

Bridge to Literacy Guidelines for Afternoon Kindergarten Instruction

Revised 2007-2008

Goal: Every kindergarten age child will be provided an environmentally rich classroom that provides a strong language-literacy connection through:

- Phonology – an awareness of the basic sound units of language
- Vocabulary – knowledge of words and their meanings
- Grammar – the system of rules and combining words into phrases and sentences to make sense
- Pragmatics – the appropriate use of language to communicate effectively: rules of politeness; conversation skills; extended discourse, i.e. tell a story, give an explanation (culturally specific)

Opportunities will be provided for students to interact in small and large group settings. These interactions will be focused on specific literary needs.

In order to better meet the needs of kindergarten students, one hour of instruction will be offered by kindergarten teachers after the point of regular kindergarten dismissal. The school system established this additional time as part of an initiative viewed as a bridge to increased literacy. During afternoon literacy instruction, kindergarten students will have the opportunity to engage in activities in the Sounds and Symbols Program, better known as High hat. The program supports the development of early childhood centers of excellence that focus on all areas of development, especially on the early language, cognitive, and pre-reading skills that prepare children for continued school success. The teacher will facilitate these instructional processes using the following strategies:

1. Encourage students in extended conversations.
2. Encourage students to tell and retell stories and events.
3. Discuss a wide range of topics.
4. Use of new and unusual words.
5. Vocabulary development (for example, name and describe objects in the classroom).
6. Oral language enrichment.
7. Encourage language play (explore and experiment with language).
8. Immersion in appropriate language models.

The following is a list of suggested strategies and activities that will reinforce the literacy instruction and High Hat Program:

- I. Strategies and Activities to Develop Oral Language:
 - Circle Time
 - Sharing Time
 - Show and Tell
 - News of the Day

- II. Read Aloud Session
- III. Small Group and Large Whole Group Instruction
 - Meet individual student needs.
 - Allow for more intensive instruction.
 - Maximize the opportunities for students to express what they know and to receive feedback.
 - Serve as an idea format to provide oral language/reading instruction.
 - Place students with similar knowledge and skills in groups of three to five.
 - Focus on instructional objectives based on current assessment data you have in your classroom.
- IV. Individual Student Support
 - Target the needs of students through one-to-one instruction. Instruction should be responsive to needs identified in the assessment process.
- V. Independent Centers
 - Dramatic Play
 - Thematic Centers
 - Content Area Centers
 - Literacy Centers

Each teacher will provide a daily record of activities implemented through High Hat during the afternoon literacy block. Plans will be reviewed by the principal and will be available for review by the instructional supervisor. The instructional supervisor will provide ideas, support, and resources as needed to promote the effective implementation of the program.