



East Hartford Public Schools

Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

1110 Main Street · East Hartford, CT 06108 · Tel: (860) 622-5107 · Fax: (860) 622-5119

February 29, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to present information in support of Early Reading Success. In East Hartford, \$739,000 is used to provide five (5) full day kindergarten positions, nine (9) paraprofessionals to staff our first grade intervention program (Teaching Literacy Competency), a TLC program coordinator, and district literacy coordinator.

Full day kindergarten was implemented September of 2004, my first full year in East Hartford. With only 48% of our children attending nursery or Head Start programs, it was so clearly apparent that a full day was crucial to building a strong foundation upon which all future learning could be set. Loss of these funds will jeopardize continuation of a program which has reaped tremendous rewards. (I urge your review of the attached samples of student work and data which supports the growth children are experiencing.)

Across the state and indeed across the nation, educators are stymied by the stagnant reading scores despite increased emphasis on reading. This is true of suburban as well as urban, wealthy as well as poor. East Hartford Public School's data substantiates the effectiveness of the TLC program and the impact it has on increasing the numbers of students performing at proficiency and decreases the numbers performing at substantially deficient.

Make it possible for us to continue the work we have begun and open the door to success for more of our students by supporting our early literacy initiatives.

Sincerely,

Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent
MHM/pmw
Encs.

Public Hearing Testimony Speaker: *Marion H. Martinez Ed.D.*

Date: *2/29/08* Bill Number: *5593*



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TEACHING LITERACY COMPETENCY

Teaching Literacy Competence (TLC) is a literacy program that provides one-on-one reading support for struggling first grade students via a structured lesson provided during a 40 minute period every day. This program is funded by East Hartford's ERS grant. Data clearly demonstrate this program's effectiveness and the number of students who benefit.

In 2005-2006:

- 38% of the first grade population was enrolled in TLC.
- 38% of students enrolled in TLC in the fall of 2005 performed at the proficient level or above on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in January.

In 2006-2007:

- 27% of the first grade population was enrolled in TLC.
- 36% of students enrolled in TLC in the fall of 2006 performed at the proficient level on the DRA in January.
- These students' average DRA level in May, 2006 was 2.5.
- By May, 2007, after completing the TLC program, their average DRA level was 14. (The 2007 assessment was given using the newer and more difficult DRA2, which makes these results even more impressive.)

Last spring, the district TLC program coordinator analyzed data from a variety of sources, in order to increase the effectiveness of the TLC program across the district. As a result, implementation is more closely monitored, both at the district and school level, and professional development for TLC staff has been increased and differentiated to meet the observed needs of individual staff. A district-wide plan was put in place to provide quality coverage for lessons in the absence of the regular instructor. In addition, the criteria for entrance have been fine tuned. This year's midyear DRA results clearly show the effectiveness of these changes.

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- 44% of children enrolled in TLC in the fall performed at proficient or above on the DRA in January.

The number of students who perform in the substantially deficient range on the January DRA has also decreased

- 19% in 2005-2006 and 22% in 2006-2007
- 12% in 2007-2008.

As we continue to analyze data and refine the implementation of the TLC program, we expect continued increases in student achievement.

We know that using our ERS grant funds to provide intensive and effective intervention in reading for students who have been identified early will provide dividends throughout their school years.



FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN

Full day Kindergarten, which is funded in part by our ERS grant, is an absolute necessity for East Hartford children. Approximately half of our students enter Kindergarten without having had preschool experiences. These students arrive with very few skills in many areas, including reading, math, and writing readiness; social behavior; and hygiene and self-help. Given that literacy is our focus throughout elementary school, we are particularly concerned that a high percentage of students come to school without the necessary literacy skills to be successful in Kindergarten, including phonological awareness skills, concepts about print, letter-sound relationships, and developed oral language. Baseline academic assessments administered at the beginning of the year verify this. For example, one school reported that only 13% of students entering Kindergarten this fall knew their upper case letters; however, in February, 82% of these students know both upper and lower case letters.

Kindergarten students are assessed using a variety of instruments, including the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), which is given twice a year. Consider our results from last school year:

- In January, 2007, 52% of Kindergarten students performed at proficient or above on the DRA.
- By May, 2007 the percentage of Kindergarten students performing at proficient or above on the DRA had increased to 67%.

Without a full day Kindergarten program, this increase would not have been possible. This year, the state has raised the DRA level at which Kindergarten students are expected to read independently in May. To meet this increased standard, it is even more essential that students receive a full day Kindergarten program.

By the end of Kindergarten, students are expected to have achieved many goals, including being able to identify all letters and sounds fluently, read 40 sight words, retell a story in sequence, count to 100, recognize all numbers to 25 out of sequence, and express themselves in writing. With a full day schedule, schools are able to provide additional time for mastering these skills. A sample schedule for one day includes whole group instruction, differentiated small group instruction, academic learning centers, social centers, a 45 minute math block, and a two hour literacy block. Teachers and schools have a greater ability to meet the needs of individual students, since there is time in each day to provide extra assistance to those who need it.

Between 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, which was the first year of full day Kindergarten across the district, the number of Kindergarten students who met reading goals increased at three different schools from

- 6% to 40% at one school
- 68% to 88% at a second
- 9% to 70% at a third.

In writing, students who met skill goals increased from

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These results clearly demonstrate the success of full day Kindergarten when compared with half day Kindergarten.

We know that full day Kindergarten has increased the success of our students. For all students, and particularly for the many students who enter East Hartford schools without a preschool experience, it provides the solid foundation on which they will build their continued success in first grade and beyond.



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East Hartford Public Schools

JOSEPH O. GOODWIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1235 FORBES STREET
EAST HARTFORD, CT 06118
TEL: (860) 622-5420 Fax: (860) 622-5439
Daniel R. Brodeur, Principal



February 26, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter in support of the full-day Kindergarten and Teaching Learning Competence (TLC) programs, and in request of whatever funding is necessary to allow East Hartford Public Schools to continue to provide them for our youngsters. Both programs have had significant impact on the quality of the early literacy instruction we provide, which as we know, translates into profound and lasting future academic success.

When I address parents at the Open House or Kindergarten Orientation, I frequently refer to the team of Kindergarten teachers and the K program as "the launching pad." This is true in the sense that children's future success and unlimited potential take off from Day 1 in full-day Kindergarten. The fact that we have the youngsters for the full day allows us to address a literacy and numeracy program fully, in addition to providing social and emotional support that can translate into a love for school and well-rounded, positive interactions with peers and adults alike. Such results are not typically possible given the hurried and abbreviated nature of a half-day program.

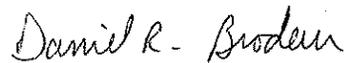
We at Goodwin have a unique perspective that allows us to gauge the value of a full-day Kindergarten program. In the past, 4 East Hartford schools, including Goodwin, were able to offer a "lottery" full-day class of 18 children chosen to participate, the others coming half-time. It became obvious to me very quickly the value this held for parents, such was the interest and desire to have their children be among those chosen. The two programs were markedly different, and I can still recall which children among our upper graders were full-time. We simply got to know them more quickly and completely when we had them for the full day, and we got to teach them more completely, I am certain. The effects remain now that we have them as 4th and 5th graders, as they undoubtedly will into the future.

Additionally, Teaching for Literacy Competence (TLC) is one of the most effective instructional programs I have ever seen. It targets the young readers in 1st grade who have not caught up to grade level and gives them one-on-one instruction daily, in addition to the literacy instruction they receive in the classroom. Whenever I describe the program to parents, I mention the power of the 1-1 instruction, the timing that research has shown provides us with the best chance to get them up to speed, and the incredible success rates we have had in the program. With success comes greater achievement across the curriculum, improved confidence, and increased love of reading. Our analyses has shown that the

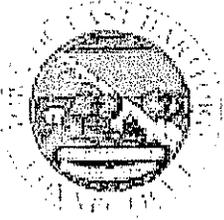
readers identified for the program, despite starting out lower and often struggling, make higher average gains than their peers. Such is the power and lasting effect of the TLC program that their reading success continues into future, and they derive lasting benefit into the upper grades.

Therefore, it is with wholehearted enthusiasm that I support the full-day Kindergarten and Teaching for Literacy Competence programs in the East Hartford Public Schools. The gains children have made as a result will have a profound positive effect on hundreds of children for many years to come. The loss of these programs would have an equally long-lasting effect in a negative way. If I can provide more information to you about these programs at Goodwin School, please feel free to contact me at any time. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel R. Brodeur".

