

It's Elementary!



The Power of Data

Data has the power to connect teachers to student learning and push them to reflect on teaching practices. This enables teachers to engage in collaborative conversations that will lead to instructional adjustments to improve student achievement. Instructional conversation is at the heart of what makes effective analysis so powerful! Administrators and teachers of the Rankin County School District continue to make great strides with data analysis. Analyzing benchmark and summative assessments allows teachers to identify areas of success and determine standards that may need an intentional focus. This leads to conversations regarding instructional practices to ensure that necessary adjustments are put in place to impact student learning.

Pictured below, Richland Elementary reviews Developmental Reading Assessments (DRAs) to identify common trends in reading behaviors. This data is used to plan purposeful learning centers, ensure effective grouping of students for instruction, and identify skills to be spiraled through large and small group instruction.



**Fountas and Pinnell
Interactive Read
Aloud and Book
Clubs**



New Teachers



ARI Training

Fountas and Pinnell Interactive Read Aloud and Book Clubs

This year teachers in grades 4-5 received the Fountas and Pinnell Interactive Read Aloud Collection and Book Clubs. Teachers are excited about the rich complex text that will increase student engagement. In January, they will receive training on Interactive Read Alouds, Book Clubs, and Reading Minilessons.

The Interactive Read-Aloud Collection provides students many opportunities to experience the joy of reading while increasing their ability to think, talk, and write about texts. This collection is organized into 25 text sets that include a diversity of characters, settings, and topics. Through Interactive Read-Alouds students are exposed to a variety of authors and illustrators, topics, genres, themes, and text structures organized around a connecting idea, central theme, or study of a particular author, illustrator, or genre.

The Fountas & Pinnell Classroom™ Book Clubs Collection provides teachers an opportunity to conduct book clubs throughout the year. The Book Clubs Collection is organized in text sets that are connected by genre, theme, topic, author, or illustrator. These books also relate to titles in other text sets, such as Interactive Read-Aloud, Shared Reading, and Independent Reading allowing students to make connections among various texts.

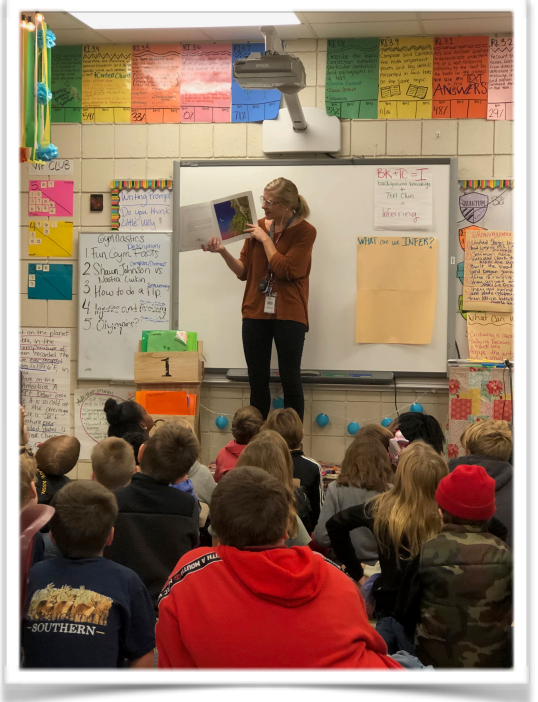
Fountas and Pinnell Interactive Read Aloud lesson below.

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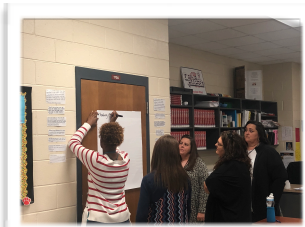
New Teachers



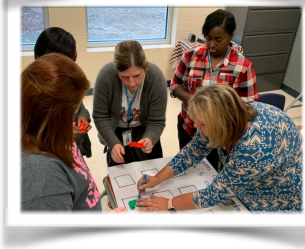
New elementary teachers and their mentors were invited to a meeting to discuss instructional and curriculum needs. The focus was on Language Arts, Math, and Science. Teachers were able to pose questions and get feedback from the District Curriculum Specialists. The meeting started off with a sweet treat to show our appreciation for the tremendous job that teachers do each day. The room was filled with discussion and first year funny stories. The group enjoyed laughs and were able to share their excitement for the new year.



