

## ***Press Release*** (May 5, 2011)

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### **Racine Christian Engages K-4 with Reading Best Practices: “The Daily 5”**



*Photo caption: At left, Racine Christian students Darion Folsom and Alex Large work at the Word Wall with Teacher Dawn Perez. At right, Lourdes Wilson and Hannah Ramcke take turns reading aloud to each other.*

Pairs of children are tucked into cozy chairs with heads close, one reading aloud to another. In a corner of the classroom, a teacher is meeting with a student for one-on-one journal review. At the Word Wall, two boys loft a pointer toward new words they are learning.

Racine Christian School is engaging K-4th graders with a new program called Reading Best Practices. Its “Daily 5” approach puts reading and writing center-stage in the classroom throughout the day - in subjects from science to social studies. The program includes interaction with other students plus one-on-one time with the teacher.

#### **The Daily 5**

Five practices are used each day to incorporate advanced reading techniques into RCS classrooms:

1. Read to self – Students practice reading alone each day, with books they choose, on their just-right reading level. Accelerated Reading tests check comprehension.
2. Read to someone – This encourages fluency and expression, checks for understanding, and allows each student to hear his/her own voice. Students summarize the story and enjoy reading with a partner.
3. Work on writing – Each day, student journaling puts ideas on paper and reinforces good grammar and spelling. The teacher reviews each student’s journal personally. The class studies two sentences per day - analyzing punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure.

4. Work on spelling/words – A “Word Wall” provides a fun way for students to see, read, and spell new words as they build vocabulary.
5. Listen to reading – Students hear teachers read aloud – modeling fluency and expression in reading. Children hear new words, expand vocabulary, and learn proper reading skills.

The program is highly customized for each class and level. Younger students’ time is more structured, and older students move more freely between choices of activities and books. Teachers pair different students throughout the year to reinforce peer learning and support.

Racine Christian School began the program in fall 2010 as a pilot school for 21<sup>st</sup> Century School’s Reading Best Practices concept. Fourth and Second Grade Teachers Dawn Perez and Sue Large are Coordinators for the school. Mrs. Perez notes, “Our objective is to improve reading abilities at a very young age, since reading is the foundation for all other learning. We are seeing tremendous results. Some students who had been struggling with reading in the fall have now jumped 6-8 months ahead. Many students are reading and writing one to three years ahead of their grade level.”

Racine Christian Principal Dave Van Swol says, “We are always looking for ways to give our students an academic advantage while providing personal interaction with teachers and peers. This new reading program fits the bill, helping equip K-4<sup>th</sup> grade students for success today and into middle school years.”

Racine Christian School provides Christ-centered teaching and excellent academics, with a strong home-church-school connection. Families from more than 30 area churches are involved in the school, located at 912 Virginia Street in Racine. For 2011-12 enrollment information, call Dave Van Swol at 262/634-0961 or visit [www.RacineChristianSchool.com](http://www.RacineChristianSchool.com).

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