
GET CAUGHT READING

Dr. Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence #89

Buffalo, New York

Get Caught Reading was instituted as part of the annual “Parents and Children Reading Together” program. Students returned a reading contract signed by the parent and child at the beginning of the reading program, agreeing to read at least twenty minutes per night for five out of seven nights. Students who returned a signed contract complete with home phone number were eligible to “Get Caught Reading.”

During the designated week for Get Caught Reading, students needed to read or be read to between 7:00 and 7:30 pm Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights. The principal, classroom teachers, special area teachers, aides, and the school secretary volunteered to call homes to “catch students reading.” Classroom teachers did not call the homes of their own students to limit parent-teacher conferences on the telephone.

Children who were “caught reading” received recognition in several ways. Their names were mentioned during morning announcements, their pictures and names were displayed in the school hallway, and they received small prizes. The Home School Association provided the money for film and prizes.

The Get Caught Reading program was a huge success. The children loved being called at home by a staff member. Families engaged in quality reading time with their children; many parents commented on the value of the program to the staff members who called. On each consecutive night of the program, more and more children were “caught reading!” Children who returned contracts and were not “caught reading” wanted another chance. The next time this program is implemented, these children will be called a second night. This partnership practice was an inexpensive way to promote quality reading between children and their parents and positive phone calls home.

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