A parent meeting is held during the year to provide parents the opportunity to express their opinions on the program, evaluate the program's effectiveness, and provide suggestions for change and improvement.

Program Objectives

The following are a list of objectives for the Title I Reading Program at North Mahaska Elementary School:

1. To determine each child's reading difficulties.
2. To form a remediation program to alleviate the child's reading difficulties.
3. To help each child develop a positive attitude for and a love of reading.
4. To help the child learn how to function better in a classroom, and to begin to accomplish more of what he or she is potentially able to be.

The evaluation procedure to measure these objectives will be the student progress as evidenced by identified reading assessments, teacher observations, and surveys.

Student Eligibility

Kindergarten through Second Grade:

The child's placement in Title I is determined by teacher recommendation, classroom assessments, and FAST assessments.

Grades Third through Sixth:

The child's placement in Title I is determined by scoring below grade level expectations on the ISASP and/or scoring below proficiency on district assessments. FAST scores, teacher recommendation and parental input may also be used to determine eligibility status.

****In certain cases, the following EXCEPTIONS can be made for those children who are not identified in the initial pool of eligible children:

1. Children who move into the district may be included in the eligible pool if they are in need of supplemental instruction.
2. If it appears Title I assistance is needed with a child, these children are potentially eligible for the program. Such cases are documented by Title I staff or the classroom teacher as to needs and remediation required.

Remedial Procedures

Records are kept for each student in addition to any other information from teachers, parents, AEA personnel, and the student to aid in the remediation procedure.

After carefully studying all results, the teacher is ready to work on a plan of remediation to utilize the child's strengths and to alleviate the child's problem areas.

After the plan of remediation has been developed, methods are determined and materials are selected and assembled for carrying out the plan of remediation.

This method usually consists of activities which ensure a high degree of success for the student. The activities are done with small groups of children which enables the teacher to administer immediate reinforcement with the child. Students may be pulled out of the classroom for intensive instruction and/or given additional instruction within their classroom.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to be involved in all phases of the Title I activities at North Mahaska Elementary School. Parents are invited and encouraged to participate in an annual Title I meeting. Parental input will be gathered regarding the Title I program and policies.

Parents are informed of their child's learning difficulties and invited to be members of the educational team to develop an educational plan with the teacher. They play a strong part in the remediation process by monitoring and assisting with home study.

The Title I teacher will be available to discuss your child's progress during parent-teacher conferences. You may also request a conference at any time to discuss your child's progress. We welcome the opportunity to visit with you about your child's education. Written reports regarding your child's progress are provided at midterm and the end of each quarter.

Dear Parent(s):

My name is Lindsay Thoreson, and I am the K-3 Title I Reading Teacher here at North Mahaska Elementary. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about myself and what brought me here. In 2006, I earned my Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education from Central College. In addition, I have teaching endorsements in Reading, Spanish, and English as a Second Language. In 2015, I earned my Master's Degree from Viterbo University and became certified as a K-12 Reading Specialist. I love learning and reading, and I strive to instill this same joy in my students!

During my time at NM, I've taught HS Spanish and a variety of reading classes in grades K-12 over the past 14 years. I have enjoyed getting to know everyone so far, and I'm looking forward to meeting those of you who I don't know yet! I love working with students to help them reach their full potential, while making school a positive experience for them. Parents are an integral part of the education process, and I believe that by working together, we can maximize each student's opportunities.

Your child has been identified as a student who may benefit from receiving services provided by our Title I program. Students in third through sixth grades scoring below the 41st percentile on the ISASP (using the national norms for reading comprehension) in reading are identified as potential candidates for our Title I program. For grades kindergarten and first, teacher recommendation and classroom assessments are used to identify students. They may also be used to identify students in grades third through sixth. In addition, FAST scores from Fall, Winter, and Spring testing may be used for identification of students in grades K-6.

Our goal is to help your child progress in his or her reading skills so he or she is at or above grade level. Your child will be receiving 20-30 minutes of daily instruction in decoding, vocabulary, reading comprehension, fluency, and/or test-taking strategies. The groups served will be small, and the instruction is targeted toward each student's specific needs.

There will be a Title I Parent Meeting on August 23 at 5:30 in the Elementary Library. Please join me to learn more about our Title I Reading Program. In order for your child to receive Title I services, we must ask for your permission. If you agree that North Mahaska's Title I program would benefit your child, please sign below and bring this permission slip to the meeting.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time about your child's participation in the Title I program, please feel free to contact me or stop in to visit with me about your child's education. Thank you for your cooperation and support!

