



Davison Community Schools

Where Kids Come First and Futures Begin

Administrative Offices

1490 N. Oak Road

Davison, Michigan 48423

August 17, 2016

Dear Families,

Davison Community Schools always strives to provide our students the highest quality educational experiences using research-based best instructional practices. Beginning with the 2016/2017 school year, the District will be implementing a Word Study approach to teaching spelling. We believe that studying word patterns through *Word Study* will help our students become more independent learners; giving them the skills necessary to gain understanding about new words.

Traditional spelling instruction involves giving all students the same list of words at the start of the week, asking the students to memorize those words and testing them on those words at the end of the week. It requires students to memorize the spelling of words without developing an understanding of why words are spelled the way they are. Although some students are successful with the traditional approach, many are not, and research shows students do not always retain the proper spelling of words and have difficulty transferring what they have learned previously to the spelling of new words because they learned the words through simple memorization rather than developing an understanding of why words are spelled the way they are.

In Word Study, students are placed in groups based on their stage of spelling development and are given words to support their learning. As they progress, they will move from one stage of development to the next. Therefore, not every student will be working on the same words as his/her peers. Students will all be working on learning to spell appropriate words and developing an understanding of spelling rules that should help them to properly spell unfamiliar words. This type of differentiation should help all students become better spellers because they will understand why words are spelled the way they are, as opposed to simply trying to memorize the spelling of a certain number of words each week, and develop a deeper understanding of how to apply spelling rules to unfamiliar words.

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Students learn to work with words by first noticing their patterns such as consonant vowel consonant (CVC), creating word families, and learning how prefixes and suffixes can change the meaning of root words, increasing their understanding. For example, if your child knows how to spell the word *cat*, he/she should be able to spell the words *mat*, *sat*, and *that*. The initial lesson is with their teacher and then children are given opportunities to work with the words and their patterns in a variety of ways.

Please look for additional information from your child's teacher regarding Word Study instruction and expectations.

Sincerely,

Kevin Brown, Assistant Superintendent

Christy Flowers, Principal, Siple Elementary

Verle Gilbert, Principal, Hahn Intermediate

Lance Harper, Principal, Central Elementary

Natalie Miller, Principal, Thomson Elementary

Jennifer Torok, Principal, Hill Elementary

Theresa Wendt, Principal, Gates Elementary

