



October 2008

Volume 7, Issue 4

COACH TALK

District 1 ... where students come first!



District
ONE
LAUSD



Jean Brown
Superintendent
Annette Star
Literacy Coordinator

1-DAY LANGUAGE ARTS TRAINING

Due to the number of new teachers and teachers changing grade levels since the opening of school, District 1 will be repeating the one-day OCR institute on *Friday, November 14, 2008* from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Devonshire Professional Development Site. This training was designed to highlight the key components of the program in three grade level/grade level spans. New teachers, teachers who have never attended an institute, and teachers new to the grade level span (Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grades 2 through 5) are highly encouraged to attend. Substitute coverage will be provided by Local District 1. Please work with your Principal(s) to identify and register your eligible teachers. Flyers and registration forms are included in your packet.

A special thanks to the presenters at the September 22nd training. They were Leslee Hazan, Tina Hernandez, Cindy Dominguez, Marilyn Hubert, Arlene Cowen, Jennifer Moles, Silvia Roman, Josie Stevens, and Cindy Fagin – Literacy Coaches. Also presenting were Aviva Freeman and Jodi Harrison, LD1 ELA Content Experts.



IMPORTANT DATES

Coach Meeting

Thurs., Nov. 13

Devonshire Site

8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Second Year Coach

Academy

Thurs., Nov. 6

Devonshire Site, Room 4

Wed., Nov. 19

Devonshire Site, Room 6

1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

DRAS

(for Reading First Schools)

Thurs., Oct. 30

Thurs., Nov. 20

St. Michael's Community Center

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Principal/Coach Meeting

(for non-Reading First

Principals & Coaches)

Thurs., Nov. 6

St. Michael's Community Center

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

GUEST PRESENTER



Last month, we welcomed teacher and the former literacy coach at Canoga Park ES, Renee Durlister, as a special guest speaker at our coach meeting. She shared with us the instructional practice she uses to guide her Kindergarten students through the writing process. She demonstrated how she uses her own teacher journal as a model for the students and shared authentic pieces of writing from her Kindergarten students. Thank you, Renee, for sharing your experiences and your expertise on writing instruction in Kindergarten! We all gained from being your audience!

What's happening at your school?

Featuring...

Bassett Elementary School

Third graders at Bassett EI were enthralled by a Wildlife presentation that included a fox, skunk, opossum, hawk, and falcon. The presenters talked about habitats and survival skills of animals that live in the city to build students' schema for the upcoming City Wildlife Unit!

----submitted by
Rajinder Sahani
Literacy Coach



A Note from Annette.....



Recently I came across an article in a newsletter on coaching by Cathy Toll, "Literacy Coaches' Tools to Use, September 2008." In that newsletter, she discussed how well-intentioned literacy coaches sometimes inadvertently increase teachers' anxiety, thereby lessening the effectiveness of the coaching conversation. She offered the following pointers.

Lack of Presence: Stay in the present moment when you are with your teachers. This brings to mind the article we read a couple of years ago by Carol Rodgers, "Seeing Student Learning: Teacher Change and the Role of Reflection." Just as the teacher must have his mind free to observe the mental responses and movement of the student, the coach must be free to give full time and attention to each coaching conversation.

Habits of Mind: Remember that adults find more meaning in nonverbal cues than in verbal ones. Nearly two-thirds of meaning in any social situation is derived from nonverbal cues (posture, gesture, proximity, facial expressions, and muscle tension). If you think about certain teachers in a negative way, you may be giving unintentional signals to them. Do not dwell on negatives or things beyond your control, but rather focus on the positives about the teachers you coach.

Turns of Phrases: Some words or phrases seem to heighten anxiety.

- An **immediate refusal** to a teacher's request for help, even if inappropriate or not within the realm of a coach's work may be seen as unsupportive. Even if a coach has to refuse a request, such a refusal will be less-anxiety producing if it is done after a conversation.
- Phrasing questions, such as "What are you have difficulty with?" or "What problem should we begin with?" **implies that the teacher has a problem.** An alternative question such as "When you think about the reading and writing you want your students to do, and the teaching you want to do, and the classroom you want to have, what gets in the way?" This question avoids the presumption that there is something wrong with the teacher, but it does acknowledge that teaching is a challenge and often there are factors that get in the way of accomplishing the teaching we want to do.
- **Plural pronouns** can create anxiety. Don't say **we** if you mean **you**. Have you ever had a dental hygienist say something like "We're doing better on our flossing," when she means you have been doing better?
- Finally, don't **implying deep understanding of teacher's psyche.** Coaches are not trained psychologists and coaching is not psychotherapy. Don't attempt to explain a teacher's motivations or intentions. A coach should respond to what you see and hear, not to what you suspect or intuit.

Literacy coaches who pay attention to the manner in which they interact with teachers, and the way those interactions might be interpreted by teachers, will avoid many situations which could cause anxiety.

--- Annette Star
Literacy Coordinator

Announcements from the Crib



WELCOME....

Samantha Nicole Cho

... born on Wednesday, Sept. 24 at 4:31 p.m. to Joanne and Eugene Cho, weighing 7 lbs., 7 oz., measuring 19 inches long at birth. Mom was formerly a Literacy Expert with District One, but currently works in the Central ELA Office.

...and

Alyssa Frances Maria Hernandez Morrison

...born on October 2 at 3:29 a.m., weighing 7 lbs., 15 oz., and measuring 20 inches long. Proud parents are Cynthia Hernandez, Literacy Coach at Canoga ES & her husband, Rafael.



Happy Birthday



10/2 Marcia Tinoco
10/15 Elizabeth Morones
10/31 Lisa Mitchnick

Happy Halloween

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