Daniel R. Brodeur



East Hartford Public Schools

Hockanum Elementary School

191 Main Street, East Hartford, Connecticut 06118

Tel. (860) 622-5440

Fax (860) 622-5459

Lisa A. Beauchamp
Principal

February 22, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to implore you to maintain the Early Reading Success Grant monies that East Hartford Public Schools has secured over the years. If you decide to cut the proposed \$739,000 in funding, the results will be disastrous for our young, urban learners!

A large portion of the E.R.S. monies fund East Hartford's Full Day Kindergarten Program. As you may know, a vast majority of our kindergarten students have no pre-school experience at all. Thus, they are already behind at the starting gate when they arrive at school for the very first time.

Our Full Day Kindergarten Program allows our students extra time to catch up. More time is spent on the academics simply because we have a full day to teach them! All of my first grade teachers are delighted with the academic reading levels that our former, full day kindergarteners arrive with each September! When comparing the academic achievement of our half-day students to our full-day students, the disparity is astonishing! Full day kindergarten has had a huge impact on our students!

Again, as an urban elementary school principal, I urge you to think about the impact your decisions will have on our students. Show your support for our students, as they need you to be their voice in this matter!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Lisa A. Beauchamp'.

Lisa A. Beauchamp

East Hartford Public Schools

Dr. John A. Langford Elementary
"Where Children and learning come first!"



Catherine Ciccomascolo
Principal

(860) 622-5700
FAX: (860) 622-5719

February 25, 2008

RE: EARLY READING SUCCESS GRANT

To Whom It May Concern:

Support for the full day kindergarten program in the East Hartford Public Schools is essential for the success of our students. As you review the State, District, and school results you will note the continuous growth over the past three years. This represents a positive, significant trend toward the improvement of student achievement.

Full day kindergarten benefits to our children are many. It provides a full day of learning to promote social, emotional and academic growth to children who did not receive any prior pre-school experience. Teachers are in a better position to match the rigor required to meet the State/District/National goals and standards set for kindergarten. Students most often at risk are now reading and writing in kindergarten which would not be possible in a half day program. Grade one teachers report the positive difference noted in their students who attended full day kindergarten. These teachers are now able to begin working with their first graders on the grade one standards and benchmark at the start of the school year.

Our District's implementation of the Teaching Literacy Competency (TLC), for eligible students in grade one, indicates student growth. For example, this school year nine students met criteria for this program at the end of the 16-18 weeks, these students all met goal on the DRA Assessment. We now have seven more identified students for this program. Our literacy coach works closely with all T.L.C. tutors and myself to ensure all goals are being met.

These programs must continue to ensure all of our students reach his/her academic potential.

Sincerely,

Catherine Ciccomascolo,
Principal

East Hartford Public Schools

Dr. Franklin H. Mayberry Elementary School
101 Great Hill Road
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108



To Whom It May Concern:

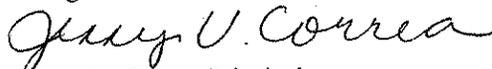
February 25, 2008

I write this letter in support of continued funding for the Early Reading Success Grant. I am the Principal of Mayberry Elementary School in East Hartford, CT. Mayberry School has 415 students of which 60% are on free and reduced lunch. Based on our 2007 CMT results we did not make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) this year. In order to address the diverse literacy needs of our students we have various programs in place. We presently have four all day kindergarten classes. We also have a variety of reading intervention programs such as the Teaching for Literacy Competence Program (TLC). In addition to these programs funds from the Early Reading Success Grant provides us with extra instructional staff such as paraprofessionals and tutors. Thanks to these programs we can show evidence that our students have made improvements in their reading achievement scores.

By the end of kindergarten students are expected to be able to read 40 sight words. They need to not only identify all letters and sounds fluently they must have the phonemic and phonological awareness skills in order to blend cvc words. Students must be able to accurately retell a story in sequence, they need to be able to count to 100, they need to recognize all numbers to 25 out of sequence and need to be able express themselves in writing. The day consists of: whole group instruction, differentiated small group instruction, academic learning centers, social centers, 45 minute math block and 2 hour literacy block. This ability to instruct in a variety of settings and for extended periods will not be attainable with the shortened day model nor without the assistance of extra instructional staff such as paraprofessionals and tutors.

Many of our students enter kindergarten without pre-school experiences which impacts on their social interactions in school. They have great difficulty in learning appropriate school behaviors. These include; following directions, listening to a story, handling school tools appropriately (pencils, scissors, etc.), sharing, waiting their turn, not interrupting, transitioning from one activity to another, walking appropriately in the hall, behaving in a structured environment, interacting with other children and working independently. We believe that having a full day to explicitly teach students these skills and reinforce constantly is critical. Based on previous experience and the knowledge of the students we currently have, we believe that half day programs would not allow for enough reinforcement of these skills that are needed to enter first grade.

In conclusion, I hope that the state legislators strongly understand the need for continued support of the Early Reading Success Grant as it is crucial to the success of all our East Hartford students.


Jenny V. Correa, Principal

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

Telephone: 860.622.5720

Fax: 860.622.5739

ANNA E. NORRIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

40 Remington Rd.
East Hartford, CT 06108
Phone: 860-622-5740
Fax: 860-622-5759

Elaina Brachman, Ed.D.
Principal



2/25/08

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to support the programs that are funded by the Early Reading Success Grant. This grant has been used to support funding for both full day kindergarten as well as *Teaching Literacy Competency (TLC)* in East Hartford. The benefits of both initiatives have been noteworthy and made a great impact for the students in my school.

Full day kindergarten has provided my students many opportunities not available to them previously. They have been immersed in much richer curricular experiences than was possible to expose them to during a shortened day program. Students are not only engaged in literacy and numeracy based learning activities that provide science and social studies connections, but also engage in fine arts and physical education without forfeiting necessary character education programs throughout their day. Full day kindergarten provides the necessary time to introduce our students to *Writer's Workshop* and have them engage in meaningful writing exploration that enhances their ability to communicate. The full day program has also allowed for increased time to integrate early intervention services that have enabled us to address potential learning and emotional difficulties much sooner.

Having attended full day kindergarten has well prepared our students for first grade. There are students, however, that do require additional reading instruction and that has been provided though TLC. Students receive individual intervention support through this program and the outcomes have resulted in the majority of students reaching proficiency on the year end Developmental Reading Assessment. Previously no intervention has yielded such positive results.

I hope that the funding for these two initiatives is continued as the students of East Hartford will suffer otherwise.

Sincerely,

Elaina Brachman



O'Brien Elementary School

65 Farm Drive
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108
Phone: (860) 622-5760

2/26/2008

To Whom It May Concern:

As a principal of a title 1 school where the majority of our students don't have the advantages of many of the wealthier surrounding towns; including opportunities to attend pre-school and being able to offer full day kindergarten and early intervention programs, such as TLC, are invaluable. Without these opportunities to begin 'catching up,' many of our students would simply fall further behind. With a transience rate over 30%, the benefits of these interventions are not always measurable 3-5 years down the road on a CMT (most of our students have left us by then), but our end of the year kindergarten student achievement data is far superior than it was when we only offered ½ day kindergarten. To see measurable results on tests given further down the road for our poorest and most transient population, the answer is not to eliminate resources such as full-day kindergarten and TLC, but rather to provide similar interventions more universally and even more significantly to intervene sooner by expanding pre-school and birth to 3 programs. This way when our students get to kindergarten they won't already be behind and have their first experience at school be a negative one. I hope you do not decide to cut the funding that allows for these programs, but rather I hope you decide to invest even more so in our students and their futures.

Sincerely,

Michael Litke
Principal, O'Brien Elementary School



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Without a full day Kindergarten program, this increase would not have been possible. This year, the state has raised the DRA level at which Kindergarten students are expected to read independently in May. To meet this increased standard, it is even more essential that students receive a full day Kindergarten program.

By the end of Kindergarten, students are expected to have achieved many goals, including being able to identify all letters and sounds fluently, read 40 sight words, retell a story in sequence, count to 100, recognize all numbers to 25 out of sequence, and express themselves in writing. With a full day schedule, schools are able to provide additional time for mastering these skills. A sample schedule for one day includes whole group instruction, differentiated small group instruction, academic learning centers, social centers, a 45 minute math block, and a two hour literacy block. Teachers and schools have a greater ability to meet the needs of individual students, since there is time in each day to provide extra assistance to those who need it.

Between 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, which was the first year of full day Kindergarten across the district, the number of Kindergarten students who met reading goals increased at three different schools from

- 6% to 40% at one school
- 68% to 88% at a second
- 9% to 70% at a third.

In writing, students who met skill goals increased from

- 40% to 57% at one school
- 61% to 70% at the second
- 0% to 66% at the third.

These results clearly demonstrate the success of full day Kindergarten when compared with half day Kindergarten.

