

FMS Reading and Writing Initiative Continues to Thrive!

A tremendous volume of educational research shows that reading and writing are critical “gateway skills” for students and the greatest predictor of success in high school and college. We are very proud of the exceptional progress our students are demonstrating in reading and writing in all subjects and classrooms as well as on the rigorous state standardized tests (PARCC). In fact, every single subgroup of students at FMS has improved by double digits in PARCC English Language Arts over the past two years. Thank you teachers and counselors for your dedication and care.

Impressive Increase in Students Passing PARCC Reading and Writing

| FMS Grade | 2017 % Increase From Previous Year | 2018 % Increase From Previous Year | 2 Year Improvement |
|-----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | | | |
| 6 th Grade | +13 % Points | equal to previous year | +13% Points |
| 7 th Grade | +16% Points | +10% Points | +26% Points |
| 8 th Grade | +13% Points | + 13% Points | +26% Points |

A revised approach to standards-aligned common benchmark assessments, doubling of instructional minutes for ELA, a standards-aligned homework policy, increased after-school academic support, cogent organization of student learning data, careful implementation of 1:1 technology strategies, expanded co-teaching model in special education classrooms, and, most importantly, new ELA curriculum units accompanied by sustained professional development, all contributed to the significant improvements in ELA for all students.

Impressive Increase in Students “*EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS*” in PARCC Reading and Writing

| FMS Grade | 2017 % Increase From Previous Year | 2018 % Increase From Previous Year | 2 Year Improvement |
|-----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | | | |
| 6 th Grade | +10 % Points | +5% Points | +15% Points |
| 7 th Grade | +16% Points | +6% Points | +22% Points |
| 8 th Grade | +13% Points | + 8% Points | +21% Points |

We have also seen exceptional improvement in the percentage of students who are “exceeding expectations” (scoring a 5) according to the Department of Education metrics. Impressively, nearly a third of our 8th grade students and forty percent of our 7th grade students are now exceeding expectations in reading and writing. This year nine 8th grade students achieved a perfect score! This information is important because our own Morris School District longitudinal data shows that students who have scored 5s on PARCC also achieve highly competitive SAT and ACT scores at Morristown High School, giving them increased options and greater access to college admissions, scholarships and aid. In short, high achievement on PARCC can open doors for our students and set them on a path of continued academic success.

Moving Forward

Through rigorous instruction in reading and writing, the Morris School District is committed to preparing students for the range of intellectual, career, and personal endeavors they will encounter in their lives.