Fishkill

Elementary

School

**

Common Acronyms,

Educational Terms and Jargon

**“A.I.S.” or Academic Intervention Services**

AIS is provided to K-6 students who are not meeting grade level standards in the areas of reading and/or math. These services are provided by either a teacher or a teaching assistant and are in addition to the regular instruction provided by classroom teachers. These services are provided as a “push-in” (within the classroom setting) or as a “pull-out” (located in a separate classroom).

**Banana Splits**

A program that is designed to create peer support for those students whose parents are separated or divorced. Students, with the guidance of a teacher, voluntarily meet to share and bond.

**Benchmark Assessments**

Benchmark assessments are short tests administered throughout the school year that give teachers immediate feedback on how students are meeting academic standards. Regular use of benchmark assessments is seen by many as a tool to measure student growth and design curriculum to meet individual learning needs.

**Common Core**

THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

1. Prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and work.
2. Provide educators, parents and students with clear, focused standards or guideposts.
3. Set consistent expectations.
4. Include both knowledge and application of subject areas.
5. Are based on real-world applications.
6. Are evidence and research based.
7. Contain guidance on pertinent topics and the order in which each topic should be introduced.

**Drug Abuse Resistance Education- D.A.R.E**

# D.A.R.E. is a police officer-led series of classroom lessons that teaches children how to resist peer pressure and live productive drug and violence-free lives.

**“F.G.O.” or Fishkill Government Organization**

FGO is a school-wide club that fosters leadership skills and promotes civic responsibility. All children can be involved and show school spirit either as representatives or as participants. Each class picks two “reps” (representatives). Picking reps is at each classroom teacher's discretion either by lottery or by voting. Representatives and/or alternates are expected to attend bimonthly meetings. Representatives take notes and report back to their class about what is going on in FGO.

**Guided Reading**

A method where the teacher works with small groups of students who are on a similar reading level. The teacher introduces small amounts of new learning, focusing on constructing meaning and problem solving strategies. This teaching method encourages independent reading strategies and involves on-going observations and assessments.

**“H.U.G.S.” or Helping Us Grow Stronger**

This committee is in charge of special events that increase self-esteem and promote character education. It is composed of teachers and parent leaders. Some of the programs include the VIP Parade, Red Ribbon Week, Warm Fuzzy Day and Hugs Day. Check out the link below for more detailed information.

https://youtu.be/WE5KoGNr69M

# **Mentor Program**

The primary focus of the mentor program is to help students (chosen by their classroom teacher) feel connected to the school, staff and peers.  Each student who participates is assigned a staff member as a support person.  The mentor meets with the student at least once a month. Mentors may plan activities with the student to develop a positive relationship.

**Morning Meeting**

Morning meetings are one component of the responsive classroom. The goal is to create a caring and supportive classroom community that facilitates trust, loyalty, honesty, fairness, respect, kindness and friendship. Morning meetings provide students with an opportunity to practice greetings, conversation, sharing and problem solving. It further provides opportunities to build self-confidence and trust in others.

**Moving Up Ceremony**

The Moving-Up Ceremony is held at the end of each school year. This ceremony is to celebrate six grade students who are graduating from Fishkill Elementary School.

**Open House**

A school-wide event that is usually scheduled in the early spring. Open House is an hour-long event that provides the student’s an opportunity to show their parents what they have been working on throughout the school year.

**“O.T.” or Occupational Therapy**

The Occupational Therapist delivers services to children whose motor delays substantially affect their academic performance in the classroom. The OT helps to facilitate development of skills necessary for learning handwriting, drawing, cutting, attending, and daily living skills such as shoe tying and dressing. Areas of instruction include fine motor, visual motor, visual perceptual, gross motor, and sensory integration.

**Fine Motor Skills**- includes drawing, cutting and pasting, completing puzzles, buttoning, building with blocks and climbing stairs.

**Visual-Motor Skills-** require the integration of visual perception, motor planning and motor execution. This means that the brain must process visual information, plan the movement, and execute the movement in a coordinated manner. Visual-motor skills are essential for many activities of daily living, including writing, using utensils, and tying shoelaces. They are also important for academic success, in tasks such as handwriting, drawing and cutting.

**Visual perception-** is the process by which the brain interprets and makes sense of visual information received from the eyes. It involves a complex series of neural processes that enable the brain to analyze and interpret the various features of visual stimuli such as color, shape, size, texture and depth.

**Gross motor skills**- are abilities that let us do tasks that involve large muscles in our torso, legs and arms. They involve whole-body movements. We use gross motor skills for all sorts of physical activities, from running to negotiating playground equipment. Most people use these skills easily and automatically.

**Sensory Integration-** is a term that has been used to describe processes in the brain that allow us to take information we receive from our senses, organize it, and respond appropriately.