We know that full day Kindergarten has increased the success of our students. For all students, and particularly for the many students who enter East Hartford schools without a preschool experience, it provides the solid foundation on which they will build their continued success in first grade and beyond.

East Hartford Public Schools

**JOSEPH O. GOODWIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1235 FORBES STREET
EAST HARTFORD, CT 06118
TEL: (860) 622-5420 Fax: (860) 622-5439
Daniel R. Brodeur, Principal**



February 26, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter in support of the full-day Kindergarten and Teaching Learning Competence (TLC) programs, and in request of whatever funding is necessary to allow East Hartford Public Schools to continue to provide them for our youngsters. Both programs have had significant impact on the quality of the early literacy instruction we provide, which as we know, translates into profound and lasting future academic success.

When I address parents at the Open House or Kindergarten Orientation, I frequently refer to the team of Kindergarten teachers and the K program as “the launching pad.” This is true in the sense that children’s future success and unlimited potential take off from Day 1 in full-day Kindergarten. The fact that we have the youngsters for the full day allows us to address a literacy and numeracy program fully, in addition to providing social and emotional support that can translate into a love for school and well-rounded, positive interactions with peers and adults alike. Such results are not typically possible given the hurried and abbreviated nature of a half-day program.

We at Goodwin have a unique perspective that allows us to gauge the value of a full-day Kindergarten program. In the past, 4 East Hartford schools, including Goodwin, were able to offer a “lottery” full-day class of 18 children chosen to participate, the others coming half-time. It became obvious to me very quickly the value this held for parents, such was the interest and desire to have their children be among those chosen. The two programs were markedly different, and I can still recall which children among our upper graders were full-time. We simply got to know them more quickly and completely when we had them for the full day, and we got to teach them more completely, I am certain. The effects remain now that we have them as 4th and 5th graders, as they undoubtedly will into the future.

Additionally, Teaching for Literacy Competence (TLC) is one of the most effective instructional programs I have ever seen. It targets the young readers in 1st grade who have not caught up to grade level and gives them one-on-one instruction daily, in addition to the literacy instruction they receive in the classroom. Whenever I describe the program to parents, I mention the power of the 1-1 instruction, the timing that research has shown provides us with the best chance to get them up to speed, and the incredible success rates we have had in the program. With success comes greater achievement across the curriculum, improved confidence, and increased love of reading. Our analyses has shown that the

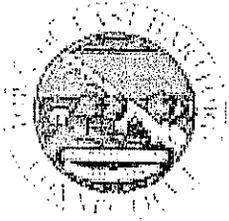
readers identified for the program, despite starting out lower and often struggling, make higher average gains than their peers. Such is the power and lasting effect of the TLC program that their reading success continues into future, and they derive lasting benefit into the upper grades.

Therefore, it is with wholehearted enthusiasm that I support the full-day Kindergarten and Teaching for Literacy Competence programs in the East Hartford Public Schools. The gains children have made as a result will have a profound positive effect on hundreds of children for many years to come. The loss of these programs would have an equally long-lasting effect in a negative way. If I can provide more information to you about these programs at Goodwin School, please feel free to contact me at any time. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Daniel R. Brodeur

Daniel R. Brodeur



East Hartford Public Schools

Hockanum Elementary School

191 Main Street, East Hartford, Connecticut 06118

Tel. (860) 622-5440

Fax (860) 622-5459

Lisa A. Beauchamp
Principal

February 22, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to implore you to maintain the Early Reading Success Grant monies that East Hartford Public Schools has secured over the years. If you decide to cut the proposed \$739,000 in funding, the results will be disastrous for our young, urban learners!

A large portion of the E.R.S. monies fund East Hartford's Full Day Kindergarten Program. As you may know, a vast majority of our kindergarten students have no pre-school experience at all. Thus, they are already behind at the starting gate when they arrive at school for the very first time.

Our Full Day Kindergarten Program allows our students extra time to catch up. More time is spent on the academics simply because we have a full day to teach them! All of my first grade teachers are delighted with the academic reading levels that our former, full day kindergarteners arrive with each September! When comparing the academic achievement of our half-day students to our full-day students, the disparity is astonishing! Full day kindergarten has had a huge impact on our students!

Again, as an urban elementary school principal, I urge you to think about the impact your decisions will have on our students. Show your support for our students, as they need you to be their voice in this matter!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa A. Beauchamp".

Lisa A. Beauchamp

East Hartford Public Schools

Dr. John A. Langford Elementary

"Where Children and learning come first!"



Catherine Ciccomascolo
Principal

(860) 622-5700
FAX: (860) 622-5719

February 25, 2008

RE: EARLY READING SUCCESS GRANT

To Whom It May Concern:

Support for the full day kindergarten program in the East Hartford Public Schools is essential for the success of our students. As you review the State, District, and school results you will note the continuous growth over the past three years. This represents a positive, significant trend toward the improvement of student achievement.

Full day kindergarten benefits to our children are many. It provides a full day of learning to promote social, emotional and academic growth to children who did not receive any prior pre-school experience. Teachers are in a better position to match the rigor required to meet the State/District/National goals and standards set for kindergarten. Students most often at risk are now reading and writing in kindergarten which would not be possible in a half day program. Grade one teachers report the positive difference noted in their students who attended full day kindergarten. These teachers are now able to begin working with their first graders on the grade one standards and benchmark at the start of the school year.

Our District's implementation of the Teaching Literacy Competency (TLC), for eligible students in grade one, indicates student growth. For example, this school year nine students met criteria for this program at the end of the 16-18 weeks, these students all met goal on the DRA Assessment. We now have seven more identified students for this program. Our literacy coach works closely with all T.L.C. tutors and myself to ensure all goals are being met.

These programs must continue to ensure all of our students reach his/her academic potential.

Sincerely,

Catherine Ciccomascolo,
Principal

East Hartford Public Schools

Dr. Franklin H. Mayberry Elementary School
101 Great Hill Road
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108



To Whom It May Concern:

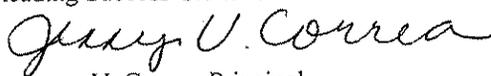
February 25, 2008

I write this letter in support of continued funding for the Early Reading Success Grant. I am the Principal of Mayberry Elementary School in East Hartford, CT. Mayberry School has 415 students of which 60% are on free and reduced lunch. Based on our 2007 CMT results we did not make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) this year. In order to address the diverse literacy needs of our students we have various programs in place. We presently have four all day kindergarten classes. We also have a variety of reading intervention programs such as the Teaching for Literacy Competence Program (TLC). In addition to these programs funds from the Early Reading Success Grant provides us with extra instructional staff such as paraprofessionals and tutors. Thanks to these programs we can show evidence that our students have made improvements in their reading achievement scores.

By the end of kindergarten students are expected to be able to read 40 sight words. They need to not only identify all letters and sounds fluently they must have the phonemic and phonological awareness skills in order to blend cvc words. Students must be able to accurately retell a story in sequence, they need to be able to count to 100, they need to recognize all numbers to 25 out of sequence and need to be able express themselves in writing. The day consists of: whole group instruction, differentiated small group instruction, academic learning centers, social centers, 45 minute math block and 2 hour literacy block. This ability to instruct in a variety of settings and for extended periods will not be attainable with the shortened day model nor without the assistance of extra instructional staff such as paraprofessionals and tutors.

Many of our students enter kindergarten without pre-school experiences which impacts on their social interactions in school. They have great difficulty in learning appropriate school behaviors. These include; following directions, listening to a story, handling school tools appropriately (pencils, scissors, etc.), sharing, waiting their turn, not interrupting, transitioning from one activity to another, walking appropriately in the hall, behaving in a structured environment, interacting with other children and working independently. We believe that having a full day to explicitly teach students these skills and reinforce constantly is critical. Based on previous experience and the knowledge of the students we currently have, we believe that half day programs would not allow for enough reinforcement of these skills that are needed to enter first grade.

In conclusion, I hope that the state legislators strongly understand the need for continued support of the Early Reading Success Grant as it is crucial to the success of all our East Hartford students.


Jenny V. Correa, Principal

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

Telephone: 860.622.5720

Fax: 860.622.5739

ANNA E. NORRIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

40 Remington Rd.
East Hartford, CT 06108
Phone: 860-622-5740
Fax: 860-622-5759

Elaina Brachman, Ed.D.
Principal



2/25/08

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to support the programs that are funded by the Early Reading Success Grant. This grant has been used to support funding for both full day kindergarten as well as *Teaching Literacy Competency (TLC)* in East Hartford. The benefits of both initiatives have been noteworthy and made a great impact for the students in my school.

