



To: Board of Education
Re: First Quarter Data
Date: December 2, 2013
From: Stephanie Falls

The following is a narrative regarding the quarterly data for the Intermediate School. You have been provided the data for the STAR reading and math as well as the module assessments for ELA and math. The STAR data was collected in September and the module assessments were administered in November.

STAR Reading and Math (grades 3-5)

This is the first time that students were administered the STAR Reading. In the past the students were tested with AIMS Web to measure fluency. STAR measures much more than fluency; it actually estimates the mastery of CCLS and suggests activities to help students with a variety of reading skills. Because this was the first year for STAR reading, we are not able to compare the results. The data are similar to the results of the 2013 NYS ELA test. The results of this screening were used to assign students to groups for our intervention/enrichment block, TEAM, based on the district RtI protocol. The data are similar to the results of the 2013 NYS Math test. Currently, we are using the STAR reading results to guide our TEAM assignments since so much of the CCLS math involves reading and writing.

ELA Module Assessments

Students in grades 3-5 took the end of Expeditionary Learning module assessment for ELA. I met with each team of teachers to discuss the assessments.

Generalized statements for the building:

- Most students preformed as expected on the assessment.
- Assessments were fair.

- Students had difficulty following directions as they were written; teachers will need to help students focus on task directions. Students have not yet developed the propensity for the close reading of complex directions.
- The tasks asked the students to really stretch to find connections in the text.
- Students learned a great deal with the modules.
- Instruction was much smoother as teachers had experience with module 1 and the students are accustomed to the structure of the lessons from last school year.

Grade specific comments:

Grade 3

- Formatting was unfamiliar to teachers and students. Teachers will integrate a variety of assessment formats to help students adapt to these changes.
- Teachers now have good feedback for assisting students with the following noticed items:
 - Students did not check their work; conventions, spelling, missing details were not self-corrected.
 - Students are learning only to find evidence which limits deep understanding tasks.
 - Background knowledge is missing from students' repertoire.

Grade 4

- Overall it was a very successful unit- students liked it, got the gist, understood it, and felt it was relevant to their lives. However, the assessment results did not reflect the learning which may be a result of familiarity with format and vocabulary.
- The 6+1 rubric was used to score the assessment; however, teachers have learned that the assessment rubric would be more fitting.

Grade 5

- Students were all able to demonstrate learning- struggling students had good organization and now need to focus on targeted writing skills.
- Teachers were pleasantly surprised by the evidence that students choose to use in their writing.
- Students analyzed their own assessments in addition to the teacher.

Math Module Assessments

Students in grades 3-5 took either the end of Common Core module or mid-module assessment for math depending on the length of the unit. I met with each team of teachers to discuss the assessments.

Generalized statements for the building:

- The math modules and assessments are the newest for our teachers and students.
- Students need assistance with learning how to avoid over thinking simple tasks.
- Strong reading and writing skills are crucial for math instruction.
- Assessments were time consuming. Many were not able to complete the assessment in the time period.
- Application of math fluency will grow over time.
- Teachers learned that strategies like skipping difficult problems penalize students as problems are interrelated.
- Tasks are very complex and it will take more practice for students to become proficient.
- Each grade level has a system to address content gaps with the change to CCLS.
- Formatting was unfamiliar to teachers and students. Teachers will integrate a variety of assessment formats to help students adapt to these changes.
- Teachers are learning the pacing of lessons.
- Partial credit helped immensely.
- Exit tickets are helpful to plan the next lessons.
- Students that were average or above average in the past are struggling with the new instructional practices. It will take time for them to integrate these skills into their learning.
- Adults (parents and teachers) are required to really think to solve the problems due to the new strategies and techniques in the CCLS.
- Assessments required higher order thinking skills such as application.

Grade specific comments:

Grade 3

- Teachers have shifted concentration to math (from ELA).
- Using multiple terms (estimate, round, reasonable) for the same concept and time on task adds to the complexity of the problem. Practice with academic vocabulary will help students become proficient.

Grade 4

- Practice in reading complex math problems is required.
Tasks require close reading; for example; "Use place value understanding to fluently add multi-digit whole numbers using the standard addition algorithm and apply the algorithm to solve word problems using tape diagrams."

Grade 5

- Module 2 is already easier as students are learning the structure and skills.
- Pacing was off so students were assessed on material that was not covered in depth (question #6). Teacher pacing will improve with familiarity with modules.
- Students are accustomed to vocabulary so questions like, “Multiply using the algorithm” are no longer a challenge.
- Students are taught mnemonics and labeling techniques to help with multi-step problems.

Thank you for your continued support. We are looking forward to using what we have learned in the first 10 weeks of instruction to help students their full potential as College and Career Ready Homer graduates.