

What Happened in 15-16? What did Peck Slip do about it?

NYS Test Results for 2015 – 2016 were disappointing.

- 53.7% of students in 3rd-grade achieved a Level 3 or 4 in ELA
- 57.1% of students in 3rd-grade achieved a Level 3 or 4 in mathematics
- These scores were both disappointing & unexpected – they did not correspond to school-based assessments.

Where were our students weakest?

ELA

- Students did significantly worse in the constructed responses (as opposed to multiple choice).
- Students generally did better in multiple choice, but there is room for growth.

Math

- Students overall were weakest in Number & Operations/Fractions and Numbers & Operations/Algebraic Thinking.
- Students generally did more poorly in constructed responses.
- Students were challenged by multi step problems.
- Some vocabulary seems to have confused students (for example, value and expression).

What have we done to address this?

In general:

- Visited other schools to see what they are doing in literacy and mathematics.
- Ratcheted up expectations for student work and increased student awareness of “best work.”
- Scheduled after school test prep two hours a week from mid-January until the test.

ELA:

- Writing is a school-wide focus. 15 teachers attended summer PD on writing, and grade teams are developing new writing units. All grades have seen improvements in student writing.
- Teachers in grades 2 – 4 are implementing a new assessment practice to ensure kids are learning what they need and practicing at their independent level.
- We are providing students with low scores with additional support.

Math:

- We are teaching strands that will receive the most focus earlier in the year.
- Students are getting more experience with multi-step problems, and teachers are getting more training on how to implement cognitively-guided instruction – a strategy to help students tackle multistep problems.
- Students are getting more exposure to vocabulary that showed up on the test.
- We aligned the math scope & sequence to content of test.
- We are incorporating writing in mathematics.
- We are providing students with low scores with additional support.

So what about middle school?

- Again, **by law** state test scores cannot play a significant role in middle school acceptances.
- Students in District Two are blessed with many, many wonderful middle schools that are academically strong and deeply nurturing.
- The VAST majority of students love the middle schools they end up in, whether they were a first choice or not. (Raise your hand if you loved middle school. My hand is down.)
- Parents’ anxiety negatively impacts students. Do not discuss middle schools or the middle school process in earshot of your children.
- The process takes place during the fifth grade year. We will go over the timeline in the spring of fourth grade. Until then, support your children in reading & doing math for pleasure. It will pay off.