**PARP or Pick a Reading Partner**

A New York State P.T.A. sponsored program that encourages the love of reading in our children. Parents are asked to read with their children for at least fifteen minutes daily, stressing the fact that reading can be fun, as well as, informative. The choice of reading materials can vary from books to anything with printed words. The daily activity of reading together strengthens reading and communication skills in the child and also strengthens the parent/child relationship. Note: The term ‘parents’ may be interpreted broadly to include all adults who play an important role in a child’s family life.

**Parents As Partners Night**

Parents As Partners Night is usually scheduled within the first few weeks of the school year. At this event the classroom teacher “walks” the parents/guardians through their child’s school day. The teacher will highlight two important topics:

1. Curriculum
2. Student expectations

***Please note:*** At Parents as Partners night, parents are encouraged to sign up for their child’s November Parent Teacher Conference.

**“P.T.” or Physical Therapy**

The focus of physical therapy is to improve an individual’s physical abilities. Therapy involves activities that strengthen the child’s muscular control and motor coordination, especially of the larger muscles. The program is usually conducted outside the student's classroom, but may incorporate a push-in model for class or physical education when appropriate.

**Gross Motor Skills** – Includes running, jumping, hopping, throwing and catching a ball, building with blocks, and climbing stairs.

**P.T.A. or Parent Teacher Association**

This group is composed of parents, teachers, support staff, and other interested members of the community. Its goal is to develop and use community resources to increase educational opportunities and enhance the learning environment at Fishkill Elementary School. The P.T.A. provides funding and organizes assemblies, grants, and family events throughout the year.

**Reading Readiness**

Includes recognition of the letters in the alphabet, letter-sound association, rhyming, speaking in sentences, following simple directions, and phonemic awareness.

**Reading Specialist**

Provides specialized instruction for students who are experiencing difficulty with beginning reading skills. The reading specialist provides services to students in Kindergarten through 6th grade in a pull-out setting. Frequency of service is based on the specific needs of the students.

***Reading- Five Essential Components of Reading Instruction***

1. **PHONEMIC AWARENESS**— is commonly defined as the understanding that spoken words are made up of separate units of sound that are blended together when words are pronounced.
2. **PHONICS**— is a set of rules that specify the relationship between letters in the spelling of words and the sounds of spoken language
3. **FLUENCY**- is recognizing the words in a text rapidly and accurately and using phrasing and emphasis in a way that makes what is read sound like spoken language.
4. **VOCABULARY**- refers to words we need to know to communicate with others.
5. **COMPREHENSION** -involves constructing meaning that is reasonable and accurate by connecting what has been read to what the reader already knows and thinking about all of this information until it is understood. Comprehension is the final goal of reading instruction.
   * **Reader's Workshop**
     + Readers’ Workshop is a research-based approach that addresses the needs of all students in the class. Readers’ Workshop begins with a focus lesson where the teacher explicitly models a strategy or skill. After the focus lesson, the students read independently to practice the strategy or skill. During independent reading, students are reading decodable books that are matched to their individual abilities and interests. The teacher confers with students during independent reading to be sure they are successful in their practice or to provide 1:1 instruction around any particular needs. Sometimes, the teacher may work with a small group of students who have similar needs during independent reading. Finally, Readers’ Workshop ends with a group share to summarize the important understandings of the lesson.
   * What are Strategies?
     + Strategies are “in the head” problem solving processes. Strategies are tools for decoding and understanding what you read. Strategy instruction helps students develop, access, and apply these strategies independently. Some examples of strategies your child will learn about include the following:
       - Retelling
       - Creating sensory images
       - Making connections
       - Asking questions
       - Inferring
       - Determining importance
       - Summarizing
       - Synthesizing
   * Why Readers’ Workshop?
     + The district has adopted the RW model for a number of reasons, including the following:
       - Assessment drives instruction
       - Every student reads decodable books
       - Key strategies are explicitly modeled
       - Experiences foster a love of reading

**Red Ribbon Week**

Red Ribbon Week is the oldest and largest drug prevention campaign in the country. Although the start and end dates can vary slightly, Red Ribbon Week generally takes place the last full week in October. Red Ribbon Week highlights the importance of living a drug-free life. It presents an opportunity for parents, educators, and communities to reinforce the drug-free messages they share with their children throughout the year.

**Response to Intervention (RtI)**

Response to Intervention (RtI) aims to proactively identify struggling students and provide them with the support(s) they need to thrive in school. The goal is to intervene by providing support before a student falls far behind academically. Instruction is designed to match each students’ individual needs through a multi-tier instructional model. Each level, also known as a tier, provides instruction with increased intensity (e.g. amount of time, small group versus individual). RtI focuses on the early prevention of academic difficulty, particularly in the areas of reading and math by:

* ensuring appropriate instruction for all students.
* monitoring students’ progress and providing additional levels of instructional assistance (intervention) as needed.

