



September 2010

Dear Parents and Guardians:

In our ongoing efforts to ensure that all students receive the academic instruction needed for them to reach their highest potential, the Placentia-Yorba Linda USD continues to provide a **Response to Intervention (RtI)** approach to reading instruction. The fundamental goal of RtI is to improve the educational outcomes for all students by providing them targeted instruction that address their learning needs. RtI informs the teaching and learning process by providing continuous student performance data and reporting results to parents, teachers, and administrators. The data enables the instructional team to make sound decisions regarding each student's reading/language arts program.

RtI Components

Students are assessed three times per year on grade appropriate skills, ranging from pre-reading and early reading to reading fluency and comprehensions skills. The assessments guide teachers in determining which students are on-track toward becoming successful readers, which students may need additional interventions to reach this goal, and which students may need enrichment or accelerated curriculum. Key components include:

- ◆ A high quality core reading program implemented with fidelity. The current adoptions for PYLUSD are the **Houghton Mifflin** and **Mc Dougal Littell** reading series.
- ◆ The use of assessments for the purposes of screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring. The Voyager "**Vital Indicators of Progress**" benchmark assessments are administered to students three times per year. These measures are discussed in greater detail below.
- ◆ The use of professional collaboration to make decisions regarding student needs, including general education teachers, administrators and special educators. Decisions regarding placement for students with IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) is made through the IEP process.
- ◆ Early intervention to provide assistance as soon as a risk factor for reading success is identified.
- ◆ The use of research-based interventions and instruction which include **Voyager Passport** and **Journeys**, supplemental curriculums that are taught in conjunction with *Houghton Mifflin* and *Mc Dougal Littell* for students with identified needs in reading. Additionally, **SRA Reading Mastery** and **Language!** are research based replacement curriculums that are provided to students demonstrating greater need in the area of reading.
- ◆ The use of data to monitor student progress to assist teaching staff in making effective instructional decisions.

Uninterrupted blocks of instructional time for language arts have been established at all grade levels. We are very conscientious about not allowing assemblies and pull-outs for other instruction to take place during this protected instructional time. During these periods, leveled reading instruction is provided to all students. Over the course of the year, your child's teacher will be sharing information with you regarding your child's progress.

Reading Assessments

Assessments are useful tools to provide teachers with information about student progress, placement in an instructional group, to monitor growth, and to drive instruction. In PYLUSD, we follow a district assessment timeline at every grade level which clearly defines what assessments will be given each quarter. **Vital Indicators of Progress (VIP)** are tests that measure reading skills. The assessments measure the five essential components of reading sometimes referred to as the building blocks of reading. A brief explanation of each of these building blocks is listed below:



- ◆ **Initial Sound Fluency** – Measures a student’s ability to recognize and produce the initial sounds of spoken words.
- ◆ **Phoneme Segmentation Fluency** – Measures a student’s ability to segment individual phonemes in spoken words.
- ◆ **Nonsense Word Fluency** – Measures phonic skills using nonsense words. Students with the ability to decode unfamiliar words are now ready to read independently.
- ◆ **Reading Connected Text** – Measures a student’s ability to read a grade level passage fluently (with appropriate speed and accuracy).
- ◆ **Retell Fluency** – Measures a student’s retelling of the reading connected text passage and provides an indication of comprehension ability. At sixth grade, the students also take a **Reading Benchmark** assessment which provides a more thorough measure of reading comprehension skills

More than a decade of research has produced these measures that can predict with 92% accuracy a K-3 student’s end of the third grade reading ability. For students in grades 4-6, the measures help monitor and guide instruction so we can meet the varying learning needs of our students. The district middle schools also employ a Response to Intervention approach to reading instruction, so all students have the continuous support and challenge they need to achieve their highest reading potential.

We are very pleased with our progress to date with Response to Intervention and look forward to another great year of our students’ reading success. If you have any questions regarding RtI, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shirley Fargo
Principal