

MID YEAR UPDATE



Dear Parents,

We have had a busy year thus far. We continue to support your child through small group intervention using 95% Group (a research-based explicit and systematic phonics program) as well as curriculum based interventions. We track your child's progress using assessments such as STAR Reading and STAR Early Literacy, as well as STAR CBM. These measures help us to understand the specific needs of your child, and helps us to decide when your child needs more support (see page 2.)

It was great to meet many of you at parent-teacher conferences in November. If you were not able to attend, please feel free to reach out to your child's Title I Reading Teacher to schedule a conference at any time. We want to make sure that we understand your child's needs, and support you and your child in any way we can. Our contact information can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Stay warm,

Your Elizabeth Forward Title I Team



SCHOOL CALENDAR DATES

February 16 - Presidents' Day - No School

*Make up day if needed

February 17 - 2 Hour Delay

March 23 - 2 Hour Delay

April 1 - No School for students

April 2 - 6th - Spring Recess

May 19 - Election Day - No School

May 22 - Early Dismissal

May 25 - Memorial Day - No School

June 10 - Early Dismissal / Last Day of School

June 19 - Kennywood Picnic



ASSESSMENT DATES

April 20-24 - PSSA Language Arts Grades 3-8

April 27 - May 1 - Math Grades 3-8

May 4-15 - STAR Reading Grades

May 18-29 - STAR CBM

REPORT CARD DATES

March 31st - 3rd 9 Weeks

June 10 - 4th 9 Weeks



My child is struggling in school, what are the options for additional support?

Title I Reading

Title I is a federal program designed to provide additional support to schools with high numbers of students from low-income families. This program aims to ensure that all children have the opportunity to receive a quality education, particularly in reading and other core subjects.

Who Qualifies for Title I Reading Support?

Schools assess students' reading skills through various assessments to identify those who may need additional help.

What Services Does Title I Reading Provide?

1. Small Group Instruction: Title I Reading programs often offer small group sessions where students receive focused instruction tailored to their individual needs. This allows for more personalized attention and targeted learning strategies.
2. Intervention Strategies: Title I Reading programs may use evidence-based intervention strategies to help students who are behind in their reading skills. These strategies are designed to improve phonics, comprehension, and fluency.
3. Progress Monitoring: Teachers regularly assess students' progress to ensure they are making gains in their reading skills. This allows for adjustments in instruction as needed.

504 Plan

A 504 Plan is an important tool designed to support students with disabilities in schools. It is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which ensures that students with disabilities receive the accommodations they need to succeed in their educational environment.

What is a 504 Plan?

A 504 Plan outlines specific **accommodations** and modifications that a student with a disability may need to participate fully in school. The plan is tailored to meet the individual needs of the student and is designed to ensure their access to the same educational opportunities as their peers.

Who is Eligible for a 504 Plan?

To qualify for a 504 Plan, a student must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This can include conditions such as:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Learning disabilities
- Chronic illnesses (like asthma or diabetes)
- Physical disabilities
- Mental health condition

IEP (Individualized Education Plan)

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a crucial document that outlines the educational plan for a student with a disability. It is designed to ensure that children receive the necessary support and services to succeed in school.

What is an IEP?

An IEP is a written plan that is tailored specifically to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability. It includes **specific goals, accommodations, modifications, and support services** that will help the student access the curriculum and achieve academic success.

Who is Eligible for an IEP?

To qualify for an IEP, a student must be evaluated and identified as having a disability that affects their ability to learn in a typical classroom setting. The disabilities can include, but are not limited to:

- Learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Emotional and behavioral disorders
- Physical disabilities



Understanding Common Causes of Reading Deficits in Elementary School Children

As parents, it can be concerning to see your child struggling with reading. Understanding the common causes of reading deficits can help you support your child's learning journey. Here are some of the most common reasons kids may have difficulty with reading:



how
can parents
help?

