

Ridge Reader

October 2016, Edition 51

Multiage and RTI

Several years ago I sent out a number of articles describing what multiage teaching is and how we do this at KRS. Knowing that we have had a large number of new families arrive in our community, I felt that I should do some recapping on this concept and add some notes on RTI (Response to Intervention). Today I am just going to give the broadest of overviews of each concept and in the following newsletters I will be expanding on various components.

What is a multiage classroom? Multiage classes are created when children of different ages and grade levels are intentionally combined in a single classroom to realize academic and social benefits. This provides the opportunity for students to spend more than one year with a teacher or team of teachers. "Multiage classrooms are nothing new. They've been around since the days of the one-room schoolhouse, when children of many ages studied side by side under the same roof with the help of one teacher." ([Bozzone 8](#)).

Though multiage systems vary, many elements remain constant. Multiage classes include at least a three-year age or a two-year grade span. Students in multiage classes remain with the same teacher or team of teachers for more than a year. The benefits experienced for students in this type of program are as a result of both learning together in a mixed-age group of children and of the extended time with a teacher or team of teachers. Finally, the classroom is created for philosophical rather than monetary reasons.

At KRS, we have three levels of multiage; K-2, 3-5 (Once the Intensive French component is complete.) and 6-8. Working in these levels gives us the flexibility to group students as needed based on interests, grades or abilities. We are also able to group students based on teacher strengths and skill sets. This ability to group according to the curriculum, student and teacher is one of the corner stones and directly relates to Response to Interventions (RTI).

What is RTI? *"At first Glance, response to intervention (RTI) is a method to identify learning-difficulties. But, RTI could play a much larger role, It has the ability to transform how we educate students-all students, With RTI, students may get the support they need as soon as they show signs that they are having difficulty learning, regardless of whether or not they have a disability."* – Council for Exceptional Children 1999

Response to intervention is the practice of 1) providing high quality instruction and interventions that match students' needs and 2) using students' learning rate over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions. (Buffum, Mattos and Weber) Now for some of you, breathe. When you read the word disability you may have started to reach for the phone to ask me what is wrong with your child. At KRS we are committed to the "all students" part of the quote. We, as a staff, have said that we do not want any student to fall through the cracks. All students are observed, monitored and reviewed as needed either at grade level meetings or at our school level meetings. At its simplest form, a student may be regrouped with another reading group so a teacher can give them a bit more practice on a concept simply because it was felt they hadn't progressed as far as they could have. Doing this grouping and regrouping is commonplace and may last for a couple of days to a whole concept in one or many subject areas. It is also used for students who grab concepts quickly. They can be moved to another group for more challenging work if needed. We strive to do this seamlessly and as a natural thing and our students are quite used to it.

This was just the first installment of our multiage and RTI concepts. Stay tuned for more information.

Cell Phones at School

During a recent meeting we reviewed our school policy of cell phones in the school. Since we are a small K-8 school and we can get information to a student quickly, cell phones are not permitted for communications during school hours (8:00 – 2:15). Students may transport them in their backpacks for use after school. At times, older grade students may be permitted to use them if the teacher gives permission for such activities as school related research, photos or recording. If a parent or guardian needs to get a message to a student they should call the school at 363-4703. If the student needs to contact a parent they may use the office phone. With cell phones in backpacks and lockers, we also avoid such situations as texting, classroom distractions and students taking photos and using them at a later date. We hope you will understand and support our policy. If you have any questions please call me at the school.

News from the Zaatmosphere

In September, students learned about the history of Jazz and Blues through study of four great artists of those genres: **Bessie Smith, Duke Ellington, Norah Jones and Matt Andersen**. In October we will be focusing on a

great musician from Australia, **Xavier Rudd**, who has inspired audiences around the world with his talents with many instruments, soaring melodies and thoughtful lyrics. Check out Mr. Zaat's page on our school website for information on our Leaders of Music. For videos please visit the "Leaders of Music Videos" under "Extracurricular" on the KRS website.

New Equipment

We have received some "new to us" equipment and we'd like to acknowledge some generous contributors from the community. Thank you to the Keswick Baptist Church for a 16 channel mixer which is already in use. We also received an EQ board which will help us regulate our sound. Thank you to the UNB Conservatory of Music for donating a drum set. This kit will need some minor repairs but should serve us well. Also, thanks to the Penner/Vreeland family for the donation of an electronic piano for the music room. We appreciate your generosity and thanks for supporting the arts at KRS!!

Bus Notice.

Please be aware of the following items that are not permitted on school busses for safety reasons and/or for taking up valuable seating space.

1. Skate Boards
2. Large Musical Instruments
3. Hockey Sticks (Large or mini*)
4. Ice Skates / Roller Skates: Must be in a canvas bag and/or have skate guards
5. Skis, Poles, Fishing Rods etc
6. Suitcases
7. Archery Equipment

*A number of our students have transported mini sticks to school and this will be allowed as long as they are completely inside their backpack. Drivers have seen kids turning around or bending over and hitting others when the sticks were in the side pouches and open.

Fredericton South – Ernest and Young Study

The Anglophone West School District, through the cooperation and support of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, are awaiting a final consultant's report that will outline demographic information and a series of recommendations on the "South Side Schools in the City of Fredericton". The company *Ernst & Young* has been secured to do the work and they are happy to share the findings with the District Education Council and the public upon completion of the report.

As such, they are inviting parents and school/community stakeholders to a public meeting on **Monday, October 24 at 6:30PM at Fredericton High School.** The findings will be shared at that time and a copy of the report will be posted to our district website.

Brochure: A Parent's Guide to NB Provincial K-8 Report Card

There have been some changes to our report cards. If you would like an early look, please review the brochure.

- o The brochure has been placed on the ASD-W Website (<http://web1.nbed.nb.ca/sites/ASD-W/Report-Card/Pages/default.aspx>), along with a video to support the Response Form conversations for parents.

Terry Fox

If you haven't heard yet, we as a community raised \$1111.00 in total. Thank you to everyone who was able to contribute. With the goal reached, the staff and students did get to duct me to the wall but they needed another role or two to hold me up. Well, maybe next year.

Upcoming

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| 05 | Cross Country at New Maryland |
| 05 | Movie Night at 6:30 |
| 06 | Staff PD – No school for students |
| 07 | Staff PD – No school for students |
| 10 | Thanksgiving Day – No school for students |
| 11 – 14 | Kindergarten Registration Week at the school |
| 11 – 14 | Safe Schools Week |
| 12 | Cross Country at Nasis Middle School – District Championships |
| 12 | PSSC Meeting at 6:30 |
| 19 | H&S Meeting at 6:30 |
| 24 | South Side School Report at FHS, 6:30 |
| 28 | Harvey Retakes |
| 31 | Halloween Activities |