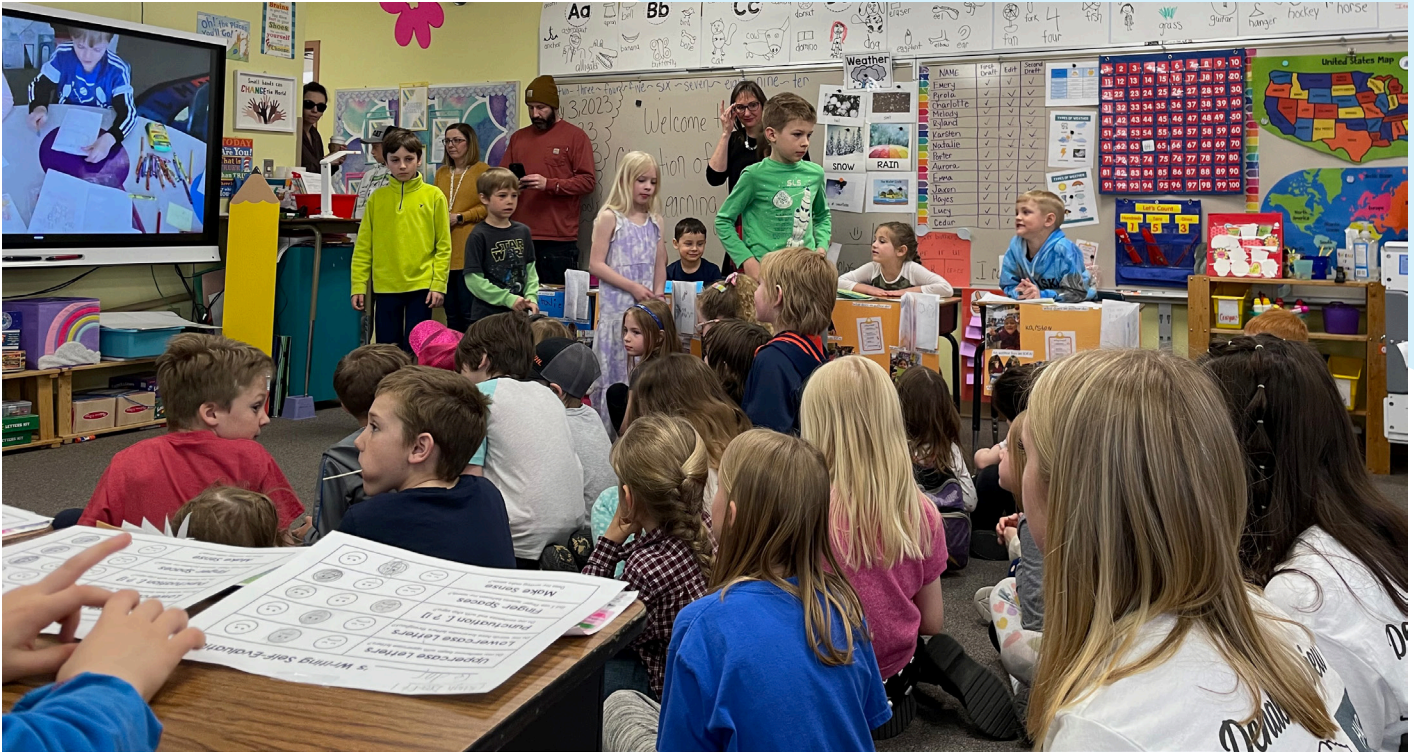


Alaska School SPOTLIGHT

Denali School District

May 2024

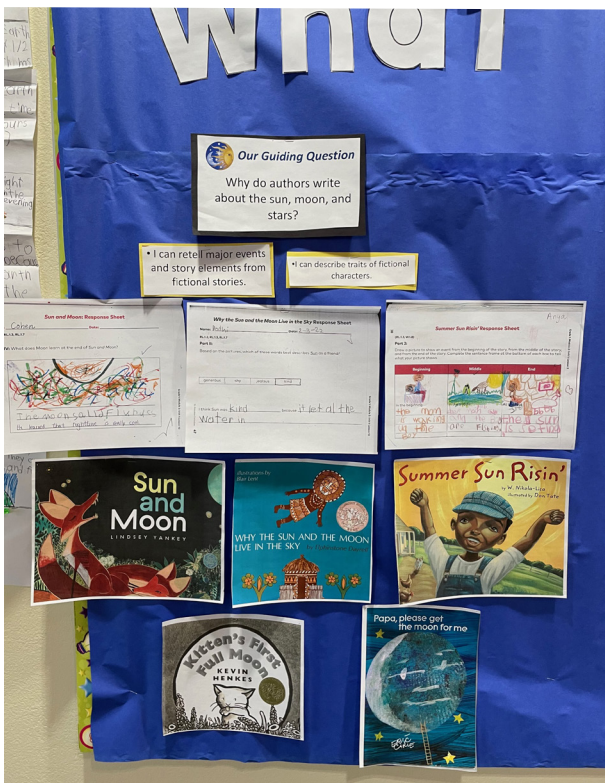


The Denali School District has committed itself to literacy education, going beyond requirements to embrace a strong belief in the transformative power of literacy. In response, the district has implemented initiatives, such as providing more resources and support to teachers as part of its literacy plan. While there have been Tier II and Tier III interventions put in place, additional support has also been added: an after-school program that the students call “The Reading Club”. Furthermore, the district’s utilization of Lexia Core5 for its after-school program underscores a commitment to strengthening literacy skills. Feedback from educators within the district highlights the program’s efficacy. One of the educators in the district notes that she fully endorses Lexia, utilizing it as an additional tool during small reading group sessions and to engage early finishers. As a side note, the students appear to enjoy the experience and are motivated to achieve their goals.

The district’s leadership team, including the superintendent, principal, educators, and paraprofessionals, has actively engaged in professional development sessions focused on the Science of Reading and data literacy. The



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leadership team has been able to proactively implement strategies by staying informed about the requirements and objectives of the Reads Act. The school leaders have been proactive about regularly attending Zoom meetings and actively collaborating with the DEED's academic support team. This collaboration provides an opportunity to discuss specific challenges and receive tailored advice, which helps in effectively implementing interventions and improving student outcomes. In addition to benefiting the individual school, this approach has a positive impact on the district. It contributes to a more robust and effective educational environment at all levels of the school district.

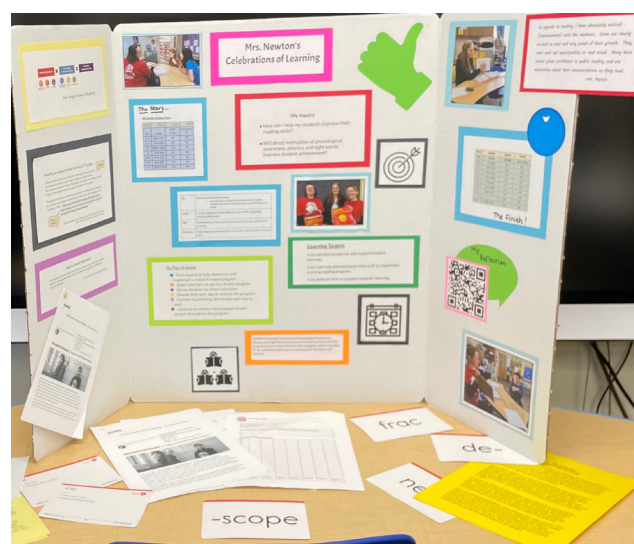
The unwavering dedication of the educators within the district to the Alaska Reads Act stands out as a noteworthy strength within the district. They have consistently

