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Emily Greiber

Director of Data, Assessment & Continuous Improvement

Date: September 2013

Subject: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Kindergarten (PALS-K)

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), an early literacy screener, is required throughout the State of Wisconsin for all Kindergarten public school students. This screener will provide valuable information necessary to improve the reading skills of students. Results are used to identify reading problems early on and to inform instruction.

The primary purpose of PALS-K is to identify students who perform below expectations in several important literacy fundamentals, and thus who are likely to experience reading difficulties. PALS-K encourages teachers to prevent problems before they occur. The screening guides teachers as they plan appropriate instruction for both grade-level readers and struggling readers.

PALS-K assesses key literacy fundamentals, including the following domains: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. Specifically, PALS-K assesses a student's:

- phonological awareness,
- alphabet knowledge,
- knowledge of letter sounds,
- spelling,
- concept of word, and
- word recognition in isolation.

PALS-K will be administered three times a year: in the fall (October 14-25), an optional mid-year window (January 6-17), and in the spring (April 28 – May 9). Classroom teachers administer PALS-K in small-groups and one-on-one.

There is no need to prepare your student specifically for PALS-K. However, we encourage parents to read to their children and to spend time with books. Any time spent reading books will help students develop important early literacy skills.

For more information regarding PALS-K, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or principal. You can also visit the website at: <http://www.palswisconsin.info/index.html> with additional questions you have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Greiber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Emily Greiber