

Spelling Program Recommendation

June 2013

Based on suggestions from building administration and teaching faculty, a meeting was convened to discuss the use of the Journeys spelling materials in grades K-4. Currently, the district is utilizing the Spelling Connections program, as adopted by the board, and while this program has not been considered ineffective, it was adopted prior to our adoption of the Journeys Literacy Program K-3. Several K-2 teachers became interested in utilizing the spelling program contained within the Journeys program because it directly ties to literature work and activities already being utilized in the classroom.

The district convened representatives from all buildings on two separate occasions to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the Journeys program and the Spelling Connections program. As Journeys has not been officially used by most of our teachers, a time period to review the materials and utilize them in class was provided to increase awareness of the Journeys product. After reconvening, members of the committee were split on which program to utilize, with K-2 presenting unanimous support in using the Journeys program and 3-4 expressing a desire to continue utilizing the Spelling Connections product. While both programs enjoyed certain advantages, 3rd-4th grades preferred the prepared materials contained within the Spelling Connections program and assessment format while K-2 preferred the integration of the Journeys material to other classroom work.

Given this situation, the team discussed possible avenues for spelling in the upcoming year and the following suggestion was created:

- Journeys materials will be used K-2 throughout the school district. Grades 3-6 will continue utilizing the Spelling Connections materials. Due to the lack of consensus in 3rd grade, several teachers will pilot the Journeys materials and on-going collaboration will occur at the grade level throughout the upcoming school year to determine which program is most effective in addressing the needs of our students. The method to evaluate the programs should be based on the appropriate CCSS standard and assessed in a similar fashion as students will experience on MAP exams.
- A group of teachers will be paid stipends this summer to review the Journeys spelling materials and the Spelling Connections materials to determine if gaps exist and to inform possible transitions for students as they progress through grade levels.

*All elementary members of the group voted with 3 or better to confirm this recommendation.