



PRINCIPAL CORNER for DECEMBER 15th
Building Independence and Agency

Recently, I led a prospective parent on a tour of our school. We walked into our 1st/2nd classroom and were greeted by Yelena who explained to us that they were doing Daily Five. She had chosen to work on writing. The parent visitor and I moved toward the low table, with students sitting on the floor and asked Wyatt what he was doing. "I'm writing my small moment story." The template he was writing on included space for a picture, primary lines for writing, and it was titled, Stretch it Out; the strategy was written at the top of the page as a reminder. At the next table, Mercedes happily shared, "My dog had puppies, but I'm just writing all about the birth of one of the puppies instead of the whole thing."

At the back carpet sat Ms. Cornell and five students, a mix of 1st grades and 2nd graders, discussing a book. She was completely focused on teaching reading strategies, facilitating the discussion, and assessing student understanding, while all other students in the classroom engaged in one of the Daily Five activities which include: **Read to Self, Work on Writing, Listen to Reading, Work with Words, and Meet with Teacher.**

While observing students it was obvious that careful planning , clear expectations and specific teaching of routines laid the groundwork for **Building Independence and Agency.**

When the teachers...

Students will...

Respect students' need for choice in what and when they read, write, and talk with classmates, within established boundaries...	Choose appropriate times to read or write intensively as well as other times to engage classmates in conversation about their work.
When the teachers give students multiple opportunities each day to work with other students, especially students who bring a different perspective....	Students will view their peers as collaborators and tackle challenging learning tasks together, compromising when needed.

Engaging Children: Igniting a Drive for Deeper Learning in K-8th. Pages 50,51

The focus, engagement, and overall learning capacity of our young readers and writers is the result of their work within an environment deliberately planned and skillfully executed every day of the school year.

With awe,
Susan Kilbane

All School Christmas Music Concert
Thursday, December 20th at 6:00p.m.
Please join us!