

# MILL HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

635 MILL HILL TERRACE, SOUTHPORT, CONNECTICUT 06890

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November 16, 2015

Dear Families:

As I had mentioned in my first newsletter, I will use this forum to inform you of the work we do and familiarize you with the terminology that you might hear from teachers and your children.

We determine the needs of our students with the analysis of the data obtained from our benchmark assessments, primarily in reading and mathematics. While we have progressed to report assessment results online via IC, there has been some confusion with some of the formative assessments we utilize and how the results are reported out. I am referring to assessments such as iReady, STAR, Spelling Knowledge, Letter ID/Sounds, Concepts About Print, Math Fluency, and Fountas and Pinnell Benchmarks. Students in every grade level aside from kindergarten were assessed at the end of last year and this information is used along with and assessments at the beginning of this year to determine learning needs of students, thus the reason that we refer to them as formative assessments since they inform our instruction as opposed summative assessments which demonstrate student learning at the end of units of study. Furthermore, we often use percentiles not percentages when reporting out results. Therefore, when you see/hear 50% that means dead average, not failing, as would be the case with percentages. The data we utilize includes informal assessments of learning gained from such things as conferring with students, observational data, and small group lessons.

These benchmark assessments are part of our comprehensive Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) plan. Essentially SRBI is a systematic approach to ensure effective progress monitoring, differentiation of instruction, and intervention when needed. SRBI is Connecticut's title for what is nationally known as Response to Intervention (RtI). The federal definition of RtI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to the student needs and using learning rate over time and level of performance (response data) to make important educational decisions.

RtI/SRBI consists of three "Tiers" of high-quality instruction. Fidelity of the high-quality core curriculum program is an essential component as is regular progress monitoring. Universal screening assessments, along with any additional means of progress monitoring, provide the data to determine the individual instructional needs of the students. The tiers provide the systematic approach to monitor progress of students and intensify interventions, if necessary. This is an incredibly brief summation of the essentials of SRBI, but more information can be found on the Connecticut State Department of Education's website: [http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/pressroom/SRBI\\_full.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/pressroom/SRBI_full.pdf)



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The staff reviews data individually, then at grade level meetings, and finally as a school-wide team. The School Improvement/Data Team reviews and analyzes all of the school-wide data, looking for trends. We then look to exploit areas of success and address any concerns through a variety of ways such as targeted professional development, coordinated supports and models for teachers, as well as direct supports for students. This team consists of grade level teachers, special education teachers, a speech and language pathologist, school psychologist, a math/science teacher,

language arts specialists, a special area teacher, instructional improvement teacher, and me. This team deals with trends and an analysis on a school-wide basis. Our School Improvement Plan is not a static document. We make adjustments, if necessary, based on consistent reviews of data. You can find the most recent version of our School Improvement Plan on our website.

Our grade levels meet to do the same level of analysis, but through the lens of their respective grade levels. Grade level meetings meet once within the five day rotation and plans are established to meet the needs of all of our learners on that grade level.

Individual teachers determine the students who may be in need of additional support or enrichment and relay this information to the Early Intervention Process (EIP) Team. If a student's plan requires the student to leave the classroom for support, the student's parents will be notified. The EIP structure allows teachers to refer students they are concerned about, based on data and classroom performance, for additional academic support. Teachers, specialists, and I brainstorm techniques and strategies to help them meet the needs of individual students. A child can be referred to this process for academic, social, or emotional issues.

Additionally, all students will receive Progress Reports at three points throughout the year. The first progress report will be handed out in the beginning of next month.

Please do not hesitate to contact your classroom teacher or me with any questions about your child's current level of progress.