Full day kindergarten has provided my students many opportunities not available to them previously. They have been immersed in much richer curricular experiences than was possible to expose them to during a shortened day program. Students are not only engaged in literacy and numeracy based learning activities that provide science and social studies connections, but also engage in fine arts and physical education without forfeiting necessary character education programs throughout their day. Full day kindergarten provides the necessary time to introduce our students to *Writer's Workshop* and have them engage in meaningful writing exploration that enhances their ability to communicate. The full day program has also allowed for increased time to integrate early intervention services that have enabled us to address potential learning and emotional difficulties much sooner.

Having attended full day kindergarten has well prepared our students for first grade. There are students, however, that do require additional reading instruction and that has been provided though TLC. Students receive individual intervention support through this program and the outcomes have resulted in the majority of students reaching proficiency on the year end Developmental Reading Assessment. Previously no intervention has yielded such positive results.

I hope that the funding for these two initiatives is continued as the students of East Hartford will suffer otherwise.

Sincerely,

Elaina Brachman



O'Brien Elementary School

65 Farm Drive
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108
Phone: (860) 622-5760

2/26/2008

To Whom It May Concern:

As a principal of a title 1 school where the majority of our students don't have the advantages of many of the wealthier surrounding towns; including opportunities to attend pre-school and being able to offer full day kindergarten and early intervention programs, such as TLC, are invaluable. Without these opportunities to begin 'catching up,' many of our students would simply fall further behind. With a transience rate over 30%, the benefits of these interventions are not always measurable 3-5 years down the road on a CMT (most of our students have left us by then), but our end of the year kindergarten student achievement data is far superior than it was when we only offered ½ day kindergarten. To see measurable results on tests given further down the road for our poorest and most transient population, the answer is not to eliminate resources such as full-day kindergarten and TLC, but rather to provide similar interventions more universally and even more significantly to intervene sooner by expanding pre-school and birth to 3 programs. This way when our students get to kindergarten they won't already be behind and have their first experience at school be a negative one. I hope you do not decide to cut the funding that allows for these programs, but rather I hope you decide to invest even more so in our students and their futures.

Sincerely,

Michael Litke
Principal, O'Brien Elementary School



East Hartford Public Schools

Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

1110 Main Street · East Hartford, CT 06108 · Tel: (860) 622-5107 · Fax: (860) 622-5119

February 29, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to present information in support of Early Reading Success. In East Hartford, \$739,000 is used to provide five (5) full day kindergarten positions, nine (9) paraprofessionals to staff our first grade intervention program (Teaching Literacy Competency), a TLC program coordinator, and district literacy coordinator.

Full day kindergarten was implemented September of 2004, my first full year in East Hartford. With only 48% of our children attending nursery or Head Start programs, it was so clearly apparent that a full day was crucial to building a strong foundation upon which all future learning could be set. Loss of these funds will jeopardize continuation of a program which has reaped tremendous rewards. (I urge your review of the attached samples of student work and data which supports the growth children are experiencing.)

Across the state and indeed across the nation, educators are stymied by the stagnant reading scores despite increased emphasis on reading. This is true of suburban as well as urban, wealthy as well as poor. East Hartford Public School's data substantiates the effectiveness of the TLC program and the impact it has on increasing the numbers of students performing at proficiency and decreases the numbers performing at substantially deficient.

Make it possible for us to continue the work we have begun and open the door to success for more of our students by supporting our early literacy initiatives.

Sincerely,

Marion H. Martinez

Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent
MHM/pmw
Encs.

Public Hearing Testimony Speaker: *Marion H. Martinez Ed.D.*

Date: *2/29/08* Bill Number: *5593*



East Hartford Public Schools

*Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools*

1110 Main Street · East Hartford, CT 06108 · Tel: (860) 622-5107 · Fax: (860) 622-5119

TEACHING LITERACY COMPETENCY

Teaching Literacy Competence (TLC) is a literacy program that provides one-on-one reading support for struggling first grade students via a structured lesson provided during a 40 minute period every day. This program is funded by East Hartford's ERS grant. Data clearly demonstrate this program's effectiveness and the number of students who benefit.

In 2005-2006:

- 38% of the first grade population was enrolled in TLC.
- 38% of students enrolled in TLC in the fall of 2005 performed at the proficient level or above on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in January.

In 2006-2007:

- 27% of the first grade population was enrolled in TLC.
- 36% of students enrolled in TLC in the fall of 2006 performed at the proficient level on the DRA in January.
- These students' average DRA level in May, 2006 was 2.5.
- By May, 2007, after completing the TLC program, their average DRA level was 14. (The 2007 assessment was given using the newer and more difficult DRA2, which makes these results even more impressive.)

Last spring, the district TLC program coordinator analyzed data from a variety of sources, in order to increase the effectiveness of the TLC program across the district. As a result, implementation is more closely monitored, both at the district and school level, and professional development for TLC staff has been increased and differentiated to meet the observed needs of individual staff. A district-wide plan was put in place to provide quality coverage for lessons in the absence of the regular instructor. In addition, the criteria for entrance have been fine tuned. This year's midyear DRA results clearly show the effectiveness of these changes.

In 2007-2008:

- 44% of children enrolled in TLC in the fall performed at proficient or above on the DRA in January.

The number of students who perform in the substantially deficient range on the January DRA has also decreased

- 19% in 2005-2006 and 22% in 2006-2007
- 12% in 2007-2008.

As we continue to analyze data and refine the implementation of the TLC program, we expect continued increases in student achievement.

We know that using our ERS grant funds to provide intensive and effective intervention in reading for students who have been identified early will provide dividends throughout their school years.



FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN

Full day Kindergarten, which is funded in part by our ERS grant, is an absolute necessity for East Hartford children. Approximately half of our students enter Kindergarten without having had preschool experiences. These students arrive with very few skills in many areas, including reading, math, and writing readiness; social behavior; and hygiene and self-help. Given that literacy is our focus throughout elementary school, we are particularly concerned that a high percentage of students come to school without the necessary literacy skills to be successful in Kindergarten, including phonological awareness skills, concepts about print, letter-sound relationships, and developed oral language. Baseline academic assessments administered at the beginning of the year verify this. For example, one school reported that only 13% of students entering Kindergarten this fall knew their upper case letters; however, in February, 82% of these students know both upper and lower case letters.

Kindergarten students are assessed using a variety of instruments, including the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), which is given twice a year. Consider our results from last school year:

- In January, 2007, 52% of Kindergarten students performed at proficient or above on the DRA.
- By May, 2007 the percentage of Kindergarten students performing at proficient or above on the DRA had increased to 67%.

Without a full day Kindergarten program, this increase would not have been possible. This year, the state has raised the DRA level at which Kindergarten students are expected to read independently in May. To meet this increased standard, it is even more essential that students receive a full day Kindergarten program.

By the end of Kindergarten, students are expected to have achieved many goals, including being able to identify all letters and sounds fluently, read 40 sight words, retell a story in sequence, count to 100, recognize all numbers to 25 out of sequence, and express themselves in writing. With a full day schedule, schools are able to provide additional time for mastering these skills. A sample schedule for one day includes whole group instruction, differentiated small group instruction, academic learning centers, social centers, a 45 minute math block, and a two hour literacy block. Teachers and schools have a greater ability to meet the needs of individual students, since there is time in each day to provide extra assistance to those who need it.

Between 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, which was the first year of full day Kindergarten across the district, the number of Kindergarten students who met reading goals increased at three different schools from

- 6% to 40% at one school
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These results clearly demonstrate the success of full day Kindergarten when compared with half day Kindergarten.

We know that full day Kindergarten has increased the success of our students. For all students, and particularly for the many students who enter East Hartford schools without a preschool experience, it provides the solid foundation on which they will build their continued success in first grade and beyond.

East Hartford Public Schools

JOSEPH O. GOODWIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1235 FORBES STREET
EAST HARTFORD, CT 06118
TEL: (860) 622-5420 Fax: (860) 622-5439
Daniel R. Brodeur, Principal



February 26, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter in support of the full-day Kindergarten and Teaching Learning Competence (TLC) programs, and in request of whatever funding is necessary to allow East Hartford Public Schools to continue to provide them for our youngsters. Both programs have had significant impact on the quality of the early literacy instruction we provide, which as we know, translates into profound and lasting future academic success.

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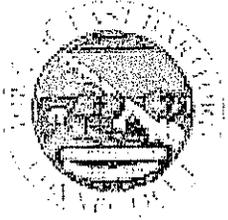
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Sincerely,

Daniel R. Brodeur

Daniel R. Brodeur



East Hartford Public Schools

Hockanum Elementary School

191 Main Street, East Hartford, Connecticut 06118

Tel. (860) 622-5440

Fax (860) 622-5459

Lisa A. Beauchamp

Principal

February 22, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to implore you to maintain the Early Reading Success Grant monies that East Hartford Public Schools has secured over the years. If you decide to cut the proposed \$739,000 in funding, the results will be disastrous for our young, urban learners!

