

Administrative Support

School administrators often write to ask how they can support their teachers in implementing Daily Five and CAFE successfully. Similarly, teachers often write to ask how they can get their district to "allow" or "support" them in their quest to implement Daily Five/ CAFE in their classroom. Many districts and teachers are seeing great things happen in their Daily Five / CAFE classrooms and are encouraging others to read and implement Daily Five and CAFE. Some districts have seen such a positive impact that it has become a district-wide initiative. School leaders understand the importance of implementing a program/ idea with fidelity and want to support their teachers. The question is... HOW? We hope to provide some assistance to administrators through a series of articles touching on some fundamental ways to support teachers. This week we begin with a support suggestion that is essential to creating teacher and district "buy-in".

Administrative Support Suggestion #1: Show the research!

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One of the foundational principles essential to the Daily Five is "creating a sense of urgency" (Boushey & Moser, 2005). Teaching students *why* we do something gives them a purpose and helps them to understand the reasons they are putting forth the effort to learn something new. It assists students in accepting responsibility and ownership of their learning. This really is no different for adults. When given a plausible reason for a task, adults often become motivated to complete the task. Therefore, when looking to introduce a staff or district to Daily Five/ CAFE, it is important to create a sense of urgency and provide them with the *why*. The best way to do this is by showing them the research!

Daily Five (Boushey & Moser, 2005) and CAFE (Boushey and Moser, 2009) are based on current research in teaching and learning. The foundational principles, routines, and concepts of both Daily Five and CAFE are supported by researchers such as Richard Allington, Margaret Mooney, Nancie Atwell, Michael Pressley, Ken Wesson, David Pearson, Regie Routman, Emmett Betts, Michael Grinder, Peter Johnston, Doug Fisher, Nancy Frey, Robert Marzano, and the list goes on. Many schools conduct informal action research projects on both Daily Five and CAFE and a few formal studies are in the process of being conducted. Below are a few highlights of research that will provide good discussion, and will help to create the sense of urgency needed to motivate teachers and districts to make the leap into the Daily Five/ CAFE approach to literacy instruction.

- Skilled teachers use instructional scaffolds such as posing questions to check for understanding, during small-group guided instruction (Frey & Fisher, 2010). Daily Five sets up a classroom for effective small group instruction to take place, CAFE provides an organizational tool and a menu of strategies for teachers to use in developing and implementing strategy group instruction.
- One way to teach our students to be independent learners is to gradually transfer the responsibility for learning to our students (Fisher & Frey, 2008). In Daily Five, students gradually build stamina until they are successful at working independently on their reading and writing tasks.
- Allowing children to choose their own books will encourage a love for reading (Atwell, 2007). Good-fit books are an essential component to Daily Five and through a series of mini-lessons, students learn how to choose good-fit books for their book boxes.
- Clear expectations and learning goals reduce student misbehavior and help create a positive learning environment (Marzano, R. & Marzano, J, 2003). The use of I-charts in Daily Five allows students to develop classroom expectations during the literacy block. A list of behaviors is created, modeled, and reviewed daily until students have mastered the expectations. The chart is posted in the classroom at

all times, anchoring their learning to it. In Daily Five, students know what is expected of them and can spend their time focused on learning.

- Allington (2012) highlights the importance of self-selected text that a student can read with 98% accuracy. He says students must read something they understand that is personally meaningful. In Daily Five and CAFE, students select books that follow the “I-PICK” guidelines. Students are reading good-fit books of their choice and writing about topics that are of interest to them.
- When teachers actively engage the body and brain in a lesson, they provide an implicit learning experience for students (Jensen, 2000). In addition, brain research from Dr. Ken Wesson (2001) shows the age of the child indicates the number of minutes they can focus on explicit instruction. In a Daily Five classroom, instruction is designed in a way that lessons are brief and focused, and chunked in order to provide the necessary brain and body breaks children need.
- Effective assessment that informs instruction matters (Johnston, 2011). The CAFE system allows a teacher to make meaning of student assessment data by organizing results and categorizing students by strategy needs. Through the use of a conferring notebook, teachers have individualized information on each child and can truly design instruction around each child’s specific needs.

The amount of research to support the ideas, concepts, and foundational pieces of both Daily Five and CAFE is abundant. If your school is focused on RTI, differentiated instruction, formative/ summative assessment, brain research, co-teaching, student-centered learning, or even best practices in teaching and learning, then Daily Five and CAFE will prove to be a good fit. To find actual student data that supports the efforts of beginning Daily Five and CAFE, visit the discussion board on www.thedailycafe.com, and talk with other educators that are currently using it in their classroom. Informal action research is continually going on in schools all over the world and teachers are usually more than willing to share their results.

If looking to spark curiosity or “create a sense of urgency” with your staff/ district/ colleagues, ask the following question: *How would you like to have a classroom of independent readers and writers, where each student had individual goals and you had time to work with small groups and confer with students individually each day?* They may not believe it is possible, but it is and this thought should certainly spark their curiosity. Present the research that we know is true about reading, writing, and literacy instruction. Then, provide an opportunity for them to really soak it in. Effective educators do what’s best for kids, and consistently strive to make a difference. After viewing, discussing, and understanding the research, the sense of urgency will be established and the true work can begin.

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