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President's Message

By: Brian Dorman, FLCA President
Sanford Middle School Reading Coach,
Seminole County Public Schools

I must apologize to Diana Triplett, Literacy Coach at Neptune Middle School in Osceola County. She was not identified as the author of the book review in last month's newsletter. She did a great job reviewing Janet Allen's book and should have received the proper credit.

Please be sure to check out the website for some information about contacting your legislators. We need to remind them of the important role Coaches play in our schools.

Also, those of you close to the Lakeland area have a great opportunity to hear from two of the leading specialists and researchers in the field of Reading, Dr. Sally Shaywitz and her husband Dr. Bennett Shaywitz. They will be sharing the latest brain research and how it pertains to Language Processing Disorders. This is an awesome chance to hear them speak since they only lecture a few times a year. They are coming to Lakeland on March 27, 2008. See the Upcoming Events for more details.

Have a wonderful Easter weekend with your families.

Respectfully,



Brian Dorman



Upcoming FLCA Events

March 27, 2008 “Why some smart people have trouble reading: The science of reading and dyslexia” by Drs. Sally and Bennett Shaywitz
Lakeland, FL
5:30PM
Email louann.bigsby@polk-fl.net for more information

April 4, 2008 UCF Literacy Symposium
Orlando, FL
<http://education.ucf.edu/litsymposium>

April 18 – 19, 2008 Secondary Reading Conference
Panama City, FL
<http://srcfl.org/conf2008/index.html>

By The Numbers

414 Current membership
61 Districts Represented
3 Other states represented

States: Pennsylvania,
Indiana & South
Carolina

Nominations Are Open for FLCA

We are accepting nominations for vice president, treasure, corresponding and recording secretary. Anyone wishing to run for office needs to submit a bio of no more than 100 words. Send your information to Stacie.kagel@sdhc.k12.fl.us or phone 813-300-8426 by April 5th.

All candidates will have time to speak during the Sunday Conference at Just Read.

Elections will be held June 29 at Just Read Florida. Members will vote at the booth.



Ideas from the Front Lines

News from Brevard County

By: Toniamae Lopez-Dykes
Area 6 Representative
Clearlake Middle School
Brevard County

Secondary News

The Cascade Project

James Madison Middle School, located in Titusville, is in its second year of implementing the Cascade Leaders and Readers Project. This is a service learning funded program in which selected FCAT level two reading students from Ms. Jennifer Stanchina's 7th grade intensive reading class mentor students from Ms. Theresa Mancini's 2nd grade class at Oak Park Elementary. Madison's Literacy Coach, Ms. Ann Rafferty, is also actively involved acting as a facilitator and mentor/coach for both classes. The Cascade Project is based on the idea that individuals retain 90% of what they are taught when they teach it to someone else. Cascade is more than a literacy-tutoring program in that it includes citizenship skills with reading. Leaders (7th grade students) and Readers (elementary

students) work cooperatively to improve reading skills. Leaders study literacy as a community issue and design lessons to meet their Reader's interests and needs.



Seventh grader reading to second grader

Some of the goals for the Leaders are to develop positive relationships with younger students and increase their own sense of accomplishment and service learning by connecting what they are learning in their own reading class with positive relationships with the elementary students. The older students or Leaders find many benefits in the program. In addition to serving as

reading tutors and becoming positive role models, they also become more fluent readers, improve their knowledge of reading strategies, and enhance what is taught in school by extending their learning beyond the classroom and into the community. Combining literacy tutoring with service learning also fosters a sense of caring for others.

Benefits for the Readers, elementary students, include the experience of a personal relationship, individualized instruction, increased reading motivation, and enhanced social development. The one-on-one tutoring model strengthens language skills and critical thinking ability in both the Readers and Leaders.

Critical Thinking Day

At Merritt Island HS, Literacy Coach, Annette Gutches wrote a school-wide “Critical Thinking Day” for the student body pertaining to teens and alcohol. Their focus was on Author’s Purpose and Inference, with Math and Science both contributing activities relevant to the topic for the day. The Reading Leadership Team assisted by offering their input on the

activities, as well as the way directions were written for all of the teachers to be able to easily follow them, even if they didn’t teach the subject that was presented for that period. Every teacher and student in the school participated in the “Critical Thinking Day” every period throughout the day.

