

A MESSAGE FROM MS. PERRY - THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY READING

Last weekend, I attended the ACSA (Association of California School Administrators) conference in Reno. Although I do not like to be gone from campus, I always gain good information and enjoy the time with my colleagues. Two of the breakout sessions I attended were on literacy.

With the budget cuts affecting our categorical funding, our Site Council had the difficult task of deciding program cuts for our Instructional Computer Specialist position and our reading program. Next year, our reading program will be able to provide less than half the services we have previously been able to provide.

Marci Bernard and Sarah Foley are already looking at creative ways to maximize the hours we will have and provide service for our most needy students.

We cannot stress enough the importance of DAILY reading! If families are able to ensure their students are reading daily (including through the summer) and having the opportunity to talk about what they have read, it will decrease the number of students who need the reading support. It is also important that children get into the habit of reading and FINISHING books. Below are some bits of information from the conference about reading and literacy:

For nine year olds on, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) in 1998, found the correlation between engaged reading and reading comprehension, achievement was higher than any demographic characteristic such as gender, income or ethnicity (Guthrie et al., 2001).

Research consistently shows that reading success is one of the most powerful determinants of academic achievement.

Engaged Reading is:

- **Frequent, focused reading**
 - Help your students be motivated by helping choose books they are interested in and giving them an inviting place to read
- **Strategic**
 - Ask your children about what they are reading. Take the time to read what they are reading and discuss it with them. When you are talking about books, make sure to ask all different kinds of questions. Include questions about what the author's reasons were for writing the way they did AND questions about how the student knows what they know.
- **Often socially interactive**
 - Find out what your child's friends are reading. Consider starting a book group in the summer. Consider choosing a book for a family book discussion.

Percentile Rank on Reading Tests	Minutes of Reading per day outside of school	Estimated Number of words read per year
98	90.7	4,733,000
90	40.4	2,357,000
70	21.7	1,168,000
50	12.9	601,000
20	3.1	134,000
10	1.6	51,000

Source: Anderson, R., Wilson, P., and Fielding, L. (1988). Growth in reading and how children spend their time outside of school. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 23. 285-303