

November 15, 2019

Q&A with Principal Stacy DeCorsey:

So many of the events are run during the day (back to school, PTO meetings...), which makes it difficult for working families to attend. Can we look at a more equitable solution? **We have scheduled one PTO meeting during the day and one in the evening to accommodate all parents.**

Given the rate of dyslexia in students is 1 in 5, how can general classroom education be addressed to accurately evaluate a students' understanding of curriculum concepts at all reading fluency levels without 20% of classrooms requiring special education interventions?

Our intervention options continue to grow as does our knowledge of how to best serve students with Dyslexia. Our Wilson, Foundations, and Just Words (K-1) programs have been very successful with students with Dyslexia. We have also added staff and supported training for interventionists as well as classroom teachers. Two years ago we had a building PLC that was devoted to learning about Dyslexia. These efforts are district wide and will continue as the numbers rise.

How do we keep this top of mind when designing classroom lessons, worksheets and testing?

When necessary we modify any and all instruction. We can also use testing interventions if necessary.

Are there upcoming funding needs like the playground project in the past we should be gearing up for? **We took out a piece of equipment last year that we felt was unsafe. We would like to replace it with a safe, handicap accessible merry-go-round. Any help from PTO would be appreciated.**

Are there ways we could eliminate homework at the elementary level? I keep reading research against it but it continues to increase. It is eroding my child's love of learning and damaging parent/child relationships.

This past year we had a building committee that looked at homework. We have reduced the amount that we are sending home this year and agree that the research doesn't support extensive amounts of homework. Our goal is to prepare

students for the demands in middle school and high school. Setting up good evening study routines will really help families down the line. Also... some kids choose not to use their time wisely during the day and therefore have to take that work home. We do not consider this homework.

Objectives and goals for Excelsior Elem.

We have two building wide goals this year. One is to reduce the number of students needing social emotional support via. Our SABERS research. Our hope is that as we get more emotional support in place for students that there will be less of a need. The other building goal is to increase our MCA reading percentages by 2%.

More information about our approach to bullying as a school and what a parent can do when witnessing bullying whether their child or not!

Raising kids is a community effort. Any time you come across a tough situation please take the time to help kids process, apologize, and move forward.

We feel it's important to teach kids skills necessary to problem solve social situations. Our Social Thinking curriculum has given us a common language across the building. We also try to be restorative and help students understand how to get along with each other. When sharing social space with others perspective taking is a challenging skill to develop but so important.

We don't believe any child is a bully, we believe they have behaviors that they need to understand and then work through. Our goal is that the behavior doesn't happen again.

I realize this is probably an ongoing issue, but how can we try to innovate and get our children more time to eat and/or play at recess?

Valid question. Due to scheduling and space we can't really change the lunch/recess time. We do encourage teachers to take students out for additional recess whenever possible. Students in today's classrooms have more opportunities for movement than when we were in school. Flexible seating, sensory track in the hallways, Go Noodle, Brain breaks, Body Breaks, etc....

Concerns about the "too short" lunch and recess periods, how can their brains work effectively if we don't allow them nourishment and fresh air/exercise time

See above