

LITERACY

SPOTLIGHT



LITERACY AT PRAIRIE CREEK

Prairie Creek grows passionate readers. And we understand that literacy goes far beyond skilled reading. A literate citizen of today's world is also skilled at writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing. Texts in today's world include not just books but websites, videos, podcasts, and other forms that are ever-changing and too numerous to list. Children must be given choice and freedom in their literacy pursuits. They must also be guided and supported to develop the skills, including phonemic skills, necessary to decode, comprehend and use texts and to produce texts. We emphasize reading, writing, and communicating for real purposes in authentic contexts.

INDIVIDUAL READING

Students enjoy lots of time to read at school. This simple arrangement can often get lost in busy, overcrowded academic curriculum. Children at Prairie Creek are explicitly taught how to choose "just right" books so that they make best use of the independent reading time to grow as readers. Teachers also provide direct, targeted instruction that is based on personalized assessment in order to support students as they develop phonemic awareness, phonics skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.



WRITING OPPORTUNITIES

Prairie Creekers are given many opportunities to grow as writers. They work on their narratives, fiction, and poetry in writing workshops. They design surveys that they administer to peers and adults in the school. They research self-selected topics and do written presentations of increasing sophistication as a part of our K-5 personal project process. They write blog posts, brochures, lists, letters, and countless other texts. Teachers support student writing with direct instruction, conferences, ongoing feedback, and support of spelling and other mechanics—assisting students through tailored, one-to-one instruction.

AUTHENTIC LITERACY THROUGHOUT THE DAY

Literacy is an integral part of the entire school day at Prairie Creek. Students have many opportunities to grow as speakers and listeners, both in their classrooms and beyond. Our weekly All School Gathering provides ongoing occasions for students to have a larger audience when that's fitting—particularly for scripted performances and literary productions. Project fairs follow most classroom themes, and often the school and parent communities are invited to listen to presentations, watch performances, and ask questions about students' work. Our strong social curriculum strives to support respectful speaking and listening in all areas of our students' lives, not just in the academic setting. Our specials classes (Art, Music, and Spanish) provide further opportunities for students to create and collaborate on texts of all varieties, and to then share them with audiences.

