

Atherton Elementary School continues to soar for excellence in the 2008-2009 school year. Our ultimate goal is to have a 100% passing rate in every area (English, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science and Math) on the CRCT. We are constantly assessing and revising our instruction while taking a laser beam focus on the School Improvement Plan and the Balanced Scorecard. We strive to eradicate our weaknesses by having all students pass the CRCT the first time, thus assuring all students that they can succeed if they are equipped with the necessary tools.

Following is a summary of strategies and other relevant information regarding efforts taken during the 2007-2008 school year to ensure the academic success of all of our students.

Strategies used throughout the school year and summer:

- **Mock CRCT practice tests from September until March-** Each student was given a practice test once a month to rate the analysis of progress for Reading and Math. All students in the building were tested from Pre-K to 5th grade. Summer School teachers collaborated with the students' previous teachers to discuss students' weaknesses.
- **Benchmark Assessments-** Students were given county mandated benchmark assessment practice tests to determine which domains needed to be re-taught.
- **Cram Jam-** Students were invited in April to stay and participate in an intensive CRCT review from 4pm-10pm. Reading skill games and technologically based games were used.
- **Individual Tutorial-** Teachers volunteered to stay before and after school to assist students with problems or concerns in a specific subject area.
- **Title I Tutorial-** Level I students were invited to participate in Reading or Math classes after school from January 2008-April 2008. The sessions lasted from 3pm-5pm. Level I Tutorial students were identified at the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year based on the CRCT results of the April 2007 CRCT test.
- **Math Night-** Parents were invited to participate in Math Night on April 15, 2008. Staff shared various math strategies used with all students. Parents and students were allowed to participate in instruction games and activities.
- **Parent Center hosted "Test Taking Strategy Workshop"-** Workshop taught by Dr. Manigo, the school counselor. The workshop was held on September 18, 2007 from 5pm-7pm. There were 57 parents in attendance. Parents were given strategies on how to assist students with helping their children pass the CRCT. Topics such as how to deal with test taking anxiety, improve study habits and utilize different learning tools were discussed.

- **CRCT website with practice questions-** Teachers created questions based on the Georgia Performance Standards for each core subject area.
- **Math Matters** –announcement of math problems in the mornings- Grade appropriate daily math questions were announced over the intercom. Students had to justify their answers and turn them in to the front office. The correct answers were then announced the following day.
- **Word of the Week**-announcement of vocabulary words and context clues- vocabulary words were announced on Mondays. Students had various activities to complete each day with the associated vocabulary word.
- **Hands on Mondays**-teachers encouraged to use hands on activities- Teachers were not allowed to use dittos in the classroom. Hands on activities for each subject were implemented throughout the entire school day.
- **Star Reader-** Testing website that informs teachers and parents of the child’s reading grade level equivalency. It also gives strategies for teachers and parents to implement.
- **Lexia-** Computer based program that informs teachers of the reading and phonics grade level of each student. It individualizes each student’s ability level and creates a step by step progression to reach proficiency in reading.
- **Star Math-** Testing website that informs teachers and parents of the child’s math grade level equivalency. It also gives strategies for teachers and parents to implement.
- **Accelerated Reader-** Program that allows students to take quizzes and tests on books that they read in the library. Competitions between grade levels for highest test scores are held quarterly. Over 300 students took Accelerated Reader tests and passed in 2007-2008 school year. However, we had a vast number of students to take more than one test.
- **Compass Learning-** Computer based game where students can review skills necessary for each subject and grade level. The game is interactive and increases student comprehension.
- **Workbook “Ladder to Success”-** Workbook that breaks down specific components of subject matter in simpler terms for students. Students were given a pre-test; from there, different strategies within the unit were utilized. At the end of each unit, students were given a post test to analyze improvement. Teachers used differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, multiple hands-on activities and 1-on-1 assistance (due to paraprofessionals and small class sizes) to support

students. Teachers also followed the scripted math curriculum that was provided by the Elementary Department of Instruction.

The above aforementioned strategies were carried out throughout the year. The teachers at Atherton did an amazing job in preparing our students for success. Many staff members volunteered and assisted students with various educational strategies this past summer.

The teachers selected by the principal to teach Summer School possessed outstanding qualifications and had demonstrated the ability to successfully implement instructional strategies that result in student achievement. These teachers had a phenomenal success rate throughout their educational careers and utilized various successful test taking strategies. However, teachers were not allowed to teach their own students who were unsuccessful during the 2007-2008 school year. They researched strengths and weaknesses to assist students with confidence and encouragement to ensure success. The county also sent proctors throughout all schools to assist with administering the CRCT this past summer.

- A. Ms. Hanley-A former Teacher of the Year with a 94% passing rate in Mathematics in 2007. She was also department chair for 5th grade, and is the current Beta Club sponsor.
- B. Ms. Clark-An outstanding teacher with a passing rate in the high 90th percentile with only one student failing Reading. She also possesses a certificate in Educational Leadership, and is a Professional Development Liaison. She was also a TSS-a Teacher Support Specialist
- C. Ms. Gulstone-current Teacher of the Year with a Master's of Education in Instruction with a 99% passing rate in Reading during the 2006-2007 school year. She was also the Beta Club sponsor for 2007-2008.
- D. Ms. Parker-department chair, geography bee sponsor and school council representative. Implemented instruction with high passing rate in the 90th percentile in 2006-2007 and 80th percentile in 2007-2008. ESOL summer school students in the 2006-07 school year made large gains which helped her with understanding strategies for students with all ability levels