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Again, as an urban elementary school principal, I urge you to think about the impact your decisions will have on our students. Show your support for our students, as they need you to be their voice in this matter!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa A. Beauchamp".

Lisa A. Beauchamp

East Hartford Public Schools

Dr. John A. Langford Elementary

"Where Children and learning come first!"



Catherine Ciccomascolo
Principal

(860) 622-5700
FAX: (860) 622-5719

February 25, 2008

RE: EARLY READING SUCCESS GRANT

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These programs must continue to ensure all of our students reach his/her academic potential.

Sincerely,

Catherine Ciccomascolo,
Principal

East Hartford Public Schools

Dr. Franklin H. Mayberry Elementary School
101 Great Hill Road
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108



To Whom It May Concern:

February 25, 2008

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By the end of kindergarten students are expected to be able to read 40 sight words. They need to not only identify all letters and sounds fluently they must have the phonemic and phonological awareness skills in order to blend cvc words. Students must be able to accurately retell a story in sequence, they need to be able to count to 100, they need to recognize all numbers to 25 out of sequence and need to be able express themselves in writing. The day consists of: whole group instruction, differentiated small group instruction, academic learning centers, social centers, 45 minute math block and 2 hour literacy block. This ability to instruct in a variety of settings and for extended periods will not be attainable with the shortened day model nor without the assistance of extra instructional staff such as paraprofessionals and tutors.

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Jenny V. Correa, Principal

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

Telephone: 860.622.5720

Fax: 860.622.5739

ANNA E. NORRIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

40 Remington Rd.
East Hartford, CT 06108
Phone: 860-622-5740
Fax: 860-622-5759

Elaina Brachman, Ed.D.
Principal



2/25/08

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I hope that the funding for these two initiatives is continued as the students of East Hartford will suffer otherwise.

Sincerely,

Elaina Brachman



O'Brien Elementary School

65 Farm Drive
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108
Phone: (860) 622-5760

2/26/2008

To Whom It May Concern:

As a principal of a title 1 school where the majority of our students don't have the advantages of many of the wealthier surrounding towns; including opportunities to attend pre-school and being able to offer full day kindergarten and early intervention programs, such as TLC, are invaluable. Without these opportunities to begin 'catching up,' many of our students would simply fall further behind. With a transience rate over 30%, the benefits of these interventions are not always measurable 3-5 years down the road on a CMT (most of our students have left us by then), but our end of the year kindergarten student achievement data is far superior than it was when we only offered ½ day kindergarten. To see measurable results on tests given further down the road for our poorest and most transient population, the answer is not to eliminate resources such as full-day kindergarten and TLC, but rather to provide similar interventions more universally and even more significantly to intervene sooner by expanding pre-school and birth to 3 programs. This way when our students get to kindergarten they won't already be behind and have their first experience at school be a negative one. I hope you do not decide to cut the funding that allows for these programs, but rather I hope you decide to invest even more so in our students and their futures.

Sincerely,

Michael Litke
Principal, O'Brien Elementary School



East Hartford Public Schools

Dr. Thomas S. O'Connell Elementary School

301 May Road
East Hartford, CT 06118

Tel: (860) 622-5460
Fax: (860) 622-5479

Scott J. Nozik, M.Ed., C.A.G.S.
Principal

February 26, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing today to ask that any and all monies used to support the Early Reading Success programs are, at a minimum, restored to their previous funding levels. It is my understanding that East Hartford stands to lose approximately \$739,000 in state funding. This would be quite devastating to our kindergarten and remedial reading programs.

While I do understand the economic impact of providing these funds to schools, I would like to share with you some of the current research on full-day versus half-day kindergarten programs.

The following data is taken from a report from the National Center for Educational Statistics using data from the Early Child Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K):

- *Full-day classes were more likely than half-day classes to spend time every day on math, social studies and science. On the days when mathematics was taught, 81 percent of full-day classes spent more than half an hour per day on mathematics instruction compared to 52 percent of half-day classes.*
- *Children in full-day classes learned more during the year in both reading and mathematics compared to those in half-day classes after adjusting for learning differences associated with race/ethnicity, poverty status, fall achievement level, sex, class size...*
- *Children in very large classes (25+) made slightly less progress in reading compared to those in medium size classes. Black children in full-day classes with an aide (which East Hartford cannot afford even with the ERS funds) made greater progress in reading compared to Black children in full-day classes without an aide.*
- *Overall, the results presented in this report support previous research on full-day kindergarten and its positive association with learning in reading and mathematics...*

The following conclusions were taken from a research article by Dr. Sherrill Martinez and Lue Ann Snider from the Kansas State Department of Education:

- *Disadvantaged children reaped greater benefits from full-day programs. Evidence suggests that full-day kindergarten graduates experienced many of the same benefits as those who attended preschool.*
- *Full-day kindergarten students, as opposed to half-day kindergarten students, are more likely to show adequate school progress through their elementary school careers. Full-day students exhibit more independent learning, productivity in work with peers and reflectiveness in their work. They also express less withdrawal and anger shyness.*
- *The aforementioned benefits seemed to last well into second grade.*

O'Connell Tigers ROAR — Respectful, Offer Kindness, Act Safely, Responsible

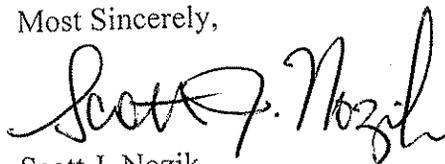
These issues are especially relevant to East Hartford for the following reasons:

1. East Hartford ranked 146th out of 152 Connecticut towns in the percentage of third grade students reading at or above goal on the 2007 CMT.
2. Each of the top three school districts in the state (Kent, Easton and New Canaan) has full-day or extended-day kindergarten programs.
3. These top performing school districts have an average of 91% of their students attending a pre-school program. Only 48% of East Hartford students have this experience. In fact, while the percentage of students attending pre-school has been increasing steadily across the state (75% in 2001 to 79% in 2006), the percentage of students in East Hartford with pre-school experience is on the decline (56% in 2001 versus 48% in 2006).
4. Despite concerns that the state is "throwing money at the problem" the reality is that even with the \$700,000 from the ERS grant, East Hartford has a per pupil expenditure of \$7,308 while the top 3 performing district average \$7,892 (2006 SSP).
5. The average percentage of minority students in the top 3 school districts is 8%. The percentage of minority students in East Hartford is 76%. If we are going to close the achievement gap, we need to support districts like East Hartford.

I'd also like to share some additional concerns with you. While the cost of education is not cheap, the cost of illiteracy is even more expensive. A 2004 article in the *New York Times* quoted Marc Mauer, the assistant director of the Sentencing Project, a prison research and advocacy group, stated that inmates serving life sentences imposes large costs on states, about \$1 million for each inmate who serves out his full sentence behind bars. Much has been made of the fact that states such as California (4th grade reading scores), Arizona (third grade reading scores) and Indiana (second grade reading scores) calculate the needs of their prison system based on the number of children who do not read on grade-level. In fact, California projects to spend more on its prisons than on its public universities by the 2012-13 fiscal year (\$15.4 billion versus \$15.3 billion). The question is, "How can we afford not fund programs that focus on early reading success?"

If Connecticut is to remain competitive in the future, students must be proficient readers and be able to develop good problem-solving skills. We must also do more to close the achievement gap that exists in our state. Taking money away from children in towns like East Hartford is not a step in this direction—in fact, it is a step backwards. I urge you restore, or increase, funding for Early Reading Success.

Most Sincerely,



Scott J. Nozik
Principal

East Hartford Public Schools

Gov. William Pitkin Elementary School



Linda J. Iverson, Ph.D.

Principal

February 27, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with pleasure that I have the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Early Reading Success Grant used to fund the Full Day Kindergarten Program and the Teaching Literacy Competence Program (TLC) initiatives in the East Hartford Public Schools.

The Early Reading Success Grant has supported our goal to have all children reading at or above the proficient levels for his/her grade level by grade three. When I began my tenure in East Hartford, the kindergarten program was half-day and there were no additional reading supports available on a daily basis for the students who were reading below their expected grade level. Therefore, students left kindergarten lacking sufficient skills to be successful in grade one and in subsequent grades as they matriculated through the educational system. There was also an increase in retention rates.

The implementation of the Full Day Kindergarten Program and the Teaching Literacy Program has addressed these needs. The full day allows for the students to receive more instruction. Students are leaving kindergarten better prepared for the rigor of grade one. The longer day has improved their social skill development and in general, has assisted the students in their overall transition to school. For those students who require more "in addition to reading support", the TLC program provides one-on-one instruction at the students reading level for 45 minutes each day. Students work on reading comprehension strategies through exposure to text at their instructional level. I have witnessed students entering the program reading at level 2 or 3, only to exit the program reading at level 10 or 14. This is powerful and has translated in more students reading at the expected levels by grade three. Additionally, retention rates among students have decreased significantly.

