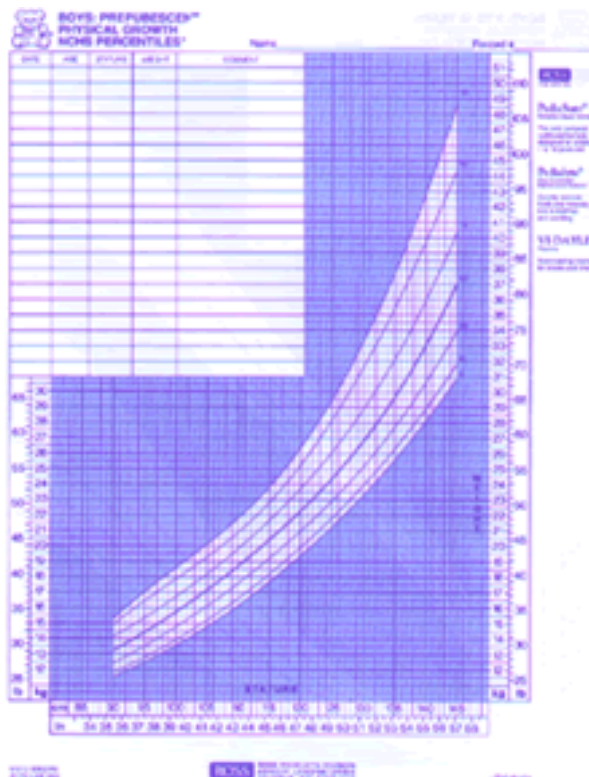


Ensuring Reading Success Through "Well Checks"

Dear Parent(s):

As our children grow, most of us see charts like the one to the right. Our doctors weigh our children and measure how tall they are. This information is put on a chart like the one to the right. This chart shows where our child stands compared to other children and how fast they are growing. These charts help doctors to understand if our children are growing properly or if something may be wrong, enabling them to do something to help as soon as possible.

Doctors use children's height and weight as "Well Checks", or vital signs of development. We all know how important it is for our children to "grow" in reading as well. In fact, successfully learning to read at an early age is probably one of the most important factors in a child's learning, both inside and outside of school.