ARI Training



The RCSD Assistant Reading Instructors work with K-6 teachers in all aspects. They assist teachers by leading various small groups that help students achieve academic growth. Their presence in the classroom is fundamental for the day to day operation. ARIs work with students in small group settings to support whole group instruction that takes place daily.

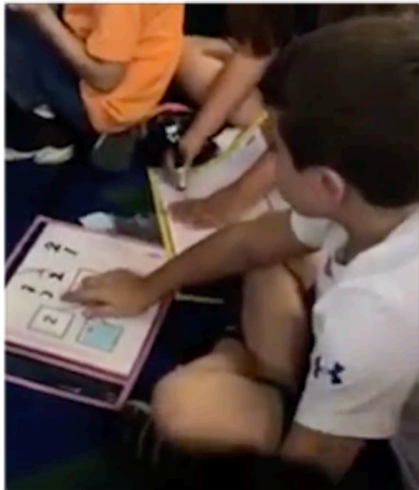


In order to support ARIs, a day of professional development was held in October on Fountas Pinnell resources and math manipulatives. It is imperative that all ARIs receive training to promote and support various learning strategies and instructional approaches that are effective in the classroom.

Eureka Math

Eureka Math instills deep, conceptual understanding that students can build on as they progress through the grades. This knowledge inspires mathematical curiosity and develops a love for the subject. Along with conceptual learning, fluency is an important component of this process. Fluency goes beyond just quick recall of facts. It also includes the understanding that these facts can help in problem solving and application to real world problems. Through much practice students learn to think, strategize and solve problems.

Eureka Math lessons can be seen daily in classrooms throughout the district. In the following video clip, Rikki Morrow's (Puckett Elementary) 1st grade class is beginning their Eureka lesson by practicing the established class signals used for Happy Counting and Cold Call fluency activities. For this particular lesson, she noted that the application problem was solved earlier during Calendar Math time. The concept development involves students using 5-group cards to solve "put together with result unknown" (1.OA.1) problems that are represented by stories stemming from pictures. The use of the cards make the expectation clear that students will practice counting on, but they can also use the strategy of counting all if needed. During the problem set, Mrs. Morrow is moving around and working with all students to ensure understanding. During the debrief, she encourages students to share their thinking with the class.



Video link below

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Principal SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Melissa McCray- Principal at McLaurin Elementary



Dr. Melissa McCray began her career as a fourth and fifth grade teacher. She taught for 9 years before becoming a principal. She spent the next 14 years as a principal of an inner-city Title I school. Under her leadership, the school was named a Title I Distinguished School twice as well as an Exceed School. She then spent two years as an administrative coach and professional development provider for a consulting firm. Dr. McCray is currently in her third year as principal of McLaurin Elementary School. Under her leadership, McLaurin has moved from a C rated school to an A rated school.

Dr. McCray completed her undergraduate work in Elementary Education at Belhaven University, attained a Master's in Leadership from Mississippi College and received her Doctorate in Elementary, Middle and Secondary School Administration from Mississippi State University.

Dr. McCray currently resides in Brandon, MS with her husband, Albert McCray. They have been married for 25 years. They have 3 children, Andrew, Matthew and Ida. They also have one grandson, Christian.

Andrea Payne - Principal at Oakdale Elementary



Andrea Payne was born and raised in Rankin County. She received her Bachelor's in Elementary Education in 2003 and Master's in Administration in 2015 from the University of Southern Mississippi. She is in her 16th year in education with all of her experience in Rankin County.

She began teaching 1st grade at Richland Elementary in 2003 and then became the interventionist in 2007. After 3 years as an Interventionist, she served as the District Interventionist for 5 years. In 2015, she took on the task of District Testing Coordinator, but knew her heart was leading her back into a school building.

She has served the past four years as a principal. First as principal of Richland Elementary from 2016-2108 and currently in her second year as principal of Oakdale Elementary. Under her leadership, Oakdale has moved from a B rated to an A rated school.

She currently resides in Brandon, MS with her husband and two sons, Anderson and Pierce.