Perhaps the most positive impact both programs have had on students is the notable increase in the students' self-esteem and confidence as learners and readers. To eliminate the funding would only prove detrimental to the students and widen the achievement gap that we are so desperately trying to close.

Sincerely,

Linda J. Iverson, Ph.D.

Principal

Pitkin Elementary School

Silver Lane Elementary School

15 Mercer Avenue
East Hartford, CT 06118
860-622-5500
www.easthartford.org

Andrea L. Einhorn, Principal

February 25, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for All Day Kindergarten and TLC. Both are critical for student success and for closing the achievement gap.

Less than 30 percent of my students have any preschool experience. Therefore, they enter kindergarten with less academic and social skills than their suburban peers. Research shows that children in full day kindergarten spend 30% more time on reading and literacy instruction, and 46% more time on mathematics than children in half day programs. Additionally, children in full-day kindergarten exhibit more independent learning, classroom involvement, productivity in work with peers and reflectiveness than half-day kindergartners. As proven in the Philadelphia study (2002), children from low income families perform better in full-day kindergarten, and the school district saved millions of dollars through significantly reduced grade retention.

The TLC program at Silver Lane School is also essential for creating successful students. TLC is able to dramatically increase literacy skills in students who are reading below grade level. In fact, 80% of students who enter the program exit on or above their current grade level. The tutors who provide this program are highly trained and are dedicated to making each student successful. Our literacy coach and the literacy team are responsible for the accomplishments of this program. They train the tutors and oversee all aspects of the implementation of the program.

It is of vital importance that All Day Kindergarten and TLC be retained. These programs offer us the best chance of closing the achievement gap and creating lifelong learners.

Sincerely,



Andrea Einhorn

Principal

Silver Lane Elementary School

East Hartford Public Schools



Woodland School
Helene S. Marchese

February 25, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my concerns about lack of funding for the Early Reading Success Grant.

As Principal of Woodland School in East Hartford, I have observed the positive impact full day Kindergarten has had on our students. The students who attend Woodland School are in need of an alternative structured setting and having a full day of instruction best suits their individual needs. The full day is critical in supporting these students who are struggling readers and writers in addition to having behavioral concerns.

Our Teaching for Literacy Competence Program (TLC) has been successful in helping students who fall short of meeting grade level literacy standards. This has been achieved through daily individual instruction that targets specific reading and writing strategies. Throughout the years, this program as well as the staff involved in teaching it, has assisted struggling readers to become on grade level readers.

For the above reasons, I would urge you to renew the Early Reading Success Grant.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

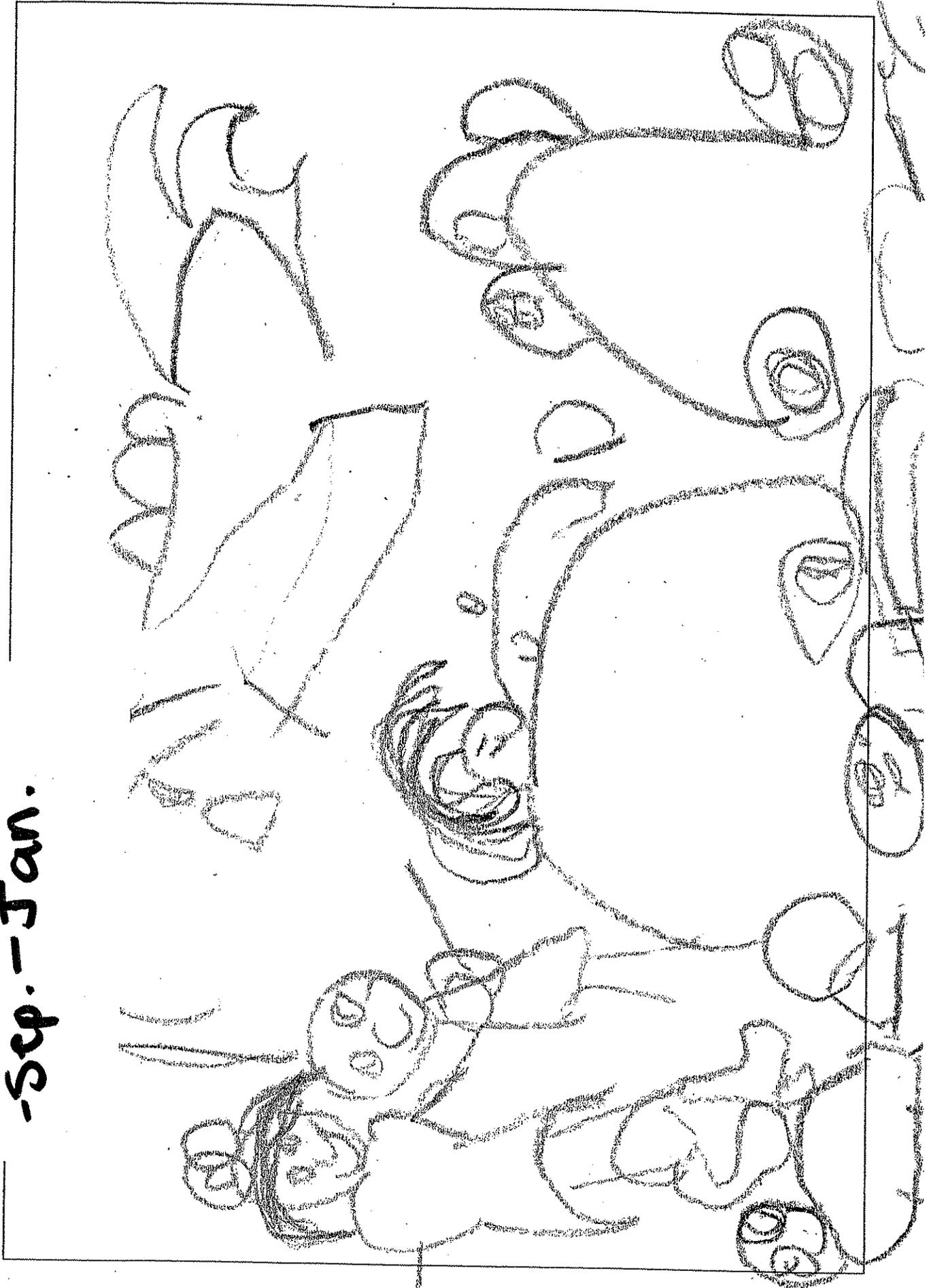
Helene Marchese, Principal
Woodland School