Sincerely,
Lindsay Thoreson
(641) 637-4187

My child, _____, has parent permission to be a part of North Mahaska's Title I program.

My child, _____, does not have parent permission to be a part of North Mahaska's Title I program.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Involvement Policy

North Mahaska Community School District

(Updated 8-20-21)

It is the policy of the North Mahaska Community School District that parents of participating children shall have the opportunity to be involved jointly in the development of the district plan and in the district's review process for the purpose of school improvement. Recognizing that parental involvement is the key to academic achievement, we seek to involve parents in an effective home-school partnership that will provide the best possible education for our students. The district provides coordination, technical assistance and other supports necessary to aid in the planning and implementation of parent involvement activities. The district encourages parent involvement and supports this partnership through providing information about standards and assessments; providing training and materials for parents to help their children; educating school personnel about involving parents and the value of parent contributions; and developing roles for community organizations and businesses to work with parents and schools.

1. This jointly developed and agreed upon written policy is distributed to parents of participating Title I children through the Parent Handbook which is distributed to every family at the Title I Parent Meeting.
2. An annual meeting is held, for all parents of participating children, both public and private. Additional meetings with flexible times shall be held throughout the year and be determined by parent suggestions. The annual meeting will be held in the fall. Notification will be sent in the building newsletter.
3. Parents are given assistance in understanding the Title I requirements, district standards, and assessments through the annual meetings and parent-teacher conferences.
4. Parents receive an explanation of the school's academic assessment used to measure student progress and the expected proficiency levels through individual reports given to parents at conference time and through report cards.
5. In targeted assistance buildings, parents are informed of and involved with their child's participation in the Title I program. They also are informed about the curriculum, instructional objectives, and methods used in the program. This information is delivered through newsletters, conferences, and the annual meetings.
6. Parent recommendations are encouraged and responded to in a timely manner. Verbal or written responses will be given for all recommendations.

7. A jointly developed school/parent compact outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students all share responsibility for improved student achievement. The compact also describes the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve our local high standards. It is distributed in the parent handbook and is reviewed at the annual meeting.
8. The Title I program provides opportunities for parents to become partners with the school in promoting the education of their children both at home and at school. Parents are given help monitoring their student's progress and provided assistance on how to participate in decisions related to their student's education. The school also provides other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as requested by parents. Parents are encouraged to participate as volunteers in the school setting. Individual conferences will also be held upon request.
9. An annual evaluation of this parental involvement policy shall be conducted to determine its effectiveness. Findings will be used to design strategies for school improvement and revision of policies. The annual meeting will serve as the site for the discussions of the program adjustments.

Providing all of North Mahaska Community School District's children with equal access to quality education is of primary purpose. It is crucial that all partners (students, parents, educators, and communities) have the opportunity to provide input and offer resources to meet this purpose. As these partnerships are mutually beneficial, developing cooperative efforts will ensure improved academic achievement for all students.

North Mahaska Elementary School Title I Parent Compact

GRADE _____

2021-2022

STUDENT

As a student, I will...

- *Respect myself, other students, my parents, teachers, school staff, and principal;
- *Always try to do my best in my work and behavior;
- *Follow rules at school;
- *Come to school with my supplies and completed homework;
- *Show respect for school equipment and materials.

Student signature

PARENT/GUARDIAN

As a parent/guardian, I will...

- *Respect and support my child, the staff, and the school;
- *Support the rules and policies of the North Mahaska Community School District;
- *Establish a time and quiet place for my child to do homework and review homework for completion;
- *See my child attends school daily and arrives on time;
- *Read with my child and let my child see me read;
- *Talk with my child about his/her school day.

Parent/Guardian signature

Alone we can do little. Together we can do so much.
-Helen Keller

STUDENT SUCCESS

Together...we CAN make a difference!



TEACHER

As a teacher, I will...

- *Respect and support student, parents, staff, and school;
- *Support the rules and policies of the North Mahaska School District;
- *Encourage each child to do his/her personal best;
- *Provide a safe, drug-free, positive healthy learning environment;
- *Share information regarding each child's needs and progress;
- *Seek ways to involve parents with school and their child's education.

Teacher signature

PRINCIPAL

As a principal, I will...

- *Respect students, parents, staff, and school;
- *Support the rules and policies of the North Mahaska School District
- *Provide a safe, drug-free, positive, and healthy learning environment;
- *Maintain open lines of communication;
- *Encourage parents to be partners in education.

