ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Dear Parent:

The *Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening* (PALS-K) was administered to your child. PALS-K is an informal screening inventory used across the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is designed to provide teachers with information for planning classroom instruction. The PALS assessment provides teachers with invaluable information that they can use to plan appropriate instruction for all readers.

The screening consists of several tasks relating to sound and print knowledge. Specifically, students were asked to complete the tasks below. Each task has grade-level expectations, and scores from selected tasks are added together to create a **summed score**.

PALS-K Tasks:
- **Rhyme awareness -** Out of a set of three pictures, students are asked to identify the one that rhymes with the target picture.
- **Beginning sound awareness -** Out of a set of three pictures, students are asked to identify the one that has the same beginning sound as the target picture.
- **Alphabet knowledge -** Students are asked to name the 26 lower-case letters of the alphabet.
- **Letter sounds -** Students are asked to produce the letter sounds of 23 upper-case letters of the alphabet, as well as three digraphs, two letters which make one sound such as /sh/.
- **Spelling -** Students spell five consonant-vowel-consonant words such as /t-o-p/, receiving credit for phonetically acceptable substitutions such as /k-a-t/ for cat.
- **Word recognition in isolation -** Word Recognition in Isolation is an optional task on PALS-K, but can be administered to students who have some reading ability. Preprimer, Primer, and First-grade level lists are provided.
- **Concept of Word** - All students received a score of zero for Concept of Word tasks, as they were not administered virtually.

Overall benchmarks are designated in both fall and spring, as well as benchmarks for subtests. The overall benchmark, also referred to as the summed score, indicates that the student is *at, below, or above grade level expectation*. Subtest benchmarks refer to grade level performance on a specific skill. Teachers will use the information from the screening to provide appropriate reading and spelling instruction. Students not meeting the *Entry Level* benchmark will receive **additional** instructional support on specific skills as indicated by PALS.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kindergarten