HM:bk

September

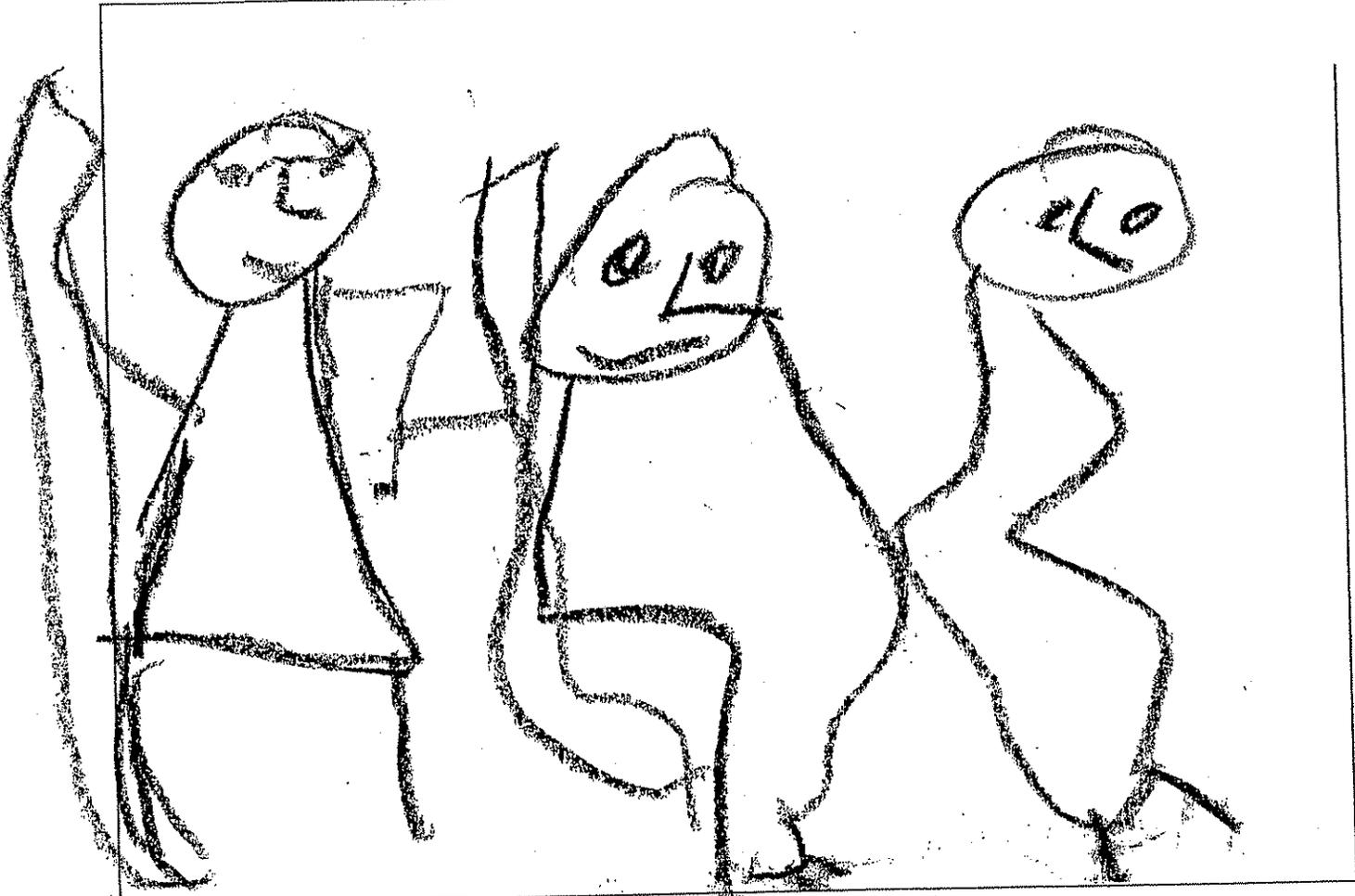
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January



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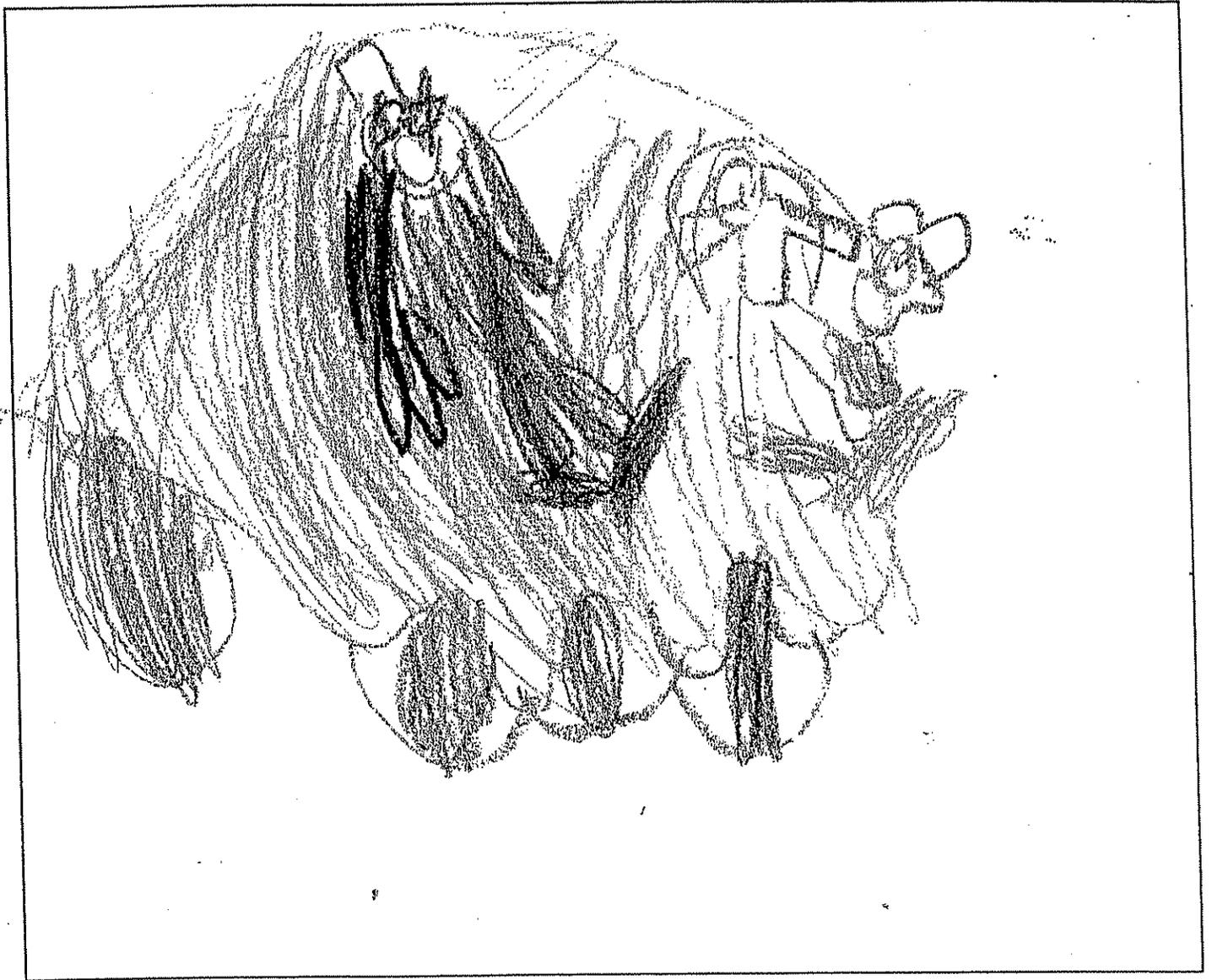
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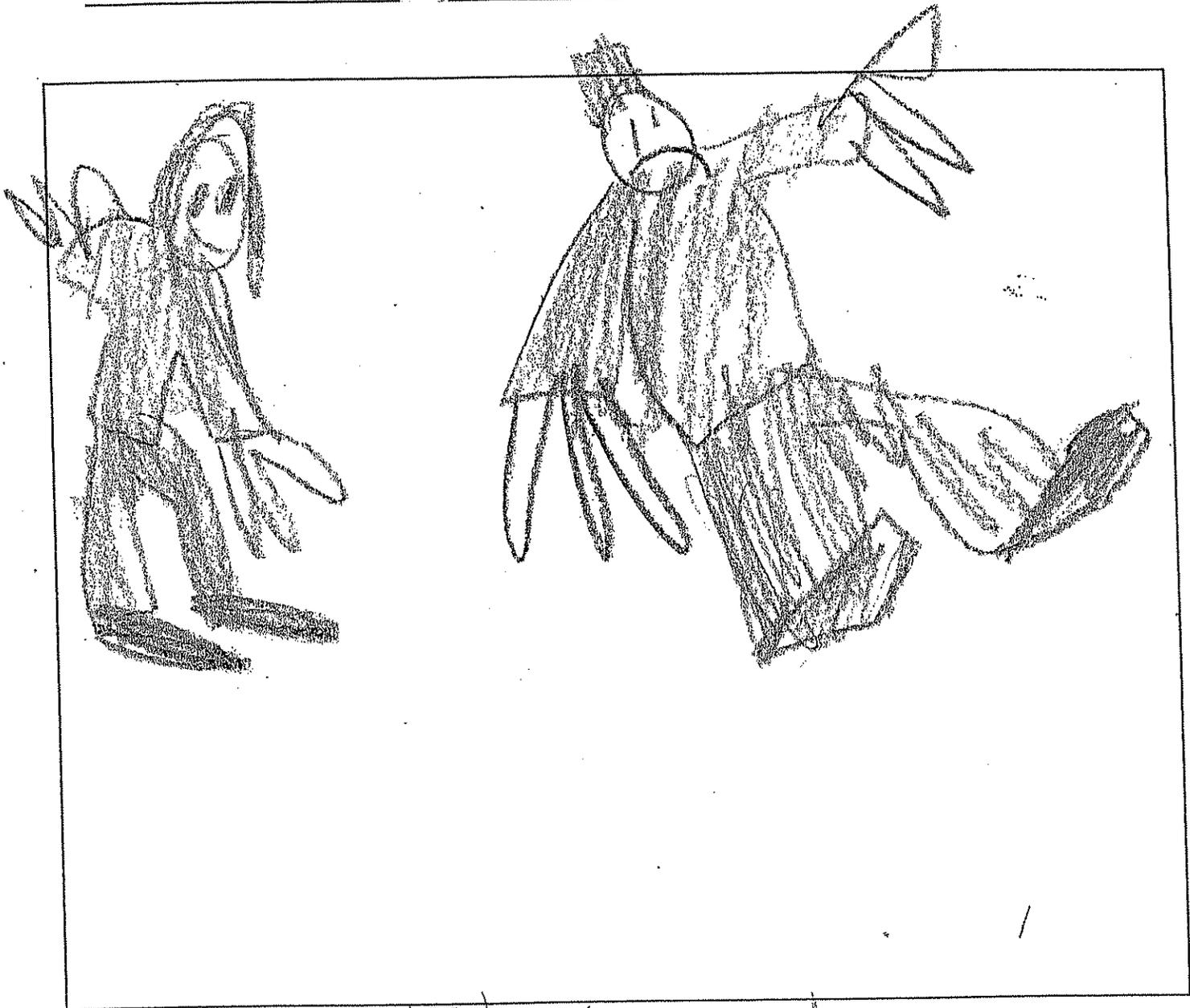


