September 23, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians of a KPS Kindergarten, Grade 1 or Grade 2 Student:

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! We hope that your child is off to a great start at their school this year.

It is more important than ever that our students learn to read in the early grades. In addition to reading being the gateway to success in much of children’s learning, it is also required by Michigan law (Public Act 306 known as the Read by Grade 3 Law) that this school year’s third grade students (and future 3rd grade students) be no lower than one grade level below grade level on the M-STEP (state) reading testing in the spring.

We must work together to make sure that all of the KPS early elementary students learn to read well! This starts in the pre-kindergarten years and continues in the early elementary grades.

Reading at home is very, very important! Please be sure that your child is reading 20 minutes every day (with you and/or on their own). The reading material should be chosen by your child. It is always good to have both fiction and non-fiction books available for them to read. The daily reading is in addition to the homework assigned by teachers which should take approximately 10 minutes a school night in kindergarten and grade 1 and 20 minutes a school night in grade 2.

There are many ways that you can support your child’s reading skills at home on a regular basis. We encourage you to start early and provide ongoing supports. Here are some of the ways you can help:

- Read out loud to your child.
- Listen to your child read.
- Echo read (You read a line, then your child reads a line).
- Read together at the same time.
- Reread or retell favorite stories.
- Talk to your child about the reading.
- Write a new ending or part to the story with your child.
- Encourage journal writing.
- Talk about the pictures and text features such as headings in the book.
- Talk about your child’s favorite parts.
- Take your child to the public library on a weekly basis all year long. Use their Kalamazoo Public Library OneCard to check out books.
- Be involved with your child’s education.
- Lead by example: read and show the children that you too learn from and enjoy reading!

See the enclosed suggestion list from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for more ideas about helping your child to develop strong reading and learning skills.

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After our NWEA-MAP reading assessments are finished at the end of this month, students who are below grade level will have a Reading Improvement Plan written in consultation with parents and guardians. Some at-home resources will also be provided for these students’ families to use at home. In the winter NWEA-MAP assessments, additional students may be identified for increased support. Best wishes for a wonderful school year! We look forward to partnering with you to maximize your child’s success in school this year.

Sincerely,

Judy D’Arcangelis
Principal

Angela Justice
Coordinator, English Language Arts

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