1. **Limited Exposure to Language:** Children who are not exposed to a rich language environment may struggle with reading. Reading to your child, talking with them, and encouraging conversations can help build their vocabulary and language skills.
2. **Phonemic Awareness:** Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate sounds in words. Children who struggle with this skill may find it hard to connect sounds to letters, which is essential for reading. Activities like rhyming games and sound matching can help develop this skill.
3. **Dyslexia:** Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that affects reading. Children with dyslexia may have trouble with phonics, spelling, and decoding words. If you suspect your child has dyslexia, it's important to consult with a specialist for assessment and support.
4. **Attention Difficulties:** Some children may have trouble focusing or paying attention, which can impact their reading skills. If your child struggles to concentrate during reading activities, consider discussing their attention span with their teacher or a professional.
5. **Vision or Hearing Problems:** Undiagnosed vision or hearing issues can affect a child's ability to read. Regular check-ups with an eye doctor and hearing specialist can help identify any problems that may be impacting your child's reading skills.
6. **Lack of Motivation or Interest:** Sometimes children struggle with reading simply because they are not interested in the material. Encouraging a love for reading by providing books that match your child's interests can help spark their motivation.
7. **Insufficient Practice:** Just like any other skill, reading requires practice. Children may need additional support and practice to become proficient readers. Reading together at home and providing time for independent reading can foster improvement.

- **Read Together:** Spend time reading books with your child. This not only improves their skills but also creates a bonding experience.
- **Encourage Reading at Home:** Provide a variety of reading materials, such as books, magazines, and comics, that match your child's interests.
- **Communicate with Teachers:** Keep an open line of communication with your child's teacher. They can offer valuable insights and strategies to help your child succeed.



Understanding the common causes of reading deficits can empower parents to take an active role in their child's literacy development. By providing support, encouragement, and resources, you can help your child become a confident reader!



What is STAR?

STAR is an assessment tool used in schools to help teachers measure students' progress in reading and math. It is designed to support students from kindergarten through eighth grade.



Regular Assessment: STAR involves regular assessments that are quick and easy for teachers to give. These assessments help identify how well your child is doing in important skills like reading fluency, comprehension, and math problem-solving.

Data-Driven: The results from these assessments give teachers valuable information about each student's strengths and areas where they may need extra help. This data helps teachers create personalized learning plans for your child.

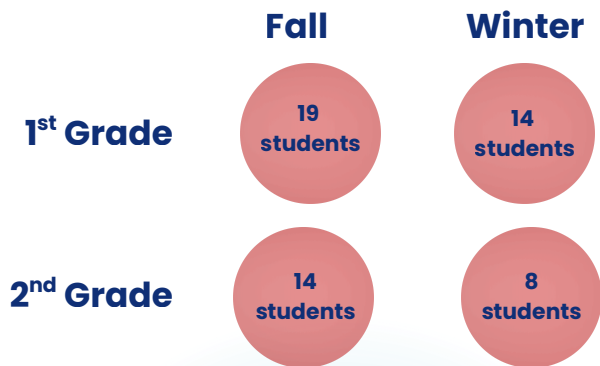
Progress Monitoring: STAR allows teachers to track your child's progress over time. By comparing results, teachers can see if students are improving and adjust their teaching strategies as needed.

Communication with Parents: STAR helps keep parents informed about their child's progress. Teachers can share assessment results with parents during conferences or through report cards.



STAR is important because it helps ensure that every child is learning and growing in their skills. It provides teachers with the tools they need to support students and helps parents understand how their child is doing in school. By working together, teachers and parents can help children succeed!

Students Scoring Below Benchmark



As we provide
targeted intervention,
less students fall
below benchmark!

check out a sample of our
RESULTS!

4

Our
TEAM



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DR. SIMALA
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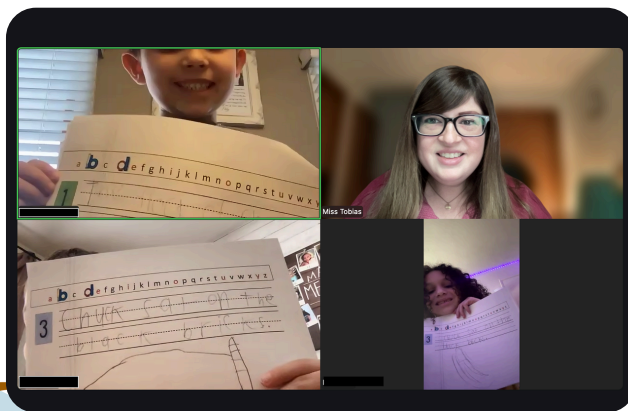
MRS. PITTMAN
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Mrs. Pittman's Mount Vernon students are working together to improve fluency and comprehension



Mrs. Nill's 1st Graders work on blending, a critical skill in phonemic awareness



Miss Tobias's second grade students practicing sentence dictation during our remote days.

A Sneak Peak into our world of reading . . .



Third grade students in Mrs. Francia's Reading group at Wm. Penn Elementary reading a winter story for their "Friday Fluency" practice.