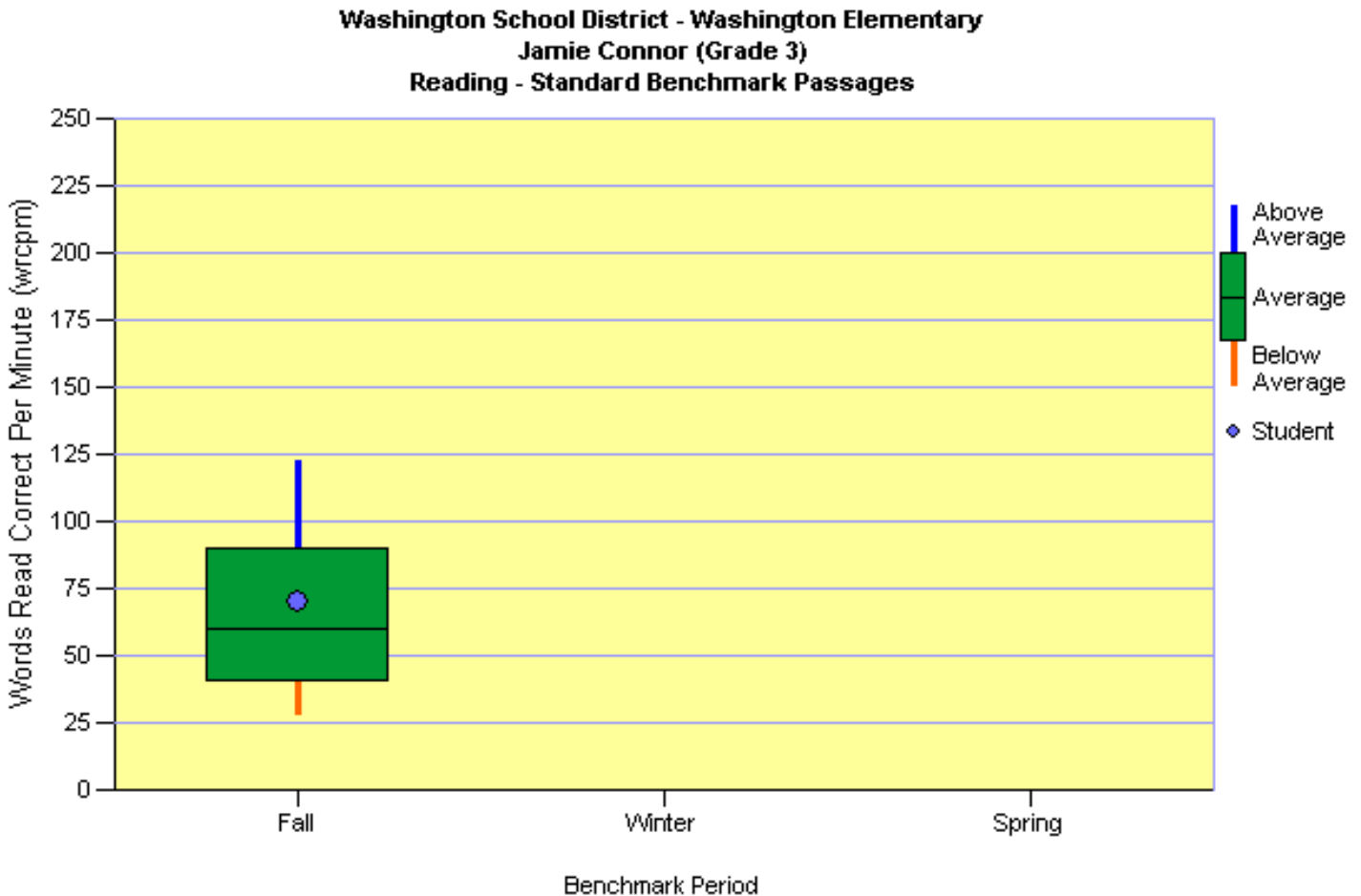


Because reading and reading growth are so important, on a regular basis, our school is going to give you "Well Check" information indicating how well your child is reading. We now know what the goals of the reading "Well Checks" should be, and will give this information to you three times per year. Generally, the first "Well Check" is given within the first few weeks of school.

The reading "Well Checks" are simple and accurate. We will have your child read 3 stories from passages comparable to their grade level and we will count the words they read correctly, as well as how well they read the stories. The "Well Checks" take less than 5 minutes. We like to think of it as taking your child's reading temperature.