geared themselves towards exerting even more effort to provide the highest quality education for their students. This proactive approach is evident in their willingness to embrace new challenges as well as their relentless pursuit of professional development opportunities. Moreover, the educators have demonstrated exceptional adaptability in navigating reading professional developments designed to meet the diverse needs of their students. These sessions, which include courses such as LETRS, Keys to Literacy, LiPS, and Visualizing and Verbalizing, provide invaluable opportunities for growth and enrichment.

With the implementation of the AK Reads Act, the partnership between schools and families has been further strengthened. In addition to highlighting the importance of early literacy, the act provides additional resources and support for schools to facilitate their involvement in the reading development of their students. Individualized reading improvement plans are developed with parents more actively involved in the process, and parents work closely with educators to identify goals and strategies tailored to their child's particular needs. This collaborative partnership between home and school creates a strong support system, ensuring that students receive consistent guidance and encouragement both inside and outside the classroom.

The concerted effort of parent-school partnership is already showing positive results, as demonstrated by an increase in reading proficiency observed throughout the district. Following the recent End of

Year assessments, notable growth has been discerned among those who were previously struggling and those who were already performing at benchmark levels. This success underscores the effectiveness of the district's approach, driven by the strong collaboration between educators, parents, and support team in advancing literacy outcomes for all students.



Has your school proven great success increasing student reading proficiency utilizing evidence-based curriculum and materials? Do you have something you are really excited about as an outcome of a shift to Science of Reading best practices? We are interested in hearing what amazing things are happening in your school to positively impact student reading proficiency and achievement. Please submit your story to the e-mail below. You may be chosen as the next school spotlight in a future edition of the Alaska Reading Newsletter.

Please e-mail your submissions or questions to: Jenn.Miller@alaska.gov

You can view all editions of the Alaska School Spotlights here:

<https://education.alaska.gov/Alaska-Reading-Resources/alaska-school-spotlights>