

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to a new school year! I hope you had a wonderful summer and enjoyed spending quality time with your children. This summer I have been deeply engrossed in discovering what research says most benefits students as they become readers, writers and lifelong learners. As a result, the structure of my literacy block may look and sound a little different and I am EXCITED!

It won't be long until you hear your child talking about "The Daily Five." The purpose of this letter is to fill you in on what The Daily Five is all about, so you don't have to nod your head while wondering what in the world your child is referring to.

The Daily Five is a way of structuring the reading block so every student is independently engaged in meaningful literacy tasks. These research based tasks are ones that will have the biggest impact on student reading and writing achievement, as well as help foster children who love to read and write. Students receive explicit whole group instruction and then are given independent practice time to read and write independently while I provide focused, intense instruction to individuals and small groups of students.

When it is up and running smoothly, students will be engaged in the Daily Five, which are comprised of:

- Read to Self
- Work on Writing
- Read to Someone
- Listen to Reading
- Word Work

There are very specific behavior expectations that go with each Daily 5 component. We will spend our first weeks working intensely on building our reading and writing stamina, learning the behaviors of the Daily 5 and fostering our classroom community. I will also spend time learning about your child's strengths and greatest needs as a reader in order to best plan for each student's instruction. Therefore I will be inviting parents into the classroom after we have accomplished this important work. Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

One thing you'll notice that may be a change for you is a direct decrease in the number of worksheets your child brings home. While worksheets keep students busy, they don't really result in the high level of learning I want for your child. Instead, your child will be taught to select "Good Fit Books" or books they can read, understand and are interested in, which they will read during Daily 5. They will be spending most of their time actually reading, which research supports as the number one way to improve reading. I anticipate the motivation and enjoyment of reading will skyrocket when this gift of choosing their own books is accompanied by extended practice and specific reading instruction for each individual child.

As you can see, I am excited about giving your child the opportunity to be involved in a structure that will have a positive effect on their education.

Please think of our classroom as you visit garage sales or clean your own child's bookcase. It is my goal to make our classroom library as appealing as your favorite bookstore for browsing.

I hope to see you at Open House where we can talk more and I can answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,