Principal signature

North Mahaska Community School District Parent Involvement Survey

2021-2022

The following statements will encourage you to reflect on family issues at your school. Please rate your school in the following areas. Circle your responses.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

Your school or school district:

1. Recognizes that all parents, regardless of income, educational level, or cultural background, want their children to do well in school and are involved in their children's learning.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

2. Holds an annual meeting to inform parents of children in Title I programs about the Title I program.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

3. Provides resources such as books, videos, and newsletters that help with better parent participation at home.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

4. Encourages and provides opportunities for parental input into the design and development of the school-parent compact.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

5. Provides parents with ideas on how to help their children with homework.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

6. Thinks of the community as an extension of the family.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

7. Provides opportunities for parents to have input in the operations of the school.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

8. Staff sees how diversity may be used to enrich learning experiences for students.

1 2 3 4
rarely sometimes regularly always

9. Uses information from parent and family surveys to design or change school procedures and programs.

1	2	3	4
rarely	sometimes	regularly	always

10. Supplies a written Title I parent involvement policy that is jointly developed with parents that outlines the partnership among the student, parent, and school.

1	2	3	4
rarely	sometimes	regularly	always

Please comment on each of these issues.

I would recommend the following changes for how the school communicates with families:

I would recommend the following changes for the Title I services my child is receiving:

I would recommend these changes for the Title I parent involvement policy:

Please list other ways that the district can help support you in your efforts to support your child's academic and social success:

Please list other comments or concerns here:

Thank you for your responses to this survey.

School begins at HOME:

There are many opportunities for your children to learn through everyday situations in your home. Here are some suggestions for turning the jobs you do daily into opportunities for teaching reading.

You can try these activities and ideas with your children in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, and watch your children improve in some of their school subjects as a result.

But remember...

From your child's point of view...

It's not what I think I am,

It's not what you think I am,

It's what I think you think I am!

Reading Assistance For Your Child

Before Reading:

- Read the title and make some predictions about what will happen in the story.
- Look at the pictures to see what the story is about.
- Decide on why you are reading the story.
- Think of things that you already know about the story.
- Think about the people in the story and where it might take place.
- Read questions pertaining to the story that you will have to answer.

While Reading:

- Check to see if the story is making sense, by seeing if you can tell what has happened so far.
- Stop and retell the main points so far.
- Keep thinking about the title and the pictures to help decide what is going to happen next.
- See if you can answer questions about the story.
- Re-read the parts you do not understand.

After Reading:

- Check to see if you met your purpose for reading the story.
- Retell the main points of the whole story. This way you can check to see if you understand the story.
- Think about if you made good or bad predictions.
- Think about how the story related with the things that you already knew.
- Have someone ask you questions about the story.

Steps to help your child become a fluent reader:

1. Make sure that the book your child is reading is not too difficult.
2. Encourage your child to reread easy books or books they have already read.
3. Encourage your child to read out loud to younger children.
4. Try echo reading: you read a phrase and the child repeats it after you, and tries to echo your phrasing and expression.
5. Make sure your child understands that punctuation marks tell us when to pause, stop, and affects your expression and tone of voice.

Steps to help your child gain Comprehension:

1. Ask your child to predict what he or she thinks is going to happen in the story.
2. After the child turns to a new page ask them questions about what happened on the previous page and ask them what they think will happen next.
3. Check for background: make sure that your child has prior knowledge of a topic that is in the book. For example, if your child is reading about a “subway” make sure they understand that it is an underground train.
4. Check the predictions of your child, ask them if what they predicted was right, and then to explain.
5. Have your child reread sentences that they had trouble with to make sure that they understand what the sentence says.
6. Identify the main characters, setting, and problem and solution of the story you’re reading.

The ABC's of Helping Your Child

- A: Accept your child, unconditionally.
- B: Believe in your child. Trust in his or her ability.
- C: Communicate with your child. Share ideas.
- D: Discuss things with your child.
- E: Enjoy your child. When parents enjoy their children, children enjoy their parents.
- F: Find things of interest to do together.
- G: Give your child responsibility which can be handled. This can lead to a feeling of accomplishments.
- H: Help your child with words of encouragement.
- I: Impress upon your child the vision of what is all around.
- J: Join your child in fun activities.
- K: Keep from over-identifying with your child. Don't try to live your life again through your child.
- L: Listen to your child. He or she needs someone to share thoughts, ideas, and feelings.
- M: Model behavior you want to see in your child.
- N: Name things for your child. Label concerning people, places and things in our environment are important.
- O: Observe the way your child goes about tasks. Provide help when needed.
- P: Place your child. Help your child do one thing at a time and do it well.
- Q: Question your child using words such as who, what, where and when. Ask about school, friends, and everyday things that happen.
- R: Read to your child every day. Have your child read to you also.
- S: Spend time with your child.
- T: Take your child to the library on a regular basis.
- U: Understand that learning isn't always easy. Sometimes we all fail. We can learn from our mistakes.
- V: Value your child's school and teachers. Your attitude will often be mirrored in your child.
- W: Write with your child. Encourage the youngster to write: even short sentences are important.
- X: X is often an unknown quantity. Your child's future is unknown, so guide him or her in a positive direction.
- Y: You are your child's most important teacher.
- Z: Zip it all up with love. Love gives zest to life.

