Grade 2: Back-to-School Family Support Letter

Dear Family,

This year, *95 Phonics Core Program*™ is being used to teach the foundational skills of reading. The program is taught for 30 minutes daily as a whole class lesson. During each lesson, your child will receive direct and explicit instruction in:

- Phonological awareness, which is the ability to hear and manipulate the spoken parts of words. Phonological awareness provides a critical foundation for acquiring phonics skills, which will, in turn, support accurate and fluent reading of text.
- Phonics, or the connections between letters and sounds.
- Morphology, which is the study of basic prefixes/suffixes as appropriate to the grade level.
- High-frequency words.
- Fluency and using phonics skills while reading decodable passages.

95 Phonics Core Program™ teaches specific patterns in the English language. The brain excels at learning patterns, so the focus is on helping students identify and apply the patterns in words. This may be a new way of learning to read and spell for you and your child. Spelling will be taught explicitly each week in class and students will have multiple opportunities for practice. An explanation of the week's target pattern and/or a list of example pattern words will be sent home so you can support your student's success with learning the pattern. The focus of your child's at-home practice should be on building automaticity with the target pattern through activities and questioning (versus memorization).

Each week your child's mastery of the target pattern will be assessed through a word dictation test. The test will include 7–8 words that follow the target pattern as well as 2–3 high-frequency words. High-frequency words are words that your child sees frequently during reading and will need to know how to spell while writing.

Use the following sample activities and questions to help your child master the weekly phonics pattern(s).

Read Aloud Time

- Look for the weekly phonics pattern in words from the books you read with your child.
- Have your child list pattern words from the books and then read the words to you.

Word Dictation

1. Say 1 word that follows the phonics pattern for the week (e.g., bake).
2. Have your child say all the sounds in the word (e.g., /b/ /ā/ /k/), then write the letters that spell each sound. Provide feedback by checking that your child has spelled the word correctly.
3. Repeat this process with more words. Examples of words that follow the phonics focus will be listed on the weekly ***Family Support Letter***.
4. Finally, have your child practice reading all the words they spelled.

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Penny Spelling

Before beginning, line up 4-6 pennies (or other coin/small object).

1. Say a pattern word, and have your child repeat the word.
2. Ask your child to pull down 1 penny for each sound in the word.
3. Have your child write the letter(s) that spell each sound to write the whole word.
4. Finally, have your child teach you the rule of the phonics pattern.

Examples

1. Word: *map* 2. Sounds: /m/ /ă/ /p/ (pull down 3 pennies) 3. Spelling: *m-a-p* 4. Pattern: When 1 vowel is followed by 1 or more consonants, the vowel is short.	1. Word: *rain* 2. Sounds: /r/ /ā/ /n/ (pull down 3 pennies) 3. Spelling: *r-a-i-n* 4. Pattern: Vowel team *ai* makes the long a vowel sound.	1. Word: *cake* 2. Sounds: /k/ /ā/ /k/ (pull down 3 pennies) 3. Spelling: *c-a-k-e* 4. Pattern: In the long vowel silent-e pattern, the vowel is long.

Note: A letter in slashes, such as /t/, indicates that the letter sound rather than the letter name should be said.

Questions

1. Say a pattern word and ask your child to repeat it.
2. Ask a few of the following questions:
    - How many sounds do you hear in the word?
    - What is the beginning sound?
    - What is the ending sound?
    - What is the vowel sound?
    - What is the pattern we are working on? Does the word have our target pattern for the week? How would you spell that pattern in this word?
    - How many syllables does the word have?

Thank you for your interest and support in teaching your student to read and spell!

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