Curriculum & Instruction Update

Fairfield City School District

Testing Blueprints

With the 2015-2016 school year in full swing, the Fairfield City School District has many outstanding things going on in classrooms all across the district. In every building, you can see the beauty of the word "AND" in action. FCSD staff are able to provide great instruction for our students, __AND__ they ensure students are learning Ohio's Learning Standards and preparing for the new state assessments. Being able to balance these two things and creating a great experience for ALL students is what makes Fairfield such an outstanding place to be!

As we continue through this year, it will be important for all staff to stay informed about Ohio's New State Tests. Below are a few "fun facts" about this year's state assessments.

- Fairfield has two teachers who are part of the development of test items for the state assessments. Thank you to Lauren Sweeny of FIS and Tyna Thompson of FMS!
- Most of the state tests will be 40-50% shorter (in times) than last year.
- There is a Student Testing Site Tutorial available to help students prepare for the testing tools at: http://oh.portal.airast.org/Tutorials/2016_Student_Tutorial_Navigation/2016_Student_Tutorial_Navigation.htm

- Updated blueprints are available for ELA and mathematics.
- The new Accessibility Manual was just released.
- Science and social studies information has not been updated yet.

Again, thank you to all of our staff – teachers, support staff, and administrators – for all that you do each and every day for our students.

For the most up to date information, please be sure to visit:

http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Testing/State-Test-Updates-for-2015_2016

Reminders

- Follow us on Twitter: @FCSDCurrInstruc

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What's the Problem?

Story problems, word problems, problem solving, real world problems ... so what's the problem?

Many of our students do well with mathematical calculations, but as soon as you throw in the written word, confusion sets in.

Many of our grade levels have received professional development sessions that include the use of bar models or tape models.

Along with these models, a set of problem solving steps was presented. We are encouraging teachers to use these steps to ensure we are all talking the same language, so students will not have to learn a new set of steps each year.

Please accept the challenge to do at least one word problem per day using these steps:

1. Read the problem.
2. Retell the problem in your own words.
3. Underline important numbers.
4. Write an answer statement leaving a blank for the answer.
5. Draw a bar model or picture to represent the problem.
6. Solve the problem.
7. Check for accuracy / reasonableness.
8. Fill in the answer statement.

Did You Know? ELA Instructional Tips

Close Reading

Close reading is different than active reading. Active reading is something good readers do all the time (annotate, highlight, etc.) Close reading is a time to engage and slow down with a shorter piece (or portion of longer text) of rich text for multiple readings and purposes: word/sentence choice, idea development, author's tone, deeper meaning, questioning, etc.

First Reading: Determine what the text says.

- What is the text about?
- What is the theme of the story (short piece)?
- What was _____ (character) like, and what did he/she do in the story?

Second Reading: Figure out how the text works.

- What does _____ (a word from the text) mean in this context?
- Who is telling this part of the story?
- What is the author's purpose for this section?

Third Reading: Analyze and compare the text.

- What information do these illustrations add to the text?

Or, how does this picture differ from what the author wrote?

- Compare _____ (an aspect of the text such as character or main idea) with the same aspect in another text by the same author. Readers can also examine texts on the same topic or from the same genre.
- What reasons does the author give to support _____ (one of the ideas)?

(www.scholastic.com)
www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec12/vol70/num04/Closing-in-on-Close-Reading.aspx
http://www.americanreading.com/documents/close-reading-in-elementary-schools.pdf
https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/student-annotated-reading-strategy/

Urgent: Passwords (Preparing for Office 365 in November)

As we gear up for use of Office365 across the district, we have to shore up our passwords.

Office365 'syncs' with the network's Active Directory (AD). AD is the framework that allows you to log into a computer with your username (lastname_firstinitial) in order to have access to your desktop profile and your My Documents. When you are first given an AD account, your password is set as fcsd and you are encouraged to change it. (Soon, you will be *required* to change your password to meet new criteria.)

Office365 pulls the password for your account from AD. However, Office365 has stronger password requirements; and if your password is too weak (or still fcsd), you will not be able to login to

Office365. Therefore, it is important to make sure your AD password meets the minimum requirements and to change it if it doesn't.

Your AD password needs to meet the following criteria:

- at least 8 characters
- at least 1 uppercase letter
- at least 1 lowercase letter
- at least 1 digit

Please change your AD password using the following steps:

1) login to your machine
2) hit this key combination Ctrl+Alt+Del
3) select 'Change a password...'
4) enter your old password
5) enter your new password meeting the criteria above
6) confirm you new password
7) click the arrow

Excellent. Now, after a short period of time, Office365 will grab your new password. You should be good to go.

On another note, it would be good if you changed your FirstClass password to match your AD password by following these steps:

1) Login to FirstClass
2) click 'Collaborate' in the menu bar
3) select 'Change Password...'
4) type your old password
5) type your new password
6) retype your new password
7) click ok

Awesome. Now your passwords match for AD (computer login), FirstClass, and Office365.