

Principal's Perspective

At Pinewood Elementary School, children are challenged to do their best within a safe, caring and respectful atmosphere. Teachers meet regularly to discuss student progress and ways to improve reading and math performance. During 2011-2012, teachers will continue to focus on the development of essential literacy skills.

In math, a range of approaches will be employed to extend or reinforce student learning. A math intervention program will also continue to support students in need of additional math support in grades 1-5. SIOP approaches will be used to engage students, make learning objectives clear and monitor ongoing student progress.

In language arts, current focus areas to improve reading fluency, introduce and apply academic vocabulary, and promote independent reading outside of the school day will continue. READ 180 and SYSTEM 44 will be offered as programs to support third- through fifth-grade students in need of additional reading intervention. Faculty will also implement SIOP processes to engage students, make learning objectives clear and monitor ongoing student progress.

Individual student growth will be assessed frequently to gauge success in meeting proficiency standards and high levels of student growth. Pinewood is a school with high expectations for student learning and there is a continuous emphasis on improvement and lifelong learning. Everyone "Believes and Achieves" at Pinewood! Parents and community members are invited to share their time and talent to make the upcoming year an outstanding one for Pinewood students. Pinewood Elementary has been validated as a "Minnesota School of Excellence" by the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association!

Goal #1: All students at Pinewood will demonstrate continuous reading growth, as progress toward their reading goals are consistently monitored and assessed while receiving challenging and appropriate reading instruction. Proficiency and growth goals have been established in grades 2-5, as measured by student performance on Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) spring reading assessments.

Results: Teachers used a range of approaches and strategies to facilitate individual reading growth. Schedules for grade level, support staff, and high performing instruction were coordinated to customize reading instruction while also reducing group size for students. Grade levels worked collaboratively to review ongoing student progress and adjust instruction, as needed, to improve student learning. School-wide emphasis areas this year included further implementation of processes to build reading fluency and formative assessment approaches to monitor and improve student learning. This year, 341 students achieved recognition by reaching the "Pinewood Reading Hall of Fame," a program to promote independent reading achievement at home. In addition, 79% of students in grades three - five met or exceeded reading proficiency, as measured by the MCA spring reading assessment.

Goal #2: All students at Pinewood will demonstrate continuous math growth, as progress toward their math goals are consistently monitored and assessed while receiving challenging and appropriate math instruction. Proficiency and growth goals in grades K-5 have been established to measure annual student improvement.

Results: Schedules for grade level, support staff, and high performing instruction were coordinated to meet a continuum of skill needs while also reducing group size for students. Varied teaching approaches were used to provide appropriate extensions or support for student learning, including a math intervention program for identified students. A plan to introduce "Hands-on Algebra" strategies as a learning extension has been expanded to identified students in grades 2-5. Grade levels met regularly to review student progress and adjust instruction, as needed, to improve math achievement. SIOP processes were implemented to establish clear objectives, monitor student learning frequently and modify instruction, as needed, to respond to student needs. Computation fluency was a focus area in grade one. 95% of all first graders computed sums to 10 with 90-100% accuracy.