

A Note From the Principal



Conferences

Thanks for attending your child's conference to learn about his/her progress, view daily work, and help set achievement goals. Conferences play an important role in communication and collaboration between parents and teachers. A high percentage of conference surveys were completed and have been sent to the District office, where the results will be tabulated along with those from other District elementary schools.

Grade Level Report Cards

Sexton Mountain students will be given their school report cards to take home on Monday, December 7. Teachers will give marks in the academic areas and in performance and effort. We encourage you to review your child's report card with him or her.

State Report Cards

We are pleased to be a school ranked as "Outstanding" by the Oregon Department of Education. The staff at Sexton Mountain is a devoted and hardworking group of professionals who enjoy working with children and are dedicated to helping students be successful. We appreciate the support Sexton Mountain parents provide their children by working closely with our teachers and support staff. State report cards will also be sent home with students on December 7 if they have been received by our schools by then.

Importance of reading

We know that children and adults acquire knowledge and ideas from reading. Therefore, we place a great deal of emphasis on helping children learn to read accurately and fluently. When it comes to knowledge, those who have more gain more. The more background

knowledge children have the more they will gain from reading.

Reading books exposes children to many facts and a richer, fuller vocabulary than any other activity. In his book *Why Don't Students Like School?* Daniel Willingham says "data indicates that people who read for pleasure enjoy cognitive benefits throughout their lifetime."

Like your child's clothes and shoes, the books he chooses should be a good fit. As he learns to read, the right books will make him feel confident and want to read more. Here are some tips to help him find books that match his reading ability.

Look it over. If your child is just starting to read, look for books that have a few words and colorful pictures on each page. A more experienced reader might be ready for a book with two or three lines of text per page and some new words. Most young readers enjoy books with repeating words or phrases that they can recognize and read.

Try it out. Let your child try to read the first page or two. If he doesn't hesitate over any words, the book is probably too easy for him. If he struggles with several of the words, it may be too difficult. Let his comfort level guide you—if he's happy with the book, encourage him to keep going.

Check the level. Some beginning reader books come in series, such as "I Can Read Book" or "Step into Reading." These books often have a reading level (1, 2, 3, 4) on the cover. If your child isn't reading yet, start with books at the lowest level. If he's reading a little, choose a higher one. Each series is different, so one publisher's level 2, for instance, may be easier or harder than another's.

Don Martin