**Developing Fluency and Automaticity in Reading:**

**Information for Parents**

For reading to be enjoyable, the reader must be automatic in his/her recognition of individual words so that attention is available for comprehension. In order to develop fluency and automaticity, it is necessary to practice the act of reading. Research indicates that good readers (who find it easy to recall sight words and to decode or sound out unfamiliar words) receive tremendous amounts of practice reading early in their school career. In contrast, poor readers (who have difficulty with word identification and decoding) find reading to be effortful and typically resist practicing reading. Consequently, they fail to develop the automaticity necessary for reading to become enjoyable. This cycle must be broken if poor readers are to become proficient readers. Following are principles to follow and techniques to use to ensure that poor readers practice reading.

The basic principle is to make the reading experience less effortful and painful for the student while ensuring regular practice. Frequent, short periods of practice are more effective than infrequent, long periods. Ideally, students should read with the teacher daily and practice at home daily. However, every effort should be made to avoid emotionally charged situations and reading practice with parents may not be possible for some children. Reading materials for practice should be carefully selected by the teacher and should be at a level of difficulty that allows the student to read most of the words accurately without a great deal of effort. The student should be prepared for the experience of reading in order to ensure success. For example:

1. review and practice the decoding skills emphasized in the passage/story (put words and phrases on cards and practice reading several times).
2. review the vocabulary words (including proper names) in the story (practice the correct pronunciation and discuss the meaning).
3. discuss the story based on the pictures and title; ask the student to predict what will happen or what the story is about.
4. read the story (or portions) aloud to the student (modeling reading with expression) while the student follows the text with his eyes. Insist that the student actually looks at the words as they are read aloud (slide your finger along the line of text above the words). Use same procedures but student reads outloud with the adult.
5. read a story aloud and stop on particular words (e.g., words with the decoding pattern being emphasized, sight words the student is learning) and the student reads the target words. This requires the student to follow the text carefully.
6. the adult and student take turns reading alternate sentences or paragraphs in the story.
7. the student reads a portion of the story silently, discusses, and then reads a portion orally. Oral reading is more stressful and difficult than silent reading.
8. use “Repeated Reading” of stories.
9. offer incentives for reading.