



CEDARWOOD
SCHOOL

Dear Cedarwood Families,

In keeping with our school's commitment to meet the individual needs of all learners, Cedarwood School will offer the PALS Program (Processing Academic Learning Strategies) to address the educational needs of students who need additional support in reading, writing and/comprehension. The enhanced instructional services, called PALS will be delivered by specialist, Wanda Muhs.

Mrs. Muhs earned her BA degree from LSU and her Master's degree from Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama. Mrs. Muhs has over 25 years of teaching experience and has taught 2nd grade at Cedarwood for 3 years. Prior to Cedarwood, she taught at Isidore Newman School in New Orleans and in several private schools in Charlotte, North Carolina. Mrs. Muhs had extensive training in teaching reading and writing using the Lucy Calkins method as well as Reading Recovery. Most recently, Mrs. Muhs has been trained in the Linda Mood Bell teaching strategies using Visualizing and Verbalizing and Seeing Stars.

The ability to process language is a prerequisite to learning content. Specifically, the ability to decode, the ability to retain sight words, the ability to spell, the ability to comprehend written and oral language, and the ability to think critically are all necessary for success in content areas. Using the Lindamood-Bell teaching strategies, it is our goal to help students to develop these abilities to help them become independent and self-correcting.

Students who may benefit from this type of specialized instruction often display some or all of the following learning behaviors:

Weak reading comprehension - They must reread material several times and often remember only a few details, rather than the "whole".

Weak oral language skills - They may seem shy and have difficulty organizing their language...or they may be talkative but scattered, relating information out of sequence.

Weak oral language comprehension - They connect to only part of a conversation and have difficulty responding relevantly and thinking logically. They may ask and re-ask the same question and may be labeled as a "poor listener."

Weak written language skills - Their writing is often described as unorganized and nonspecific.

Mrs. Muhs is trained in two of the Lindamood-Bell Programs: ***Seeing Stars, Visualizing and Verbalizing***

- The ***Seeing Stars: Symbol Imagery for Phonemic Awareness, Sight Words and Spelling Program*** successfully develops symbol imagery and directly applies that sensory-cognitive function to sight word development, contextual fluency, spelling and increasing the speed and stability of phonemic awareness. The program begins by visualizing the identity, number, and sequence of letters for the sounds within words, and extends into multi-syllable and contextual reading and spelling.
- The ***Visualizing and Verbalizing for Language Comprehension and Thinking (V/V)*** successfully stimulates concept imagery. Individuals become able to image gestalts (the whole) which include color, and even movement. This improves their language comprehension, reasoning for critical thinking, and expressive language skills.

The one-to-one instruction is based on the student's learning needs. Upon review of the student's academic record, a PALS Plan will be written with specific goals of focus for instruction. Parents will be included in the PALS Plan review. A formal evaluation may be recommended following a review of the student's progress if an evaluation is not currently on file.

For more information about the **PALS** program, contact Ms. Krieger, School Counselor or Mrs. Chrissy Gates, Principal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn LeBlanc".

Kathryn LeBlanc, M.Ed.
President