In each period, every teacher taught whatever activity was scheduled for that time, whether a math teacher was teaching Science, or an English teacher was teaching Math... It was truly a collaborative effort, supported by administration. At the end of the day, the entire student body (in two groups) went to a presentation in the auditorium to listen to a guest speaker who had first hand experience with drinking and driving. She really drove home the day’s activities, as she was just out of high school and the students were able to relate to her, and therefore make a connection.

At the last Reading Leadership meeting, they debriefed and decided to continue with more “Critical Thinking” days, focusing on topics relevant to the students. “Cyber-Bullying” and “Drug Abuse” were topics overwhelmingly suggested by students in

their 7th period debriefing papers. Annette will be writing curriculum for these topics with assistance from the Reading Leadership Team again.

The Arts Find a Place in Brevard's Secondary Reading Curriculum

Recently, the Brevard school district purchased a series of books for juniors and seniors enrolled in reading classes. While the content relates to the arts, it focuses upon reading and writing in the academic content areas, as they relate to the arts.



Junior and senior reading students at Astronaut High School look forward to these books because they are high-interest and provide a fresh approach to reading and inquiry. Literacy Coach Rebecca Rodgers has worked with Mrs. Freeman's reading classes to help create this learning environment.

The American Reading Company carefully researched the reading levels and suitability of the chosen books and placed them at six reading levels, so each students will find reading material appropriate for their independent reading level.

A chief goal is for students to relish the joy of reading; however, as they continue through the dozens of selections, they will work with their classmates and teacher in producing a research project.

Overview of the program:

Goals

Each student will:

- Spend 15-45 minutes reading in selected content areas
- Spend 15-45 minutes writing in selected content area
- Develop a working knowledge of the key concepts, network of concepts, and habits of mind central to this field of inquiry

Components

- Thematic collections of leveled books
- Thematic inquiry in the content areas

- Culminating projects include publishing of writing and a research project, exhibiting “expertise” with a chosen topic or subtopic

Guiding Principles

- Maximize reading time with books in academic content area for independent reading with comprehension
- Use daily teacher modeling and instruction before silent reading and writing
- Allow students to choose reading materials with teacher assistance
- Encourage student collaboration
- Organize projects around reading materials with inquiry and a researched project as the end goal.

FCAT Survivor Camp



Approximately 100 students voluntarily participated in FCAT Survivor

Camp at Clearlake Middle School on Saturday, March 8th. Literacy Coach

Toniamae Lopez-Dykes organized the event for the third year in a row.

Students arrived at 8:30 a.m. and were put through a rigorous schedule of FCAT preparation activities. Students were grouped according to the following tribes: Calusa, Jeaga, Santaluces, and Tequesta and given their “Tree Mail” directions.

Survivors then participated in a series of Quests that included activities oriented to math, reading, test taking and test anxiety strategies, as well as a mental/physical challenge.

During the math sessions, Mr. Mullins, principal at Clearlake, and Renee Webster, math teacher lead students in small groups to complete a hands-on problem related to surface area.

Teachers Ciara Hudleston, Gabrielle Rich and Joyce Dooley provided test taking and test anxiety strategies focused on ideas like, “*Hunt Down Test Anxiety*” ~ Eat a good breakfast and get a good night’s sleep, “*Survivor Tactics*”~ Use good strategies for answering multiple choice and other objective questions, “*Survivor’s Alert*

System” ~ Don't waste time and energy worrying, thinking about the consequences of not doing well, or wondering what others are doing, Using the “*Tribal Code*” ~ use a code to rate each answer and be a “*Tribal Scout*” - Preview the test by looking through all the sections of the test.

Finally, the Cocoa Parks and Recreation did a fantastic job of creating a series of mental and physical challenges that required teamwork.

All cadets were served breakfast and a morning snack, compliments of Mrs. Tubbs, the cafeteria manager. The principal, Mr. Mullins also led the teachers in a hot dog cook off and supplied the survivors with a much needed feast. At 1:30 p.m. parents joined the tribes as they celebrated with an ice cream party and gift certificate drawings. Survivors received an FCAT Survivor T-shirt to be worn the first day of testing. The whole event was a great success as it bolstered student confidence and equipped them with additional skills to tackle the test.

Elementary News

Fiction or Nonfiction

This year, Surfside Elementary wanted to focus on technology and reading nonfiction.

Their 4th grade students under the direction of Jayna Snyder, reading expert, did a unit as follows:

They read the story *Into the Sea* (a sea turtles life cycle) and earlier in the year they read *Komodo Dragons*. For each of these stories the students wrote down 10 facts about the story... then they changed 5 of them to make them into fiction statements.

