

MORTON'S MERIT MEANDERINGS

Oct. 13, 2011

This newsletter from your MERIT staff will be published monthly to inform all stakeholders of our progress on the MERIT (RAD) grant. Updates from the TAC (Technical Assistance Coordinator), the literacy/math coaches, and our communications specialist will be included. Any comments or questions may be directed to the MERIT staff at 496-5137, ext. 119.

From the Mind of a Math Coach (Katelyn Hubert)

I've been able to spend time with all K-9th grade math teachers to help them align their curricular materials to our Washington State math standards. In addition, I've spent time in classrooms to observe students learning.

Currently, the Morton School District has 53 students enrolled in an RTI (Response to Intervention) math class. RTI Math is transitioning from a skill-building course to a part skill-building, part Tier 2 intervention class. The skill-building portion of the class will continue to be Corrective Math. The Tier 2 intervention portion of the class will include homework help, work completion, online tutorials and practice tests.

Finally, I've been working on creating math spreadsheets for each grade level. So far these spreadsheets include current and previous core math classes and their semester grades, previous MSP scores and their Corrective Math scores. This data will help us know which students to target for interventions throughout the year. In the spring we can use the data to help create placement criteria for incoming 7th graders.

From the Notepad of a Literacy Coach (Derrek Berkompas)

Why coaching?

Now that we are almost two months into the school year, I'm certain the students are into high gear with routines and focusing on the challenges of learning. I've been welcomed in to classrooms and appreciate the dedication of staff members as we move forward. With around 50+ students in RTI reading classes it has been my challenge to observe the learning and make recommendations for improvement.

As a literacy coach I hope to be supportive of staff as they work toward meeting the needs of our students. I am able to help implement the new elementary reading series, align junior high and high school reading and language arts curriculum with state standards, monitor student progress and interpret testing data.

From the Computer of a Communications Specialist (Chris Johnson)

Our newly developed Morton School District website is up and running. Be sure to check it out at www.morton.k12.wa.us. Morton Jr/Sr High School teacher pages will be created next week and the MERIT staff will also have a link.

From the Desk of a TAC (Kathy Tully)

I have several major responsibilities. Let's see what has been happening in those areas . . .

The most challenging role of mine has been managing the RTI system. Adding math interventions this year to the already existing reading interventions meant more people, more materials, and more students

My second role is scheduling professional development for early release Wednesdays. I'm working with our consultants, Connie Sims (Instructional Framework), Flint Simonsen (Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports), Kasey Benesch (Smart Boards and Response Systems), and Envictus (Navigation 101) to schedule useful professional learning for staff.

My greatest responsibility is ensuring that the action plans of our RAD grant are successfully completed. We are held accountable by the state whose representative, Janell Newman, visits us quarterly to give us reports on our progress. My job is to make sure we have gathered the evidence needed to show our progress.

CELEBRATIONS

The Morton School District staff can celebrate these accomplishments:

1. Professional development in Corrective Math and Reading, Danielson's Instructional Frameworks, PBIS, DIBELS, and differentiation and scheduling for Nav 101 and Smart Boards
2. District-wide newsletter
3. After School Program more aligned with intervention needs
4. Standards-based lesson plan design in each 7th-12th grade classroom (Snapshot)
5. PRIDE and PAWS cards and reinforcement established
6. Changing our RTI math classes to represent a Tier 2 intervention in addition to the skill building