



HOWELL TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PROUD OF OUR SCHOOLS - CONCERNED FOR OUR CHILDREN

September 2015

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Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome back to a new school year and a fresh beginning for our K-2 learners! As you know, national and state curricular standards have become more challenging and nuanced in the past few years. The literacy expectations for our youngest students are higher than ever. Here in Howell, we are working hard to prepare our teachers and students to meet, and even exceed, these expectations! To this end, we are reevaluating our primary literacy curriculum and updating our classroom materials and resources.

The purpose of this letter is to share with you some of the exciting changes you may notice taking place in regards to the literacy instruction in our primary schools. For the past eight years, our district has utilized the writing workshop model of instruction in grades K-8. More recently, we phased in reading workshop in grades 3-8. Beginning this fall, select teachers across the district in grades K-2 will be piloting one of two reading workshop programs alongside one of two phonics programs. This combination will provide our students with a balanced literacy model that addresses the essential components of phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. The reading workshop programs being piloted are *Making Meaning* and *Units of Study for Teaching Reading*. The phonics programs being piloted are *Wilson Foundations* and *Words Their Way*. If you are receiving this letter, your child is in one of the pilot classrooms. Please note that all of our K-2 teachers continue to teach to the same standards and follow the same Howell Language Arts Curriculum Guide, though the curricular materials in each classroom may vary. All teachers implement whole group instruction as well as small groups to meet differentiated student needs. All students participate in independent reading and writing tasks on a daily basis.

Please visit the district curriculum website at www.howell.k12.nj.us for more information about our language arts curriculum and do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher, your building principal, or the Supervisor of Language Arts Literacy if you have any questions or concerns. We are looking forward to a wonderful school year of nurturing our students as they grow into avid readers, writers, and inquirers!

Sincerely,



Jane Losinger
Supervisor of Language Arts Literacy