Nifty Ways Parents Can Help Their Children in Reading at Home

1. Read newspapers, books, magazines, etc., where children can see you enjoying reading.
2. Read stories or books aloud to children. Talk about the stories, talk about new words; make it fun!
3. Sit down beside your child; both you and your child read silently that you enjoy. Then tell one another a little about what you each read.
4. Talk with your child about new words you see, ideas you get from things you read, news, and other information gained from reading; this shows that the ideas gotten from reading are worthwhile.
5. Let your child read aloud to you for 3-5 minutes. Compliment him/her on reading; don't be afraid to tell your child words they don't know.
6. At Christmas and birthday time when buying small gifts for your child, sometimes select books as gifts. Or magazine subscriptions; children love having magazines come to their home in the mail.
7. Leave the T.V. turned off for a half hour in the evening and read during this time.
8. Use reading games they are a fun way of learning and having a together time with mom or dad.
9. Attend a parent group meeting to talk about reading with teachers and other parents.
10. Visit your child's classroom and observe the kinds of reading activities that go on during their day. Children love having parents visit school. You can even eat lunch with your child if you make arrangements with the teacher.
11. To help your child know he/she is a member of your family group, include him/her in planning family activities. Encourage your child and give them praise when merited.
12. Talk with your child about activities as you do them together. Toss in some "big" words not known to the child. Children have to be able to hear, say words before they will know them to print.
13. Praise your child for honest effort. Don't be afraid to help a little when your child needs it. Tell him/her words they don't know in speaking and reading.
14. Don't compare one child with another.
15. If you have a tape recorder, allow your child to use it. Let them tape record happy, funny, sad or other interesting parts of a story or book.
16. Let your child listen to read along books.
17. Let your child read comic or weather reports to you as you prepare a meal.
18. Encourage big brothers/sisters to read to younger ones.
19. Talk with your child about "figurative language". Examples: To "pull your leg" means you are joking with someone. Or "a chip off the old block" means a child is like their father or mother.

Once You Have Chosen the Right Book.....

- *You need to stay within your reading zone (book level)*
- *Read the first pages before making a commitment (if you cannot read 5 or more words on the first page it is not the book for you)*
- *Read the summary on the back of the book (this is called the hook)*
- *Look at the cover and any pictures in the book to see if they interest you*
- *If you enjoy an author or series, be sure to check what books we have in our school library and your classroom library*
- *Find books with topics that interest you*
- *Most of all - enjoy reading the book!*

Fluency Tips

Pause at a . and a ,

. voice stays the same

! voice is louder & goes up at the end

? voice is up at the end

Use the following prompts as you read with your child:

Making Connections

Good readers constantly make connections between what they are reading and their lives, the world, and other texts. Making connections deepens understanding and brings meaning to the text.

Text-to-Self

This story reminds me of.....

I felt the way the character did in this story when.....

Text-to-Text

The main character in this story reminds me of the main character in _____.

The problem in this story reminds me of the problem in _____ because....

The solution in this story reminds me of the solution in _____ because.....

The lesson in this story reminds me of the illustrations in _____ because....

The way this story is written reminds me of _____ because.....

Text-to-World

This story makes me think of.....

Visualizing

When we visualize while reading, we create pictures in our minds. Visualizing helps us to relate to the characters in the text. We imagine what they look like and how they act. When children hear a well-written text, they can mix the author's words with their own ideas to create a visual image. The child adds his/her own experiences to the words above to create a picture of the event. Children can describe these visual images or draw a picture to illustrate the images.

When we first began practicing the strategy, students drew a picture about what they were visualizing when I was reading. We call our visualizations "Mental Pictures".

Asking Questions

Good readers constantly ask questions before, during, and after reading. Questioning provides a purpose for reading and keeps the reader engaged in the text. It propels the reader forward to search for answers to their questions. Questions are answered many different ways: in the text, from prior knowledge, inferences, and further research. There are also some questions that are not answered.