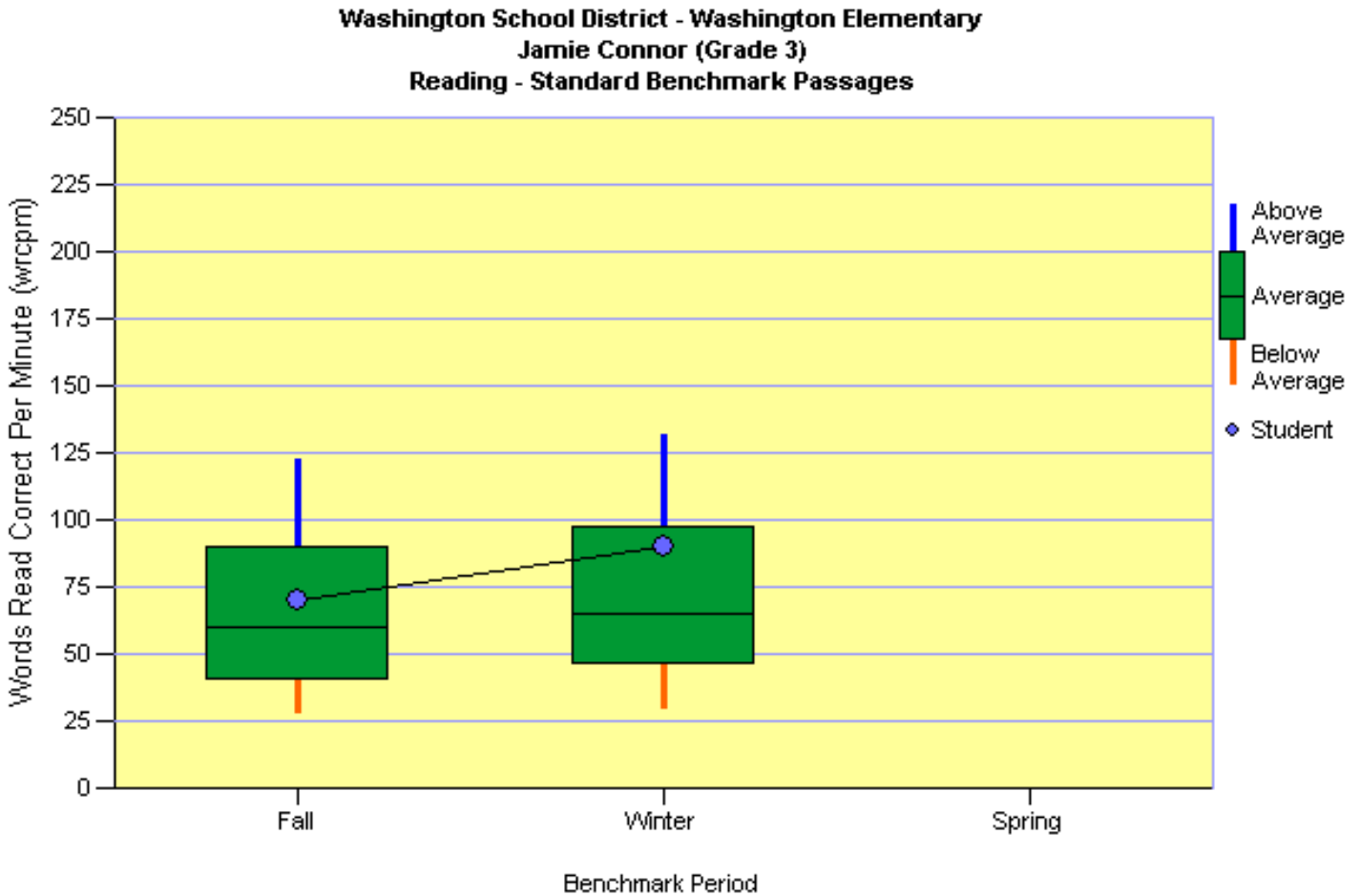
Teachers will use these "Well Checks" to help them plan their reading instruction. This information will also help them individualize for students who are above or below average in their reading abilities. The "Well Check" information for your child will be put on a chart like the one below, and your child's teacher will explain it to you at conference time.

This chart shows how one student read the stories compared to other classmates in the same grade. This chart also displays how well an average third-grade reader at our school reads a third-grade story at the beginning of the year (Fall). The number of words this child read correctly in 1 minute is indicated by a **blue** dot. The **black** horizontal line is the score of what the **very middle** student read and the **green** box displays scores of **average** readers in this grade. Scores within the **blue** line are **above average** readers, while scores within the **red** line are **below average** readers. This graph indicates the student read about 70 words correctly in 1 minute. The average reader in this grade read about 65 words correct per minute.



In January (Winter), your child's teacher will do another "Well Check" to see if an improvement in your child's reading ability has been made. Another chart, similar to the one below, will then be given to you. This chart will indicate what your child's score was in the fall and what your child's score is in Winter.

The reading "Well Check" chart below shows the rate of progress of an average student in the third grade. The lines connecting the **blue** dots show the rate of progress. Notice an improvement from 70 words correct in Fall to about 90 words correct in Winter. This reader is growing at a slightly faster rate than other students in our school. This information shows success!



These reading "Well Checks" will be done again during the last several weeks of school (Spring) and the results will be shown to you. We will then be able to inform you of how much reading growth your child has made throughout the year, and what may be needed in order for your child to become a truly successful reader.

As a school staff, we are excited about our ability to know where all of our students are at on their path to being successful readers and learners. We hope that you are excited as well. We also look forward to seeing and talking with you regarding the progress of your child.

If you have any questions about our Reading Improvement Report Card and Reading Well Check Program, please feel free to contact me.

Wendy Hagenbuch
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