

PS 25 COLLABORATIVE TEAM

INQUIRY NEWSLETTER

Carmen Toledo-Guerrero, Principal

Issue 1 Volume 2

Kindergarten Inquiry-Phonics

The focus of Kindergarten inquiry is phonics instruction. Based on analyzed data, Kindergarten students demonstrate deficits in letter/sound recognition. Our goal is that by the end of March, students will recognize and name 85% of all upper-and lower letters of the alphabet, and sounds. To meet this goal, teachers will provide support through conferences, small group instruction, and the use of technology. Therefore, Kindergarten students will be able to improve, enhance letters/sound recognition to help develop their reading and writing skills across all content areas.

First Grade Inquiry-Impact of Phonemic Awareness Skills in Student Writing

How can students transfer their acquired phonemic awareness skills to their every day writing practice?

Based on our observation and analysis of students' writing from different first grade classes, we've determined that each class has different areas of strengths and needs. Nearly all 1st. grade classes were able to express an idea verbally and through their drawings. However, they have difficulty using grade appropriate spelling strategies when writing words. Our goal for this cycle is to see a 5% increase of grade appropriate spelling in students writing. This will be achieved through small group instruction, one-on-one conferring, and modeling of print strategies during writer's workshop.



Pre-K Professor, Ms. Centeno with two of her scholars.

What is Inquiry?

Data Driven Instruction and Inquiry is a precise and systematic approach to improving student learning throughout the year. The inquiry cycle of data-driven instruction includes assessment, analysis, and action and is a key framework for school-wide support of all student success. The inquiry process used at PS 25 is based on the Data Wise Improvement Protocol, which includes eight distinct activities school leaders engage in to use their student assessment data effectively. The eight activities fall into three categories: Prepare, Inquire, and Act. Initially, schools- engage in activities that establish a foundation for learning from student assessment results. They then Inquire, and subsequently Act on what they learn. Then they cycle back to further inquiry. (Data Wise, Boudett, City, Murnane, 2015)



Second Grade Inquiry -Analyzing Writing Using the Data Wise Protocol

The focus of the second grade inquiry team is to determine appropriate writing strategies to implement that will better support writing development. These strategies will guide students who fall below the second grade writing benchmark as measured by the Writing Developmental Scale. The level indicated on the scale will determine the next writing steps the student will need to implement to improve and develop their writing. The 2nd grade Inquiry Team has been following the "Data Wise" Improvement Process. The process includes eight distinct steps, which are organized into three phases: Prepare, Inquire, and Act (Data Wise, Boudett, City, Murnane, 2015)

Third Grade Inquiry - Impact of Thinking Maps in Organizing Writing

The third grade team inquiry focus is to analyze the impact of "Thinking Maps" have on students' writing organization. According to the analysis of the pre and post writing assessments, students are not able to elaborate and extend paragraphs into more complex writing pieces or essays. The data collected (completed students Thinking Maps) will be reviewed and analyzed to determine the effectiveness and the impact thinking maps have on improving third grade writing.

Fourth Grade Inquiry -Thinking Maps and Scaffolding Strategies to Write Short and Extended Response Questions

In our first inquiry cycle, the team's inquiry meetings have been focusing largely on students responding to the short and extended response questions. The following is evident based on our findings; students struggle with understanding what the question is asking, struggle with organizing ideas in a paragraph, using fluency and elaboration techniques, and applying conventions in writing. Due to these findings, the fourth grade team has adopted the following focus for current inquiry cycle: using R.A.F.F.T. (short responses) and R.A.C.E.S./ R.A.F.F.T. (extended response) as an organizational tool to support ideas in a paragraph. Thinking maps will be used to assist with elaboration of ideas.

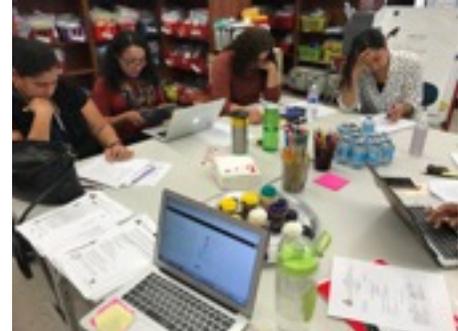
Fifth Grade Inquiry - Impact of Digital Tools to Increase Student Achievement

This year the fifth grade team is piloting a technology integrated curriculum across all content areas. The rationale for this initiative is to accelerate learning and foster 21st. century skills in our scholars. Our inquiry focus is to analyze how the use of digital tools increases student achievement. This impact will be measured by student collaboration and engagement in projects and formal and informal assessments.

The Data Wise Improvement Process



(Data Wise, Boudett, City, Murnane, 2015)



Inquiry Teams at PS 25