Before

- I wonder.....?
- What do I think is going to happen?
- What am I going to learn?
- Why did the author choose this title?
- Why did the author write this?
- When did this story take place?
- Who is the story about?
- Who is telling the story?

During

- What do I think will happen next?
- How does this character feel?
- Why did _____ happen?
- I wonder why _____?
- What would I do?
- How is the problem going to be solved?
- Do you think _____ should have _____?
- Am I paying attention to the message?
- Would I be friends with _____?
- What might happen if _____?
- What do I still need to find out?

After

- How did I feel when.....?
- What was my opinion of.....?
- When the author said __, I wondered....?
- Why do you think the author.....?
- What was the main idea.....?
- Do I know someone like...?
- What would have happened if.....?
- Do I agree with what the author said?
- Would I be friends with _____?
- What might happen if _____?
- What do I still need to find out?
- Why is this information important?
- Do I understand what the author is saying?

Explanation of Tests Administered to Students

ISASP

ISASP is a series of tests administered to all students in grades 3-6. All of the scores are analyzed by the NM teachers and administrators, with a focus on scores in Reading, Math, and Science. The scores are recorded and used to measure both grade-level proficiency and growth over time. The goal of the Title I Program is for students to show advanced growth that will close the gap so all students can meet grade-level proficiency.

STAR

The STAR Test is usually given to all NM students in grades 1-6. The test is typically given 3 times per year: fall, winter, and spring. The test is given in the computer lab. It is a 25-question test that starts at grade level and changes either by getting easier or harder depending on the answers given. The last 5 questions are small paragraphs measuring comprehension. Each question is timed and a clock shows up to let the student know when time is about to end. When the test is finished it gives the teacher a grade level for the given test. It also gives an appropriate reading range used in Accelerated Reader (AR).

A to Z

The A to Z Reading Program is a program many NM teachers are using to target a variety of skills such as decoding, comprehension, vocabulary development, and fluency. Printable leveled books are used to work with small groups on reading skills. The students in the program are tested 3 times per year; fall, winter, and spring. The students read a short story and then answer 10 questions about the story. The questions are text based, inferential, and critical response. This program can fill in the gaps that regular classroom instruction may miss. In addition, the use of readers' theater is used to improve reading fluency.

Accelerated Reader (AR)

Accelerated Reader (AR) is typically used by teachers in grades 1-6 to improve student achievement in reading. The students are given a quarterly AR goal at the beginning of each new quarter of the school year. In many classes, the quarter goal is broken down into weekly goals. The thought behind this is that weekly goals are easier for the students to understand and to monitor their progress with. The weekly goals can be updated daily on a chart in the classroom. The teacher helps the students to find appropriate leveled books to both challenge them and to help them to meet their goals. It is important for students to understand that their goals should not be too easy to obtain nor too hard. It is important for the student to have to push a bit to meet the goals. When a student pushes, he or she is growing. Tests are taken on the computer over books read and the accuracy in answering comprehension questions is recorded as well as the book level of the book being tested over. Submerging kids into "*reading, reading, reading*" produces readers. This is the ultimate goal – producing young people who will be lifelong readers!

Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST)

The Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) is a universal screener that is administered three times a year (Fall, Winter, and Spring) to determine whether or not students are meeting grade-level fluency benchmarks. Students in Kindergarten and First Grade are given a series of four sub-tests to determine if they are making adequate progress in early reading skills. Students in grades 2-6 are given three passages. They read each one for one minute. The number of words they can read in a minute and their accuracy are both recorded and used to determine whether or not students are adequately progressing as fluent readers.

Fluency Probes

If a student is showing and/or desiring help in the area of fluency, he or she can be given classroom reading probes. The students are reading a grade level passage. The readings are recorded on a chart that shows the students how they are progressing and offers a great visual for them that is easy to read. Each story is read first as a cold read. A cold read means that the student has never read this story before. Once they have read the story cold and have recorded their score on their chart the student and teacher finish reading and discussing the story targeting any trouble areas. The next 4 readings are called hot reads. A hot read simply means that the student has been exposed to the selection. After each hot read the student fills in their chart and measures their progress. This is a great opportunity for the teacher to celebrate successes and help the student set individual goals for themselves. All cold reads are colored blue and all hot reads are colored red on the chart. All readings are 1 minute long. The goal for classroom fluency is to increase student's confidence, smoothness, and speed in reading. The students are trying to read with an accuracy score of 90% or higher.

Written By Lisa Watts (5th and 6th Grade Reading)
and Lindsay Thoreson (K-3 Title I Reading)