

August 2006

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Indian Springs School District #109 is introducing a new program for the Sight Word and Spelling Curriculum in all Kindergarten through Second Grade classrooms in the 2006/2007 school year. This program was developed by a committee of our own teachers, reading specialists, and administrators to make sure that we are using the best practices and the latest research-based ideas to help our children be as successful as they can be.

Each grade will have a designated number of words that the children will be expected to be able to identify, both in and out of text, spell, and use in their writing activities. These words will be taught each week in a systematic way that will involve alphabet recognition, letter sounds, long and short vowels, blends and diagraphs, rhyming words, word families, and the rules of grammar that control the appropriate way to spell each word.

Each week a list of words your child will be working on and learning will be sent home so that you can practice and help your child throughout the week. The weekly list will consist of words that are created using a particular Word Family, such as all words that end in *_at*. These words will all rhyme, and the only thing that will change for each of them will be the beginning sounds. The second part of the list will consist of High Frequency Sight Words that your child will be expected to be able to read and write by the end of each week. Your child will then be assessed on Fridays in the form of a Spelling test where they will need to know all of that week's High Frequency Sight Words. They will also be tested on several, but not all, of the Word Family list of words. This is to make sure that students understand (and hear) the targeted pattern for that week. Formal spelling tests will be administered in First and Second Grade only. Kindergarteners will not have a weekly spelling test.

We are very excited about this new program and feel it will be of great benefit to your child in all subject areas, especially reading and writing. You will be hearing more about this new program from your child's classroom teacher as the beginning of the year starts to unfold. Working as a team, we are confident that all of our children will be successful.

Sincerely,

Kay Dugan
Director of Curriculum and Instruction