**Resource Room**

Resource Room is a remediation program provided to some special education students by a special education teacher within a separate setting (outside of the classroom). The student to teacher ratio for a Resource Room is 5:1 or less. This teacher targets the specific needs of each student as stated on their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

**School Psychologist**

The School Psychologist examines what is being done for students in terms of early intervention support and cognitive growth to promote proper social, emotional, and academic development. The School Psychologist administers assessments/evaluations to students in order to determine how to best meet the student’s needs. The School Psychologist then interprets test results and acts as a consultant to both the parent and the classroom teachers. They assist struggling and diverse learners by providing a safe and supportive learning environment.

**Social Work**

Works with students to enhance their social and emotional learning. In sessions, we learn and build on existing coping skills and emotional regulation strategies which helps our students be as successful as they can be within the classroom. Students also work on social skills and play skills to learn how to navigate social stressors and maintain positive relationships with their peers.

**“Speech” or Speech Language Services**

The purpose of Speech Language Services is to improve a child’s ability to effectively communicate in the academic setting. Instruction can focus on improvement in articulation and/or language skills. Children with communication delays are identified through referrals, screenings, and evaluations. Direct intervention services are provided to children individually or in small groups, depending on their needs. Consultation also occurs with parents and teachers to develop appropriate activities, techniques and strategies to improve/reinforce communication skills. The following is a list of common terminology used in Speech:

**Articulation:** movement of the jaw, tongue and/or lips (“articulators”) that obstruct/interrupt airflow in order to produce speech sounds. Speaking involves accuracy in placement, timing, speed, pressure and integration of the oral structures.

**Auditory Processing:** the ability to attend, discriminate, recognize, comprehend, organize, sequence and/or retain complex sounds/verbal information. To have a breakdown in this process is called an auditory processing disorder/delay. This deficit is present despite having normal hearing.

**Expressive Language:** the ability to use language. In other words, to communicate thoughts, feelings, ideas, and/or intentions via spoken word, written word, or symbols.

**Communication**: the act of transferring information from one place to another. An individual can communicate in a variety of ways:

* Verbal/Spoken Communication- in person, telephone, radio, television, etc.
* Non-Verbal Communication- body language, physical gestures, facial expressions, etc.
* Written Communication- letters, books, magazines, newspaper, email, etc.
* Visualizations- pictures, graphs, charts, maps, etc.

**Fluency**: the smoothness or flow with which sounds, syllables, words and phrases are joined together when speaking. A fluent speaker produces speech with rhythm, inflection/prosody, and an appropriate rate. Dysfluency is a term used to describe individuals who demonstrate irregularities in the flow of speech (e.g. stuttering or cluttering).

**Motor-Planning:** the brain organizes a plan and sends a signal to the necessary muscles in order to coordinate sequence and execute specific movements to produce speech.

**Oral-Motor:** encompasses the integrity, strength, coordination, and precise movement of the structures in the oral cavity needed for sound production.

**Phonemic Awareness:** the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is a pre-literacy skill needed to learn how to read. A child who has difficulty with phonemic awareness may demonstrate weakness in rhyming, blending sounds to make words and segmenting words into individual sounds.

**Phonological Processes**: sound error patterns in a child's speech that account for substitutions, omissions, or additions of speech sounds that make a child difficult to understand.

**Pragmatic Language:** an individual’s use of language in a socially appropriate way. Pragmatic language includes appropriate use of eye contact, body language, conversational skills, turn-taking, topic initiation, topic maintenance, and termination of topics when speaking to others.

**Receptive Language*:*** the ability to understand spoken language to derive meaning. This includes an individual’s ability to attend, listen, interpret and process information effectively.

**Semantics**: word knowledge, vocabulary, and the meaning of language.

**Syntax**: the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formed sentences in language. It includes an individual’s ability to formulate grammatically correct and appropriate utterances.

**Superintendent’s Conference Day**

Periodically throughout the course of the school year Superintendent’s Conference Days are scheduled. The days are designed for teacher and staff professional development. During these days the students do NOT attend school.

**Writers' Workshop**

Writers’ Workshop is an approach to writing instruction that addresses the needs of *all* students in the class.  Writers’ Workshop begins with a **focus lesson** where the teacher explicitly models the process and conventions of writing.  After the focus lesson, students write independently for an extended period of time.  During **independent writing**, the teacher **confers** with individual students to assess progress and provide **1:1 instruction** to help students grow as writers.  Sometimes, the teacher may work with a **small group** of students who share similar writing needs during the independent writing time.  Writers’ Workshop ends with a **group share** where students discuss and share their writing.

**Resources**

Benchmark Assessments:

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/5317>

THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

<http://nyspta.org/pdf/advocacy/nyspta_nysut_common_core_brochure_8.13.pdf>

D.A.R.E

<http://www.dare.org/about-d-a-r-e/>

Parents as Reading Partners (PARP)

<http://www.nyspta.org/YourPTA/YourPTA_PARP.cfm>

P.T.A. (Parent Teacher Association)

<http://www.nyspta.org/>

Red Ribbon Week:

<http://www.preventionpartners.com/events/red_ribbon_week.cfm>