

K-3 Essential 10, Bullets 1-5 Parent Interview Video

MAISA Literacy Essentials

<https://youtu.be/AyimQF1WFe0?si=THMJVhnPjBb1k6-L>

Narrator: Collaboration between teachers and families supports children's literacy development. These families collaborate with teachers to learn strategies for promoting literacy at home and also work with their children's teachers to support literacy learning at school.

Parent: They spend more time with my child in the school year than I do, so I really want to have a relationship. So I encourage teachers to foster those relationships. So one of the great things that happened right away was the team shared ways I could support our son at home. And that's what we did. We adapted a lot of what they were doing at schools.

We also strategize with him books that he would love. Our kids are growing up in an era of technology, and even though we try to limit screen time, he'd much rather be on a screen than read a book. So dad and I really tried to devote, it's hard, but we tried to get those 20 minutes in every night, try to make reading fun. So between visiting the library, encouraging reading, trying to find stories, trying to really be diligent about finding time to read, even though we're busy and families are busy, and it's not always practical. Do we read or do I feed you? Sometimes it can be just that difficult, wanting him to get adequate rest. We try to put 'em down at a certain time and it's not always convenient to, okay, we're going to stop and read, especially when he's overtired. So we'll keep, I think we learned about the process that it doesn't really stop. And we're fortunate to be in a school that provides the supports.

Our teacher had always sort of opened the invitation to come in and read to parents, and over the year we forged a relationship, a bond. We really cared about all the kids in his classroom. And so he came to me and said, we get a lot of moms that come to read, but not so many dads and certainly not enough men of color. And so I said, oh, well I happen to know black men and I happen to know black men that will read to children. And so informally, I reached out to my network and I asked about 20 guys I knew, would one of you come and read? And about 10 of them responded and four of them ended up in the classroom. And they were from all walks of life and all professions. And they came in and read stories, some of which were culturally relevant, some just were cool kids stories. And as he and I continued to talk, we expanded access to that pool of gentlemen to the entire school. And then in May we expanded it to our community. And we now have a program called Black Men Read at a local black bookstore. So children from all walks of life can come into the bookstore the fourth Saturday of every month. And for an hour here a great story, mostly culturally relevant, African-American stories from black men. So that's probably the way we've engaged the most with our teacher and adding on to his capacity.

Ultimately, we saw my son move leaps and bounds record improvement over the year.

Narrator: Learn more at literacyessentials.org.