Taking two statements (each fiction and nonfiction) from each student, they created powerpoint slides. The final project involved creating a powerpoint presentation of all the slides. When the powerpoint was displayed the class had to decide, based on what they read, which slides were fact and which slides were fiction. If the slide was determined to be fiction, corrections were needed to make it a fact. The students had a fabulous and fun learning experience with nonfiction.

Book Study and More

Patricia Larson, Literacy Coach at Columbia Elementary facilitated a book study with

teachers at her school using the book “*What Great Teachers Do Differently*” by Todd Whitaker.

One evening in the month of February, Columbia Elementary also participated in a Barnes and Noble Book Fair at the Barnes and Noble location in Melbourne where more than 300 students, parents, and staff were in attendance to listen to our chorus and recorder groups perform. Attendees were also able to peruse some of our students’ artwork as well as participate in a scavenger hunt, and various read-alouds.

Tuned into Reading



Reading expert Evelyn Ziccardi from Golfview Elementary School has worked

diligently to get students that qualify a CD player from the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D). The students will use these players to improve their fluency and independent reading.

RFB&D, a national nonprofit organization, is the nation’s educational library serving

people who cannot effectively read standard print because of visual impairment, learning disability or other physical disability. Their mission is to create opportunities for individual success by providing, and promoting the effective use of, accessible educational materials.

Evelyn has worked collaboratively with Claudia Kickery, the Outreach Coordinator for the Melbourne Center. Together they have created a library of over 300 CDs (recorded books) that students can check out and read.

Approximately 30 students in grades 3-6 are using them

effectively and continuously.

In addition to

these students, a whole self contained classroom of ESE students will be using this program as well. Golfview is a model school for RFB&D.



Coaching Update

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Legislative Update

By: Josh Hall
Foundation for Florida's Future

The 2008 Legislative Session is underway, and the Capitol is buzzing with activity. Due to Florida's economic slow down and ever-worsening revenue projections, the first order of business for our lawmakers has been to cut the state's current budget even further. This revised 2007-2008 budget will serve as the starting point for next year's budget, which will be finalized toward the end of session. Based on a slumping real estate market and declining sales tax revenue, we can expect to see some tough times for the state's budget over the next couple of years.

With a shrinking education budget, your local school district would gladly use reading funding for other purposes. In order to preserve adequate funding for reading programs and reading coaches, your legislators need to hear from you...and a lot of you! Without understanding the value of a literacy coach, legislators will not see a reason to set aside the necessary funding.

To connect with your State Senator and Representative you can:

- Meet with them in their Tallahassee office during the next few weeks (or possibly even in their local district office).

- Call and either speak with the legislator or their legislative aide.
- Mail a letter to their office.
- Send an e-mail to their state e-mail address. Go to www.flsenate.gov and www.myfloridahouse.gov.

See the FLCA website for a detailed outline of what to communicate to your legislators. Go to www.floridaliteracycoaches.org.

If you have any questions or would like help, please contact Josh Hall at (850) 298-8571 or josh@afloridapromise.org.



FLCA Area Representatives Email Addresses

Area 1 – Inga Smith

ismith@escambia.k12.fl.us

Area 2 – Vicki Gillmore

gillmvd@bay.k12.fl.us

Area 3 – Patricia Rouse

rousep@mail.bellevue.leon.k12.fl.us

Area 4 – Jerry Lanford

lanforg@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Beryl Rogers

rogersb@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Area 5 – OPEN

Area 6 – Toniamae Lopez-Dykes

lopezt@brevard.k12.fl.us

Archer Israel

ajisrael@volusia.k12.fl.us

Area 7 – Maxine Mangus

mangusm@lake.k12.fl.us

Pat Fisher

fisherp@lake.k12.fl.us

Area 8 – Brian Dorman

Brian_dorman@scps.k12.fl.us

Diana Triplett

tipletd@osceola.k12.fl.us

Area 9 – Stacie Kagel

Stacie.kagel@sdhc.k12.fl.us

Karen Reed

reedk@pcsb.org

Area 10 – OPEN

Area 11 – OPEN

Areas 12, 13 & 14 – Sandra Perkins

sperkins@dadeschools.net



ATTENTION!!!

Encourage your fellow coaches to join!

MEMBERSHIP FORMS AVAILABLE ON THE
FLORIDA LITERACY COACHES
ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

WWW.FLORIDALITERACYCOACHES.ORG