

April 23, 2010

Elementary Reading Adoption – A thanks to those who processed thousands of books!

Anyone connected with elementary literacy and the new reading adoption has heard murmurings about the bus barn for months now. That is where the new reading materials have been stored waiting for processing. It wasn't until March 22, though, that a number of reading specialists, paraprofessionals, office managers, recruited family members and district literacy staff followed the sound of Pink Floyd up the dimly lit steps of the much touted bus barn.

Huffing and puffing as they entered the once cavernous warehouse, most uttered, "Oh, my gosh!" while a handful became mute upon viewing the hundreds of pallets housing box after box of *Good Habits*, *Great Readers* materials. "How on earth will we stamp all of the books in those boxes?"

Anticipating their reaction to the ominous task of inventorying, labeling and stamping the materials, Patty Ney, the literacy administrative assistant who organized the processing event, provided a welcoming smile, a heartfelt hello and a supersized box of assorted donuts to those feeling overwhelmed by the sight of so many boxes.

As the first box cutter opened the kindergarten materials, however, all immediately became intrigued with the contents. While the process had been streamlined to foster the quick processing of each box, the artistic covers and compelling stories on the pages within were too much of a temptation. To merely stamp the inside cover with the school name and move on to the next book was an impossibility. Our team members stopped to admire and briefly discuss favorite books they discovered in each carton.



Patty Ney greets the processors at the bus barn.

As the hours, days and week passed, the once-hesitant workers shared snacks, laughs and insights about the books they were labeling. A sense of camaraderie pervaded, and over and over again, we heard, "The teachers are going to love these books!" or "The kids will love this one!"

As Friday afternoon, March 26, rolled around, exhaustion set in from a week of physical labor and tedium from the assembly line stamping. Many members of our group were looking forward to treating their fingertips with a liberal dose of Neosporin from



Despite the body aches and pains, a joyful atmosphere prevailed and co-workers became even better friends.

the plentiful paper cuts they received from their hard work.

Most schools that processed at the bus barn have completed their task and they look forward to the next phase. Teachers will participate in trainings to effectively use the new program which follows a balanced literacy approach. Forest View, Garfield and Lowell teachers have field-tested the program during the 2009-10 school year, and the feedback is very positive. The training for the remaining 14 schools is scheduled for June 11.



Even family members came to help out!

Thanks to those who worked so hard at the bus barn and to those of you who followed the same process in your buildings to prepare the materials for teacher and student use in September. This is an exciting time for all of us who anticipate great things from our new reading adoption. Thank you for hard work!

Submitted by Loretta Comfort, Literacy Specialist and Patty Ney, Administrative Assistant for Literacy

