

Grade Level Reading Coalition Recap & Next Steps 12.7.16

Principal Panel

- Sara Long (Federal Hill Prep Academy), Rochelle Machado (Arundel Elementary/Middle) and Christopher Turk (George Washington Elementary) shared how they approach reading instruction at their schools. Some things they highlighted include:
 - Importance of small group instruction and groups that are created based on data
 - Strong implementation of guided reading
 - Stressing the connection between writing and reading and ensuring students are able to write well
 - Teachers collaborating and feeling shared accountability for success of students
 - Supports for families to help their children at home (including workshops for parents and resources to help them become better educated themselves)
 - Strong relationships between principal and teachers and a school environment where feedback is welcome
- Principals asked for support in the following ways:
 - Purchasing materials for school (including basic necessities like paper)
 - Experts who can help school understand reading data and create data-driven strategies
 - Partnerships to help increase attendance at schools
 - Opportunities for effective Professional Development on reading for teachers (including over the summer)
 - Funding for high quality afterschool programming
 - Development of partnership with Housing and advocacy to improve conditions for students

Vision for the Campaign

- Group discussed their vision for the Campaign. Highlights of this conversation include:
 - Campaign's role as resource and connector to other organizations in Baltimore
 - Campaign as way to bridge from practice to policy
 - Strong potential to change policy in Baltimore and advocate for policies we think are important
 - Importance of focusing on equity for students in Baltimore
 - Strength of voices and diversity in Coalition
 - Importance of determining how we get to the core of fundamental basic things a school needs to increase reading regardless of what specific reading program they use

Campaign Updates

- Pre-K Enrollment
 - Family Literacy Coalition (school readiness arm of Campaign) gave grants to two community organizations (Strong City Baltimore & Communities United) to increase enrollment at two historically under-enrolled schools (Gilmor Elementary & Dallas F. Nicholas). Both schools were fully enrolled this year.
 - Best practices include: Having a dedicated staff person who can focus on Pre-K enrollment is valuable, events that introduced families to teachers and other school staff helped create connection with school, a trusted community liaison who can meet with families and discuss the importance of Pre-K

- Some barriers to Pre-K enrollment include: lack of access to birth certificates, getting medical forms completed, lack of systemic funding for Pre-K does not incentivize full enrollment
- Kids A-Z
 - City Schools has purchased Kids A-Z app for all non-charter K-3rd graders, giving them access over 1500 books online
 - If you would like postcards or posters to help promote App, please email Lindsay Sullivan at LSullivan@bcps.k12.md.us

Coalition Announcements

- Literacy Lab is need of additional, reusable bags that students can use to transport the *Talk, Read, and Write with Me!* Materials, as part of a program where books are sent home to Pre-K students in bags on a weekly basis along with activities that encourage families to talk, read, and write at home about the books sent
- If you have announcements you would like shared with the Coalition please email Carrie at carrief@ffee.org and they will be shared in our monthly newsletter.