

February 2, 2014

GRADES 3-5: PREPARING FOR OUR SPRING STATE TESTING PILOT

The Grand View teachers are grateful for the many ways you support and model literacy within your homes. We enjoy hearing stories about daily reading rituals, discussions about poetry, and debates on favorite books. These home experiences make a significant difference for our students at school as your work supports engagement in reading, writing, speaking; these skills are key components of Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These standards place a greater emphasis on reading informational texts (nonfiction) and writing informative, explanatory, and evidence-based pieces across all curriculum areas.

The more opportunities provided for both sustained reading and engagement in conversations about the text, the more your child will increase his/her skills, and be better prepared for the demands of CCSS. We believe that children should read many, many books at their independent or "just right" reading level. If you would like to engage your child with text beyond their independent reading level, try reading aloud or provide audio book experiences, accompanied with text. These experiences are valuable and build comprehension, attention, critical thinking, connections between print elements, and thoughtful reflection.

In the spring, our 3rd/4th/5th grade students will participate in online CCSS field testing in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. These assessments are pilot tests; therefore, parents and teachers will not receive score reports. Our students will be able to experience the new online testing system without the pressure of scores counting. This field testing experience will provide important feedback to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium so that adjustments can be made to the test before the official launch next spring.

The Grand View teachers are already providing instruction and classroom activities that support Common Core. If you would like to support keyboarding opportunities at home, this would be helpful for our students. All students will participate in CCSS testing in the computer lab or on their iPads. Typing Web is a free online tutorial that you may want to consider: www.typingweb.com.

Thank you again for your support and commitment to your child's learning. We are very fortunate to have parents that are so purposely and passionately invested in our Gator community.

Rhonda Steinberg
Principal
Grand View Elementary School

For more information on CCSS please see the brochures provided by the National PTA and the Council of Great City Schools:

National PTA

[Two-page Parents' Guides to Student Success](#)

[Four-page Parents' Guides to Student Success](#)

Council of Great City Schools

[Parent Roadmaps: English Language Arts](#)

[Parent Roadmaps: Mathematics](#)