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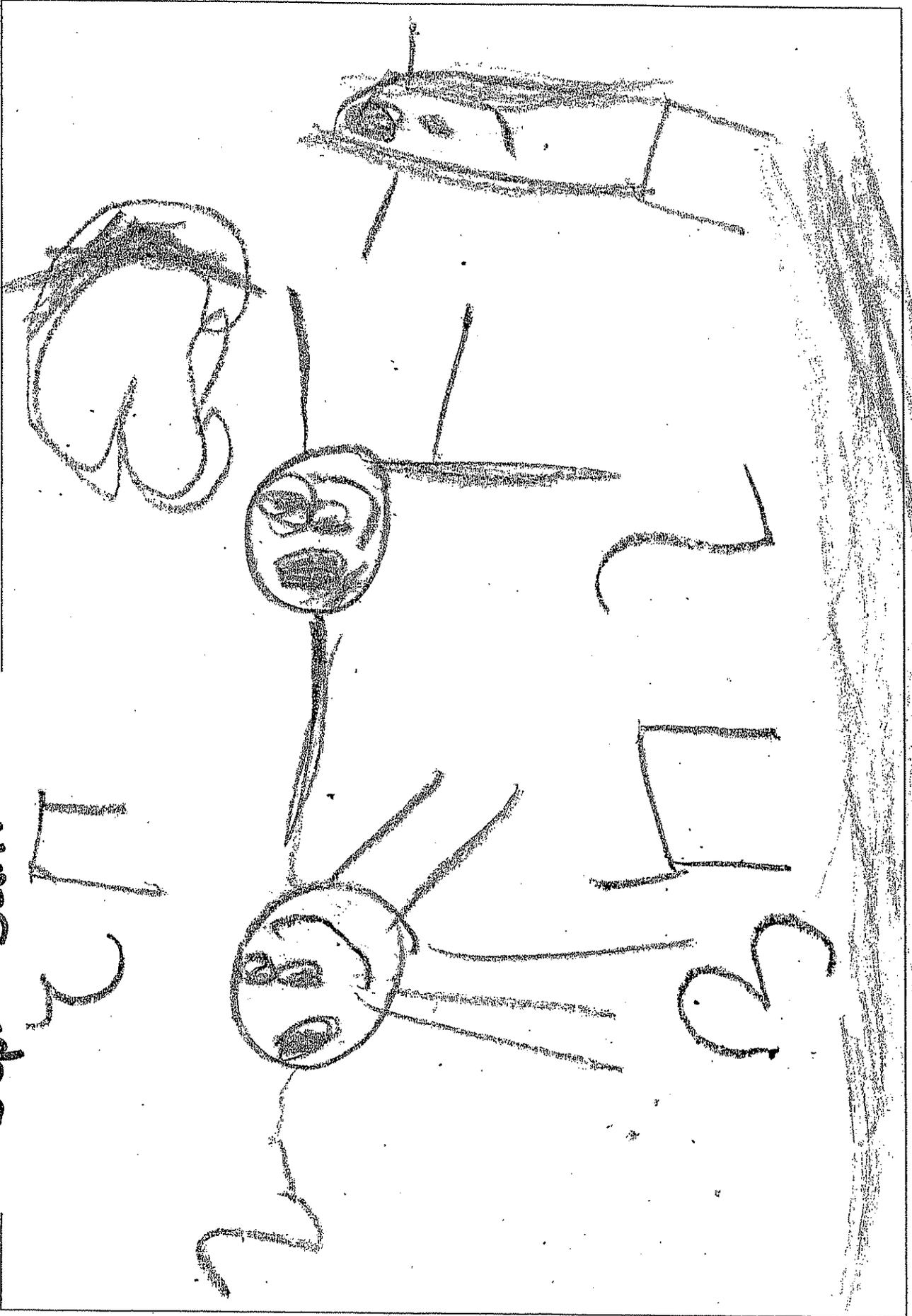


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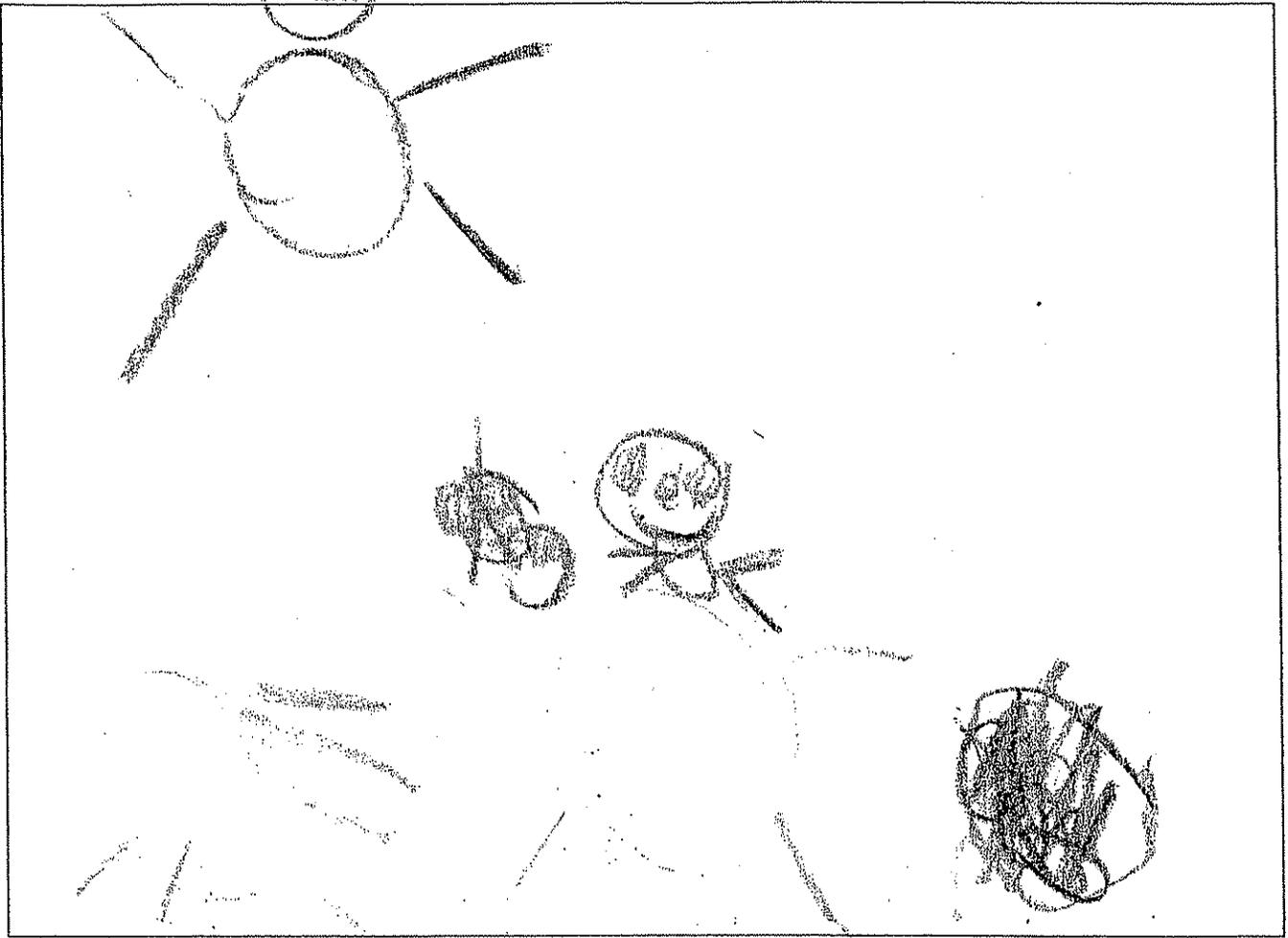
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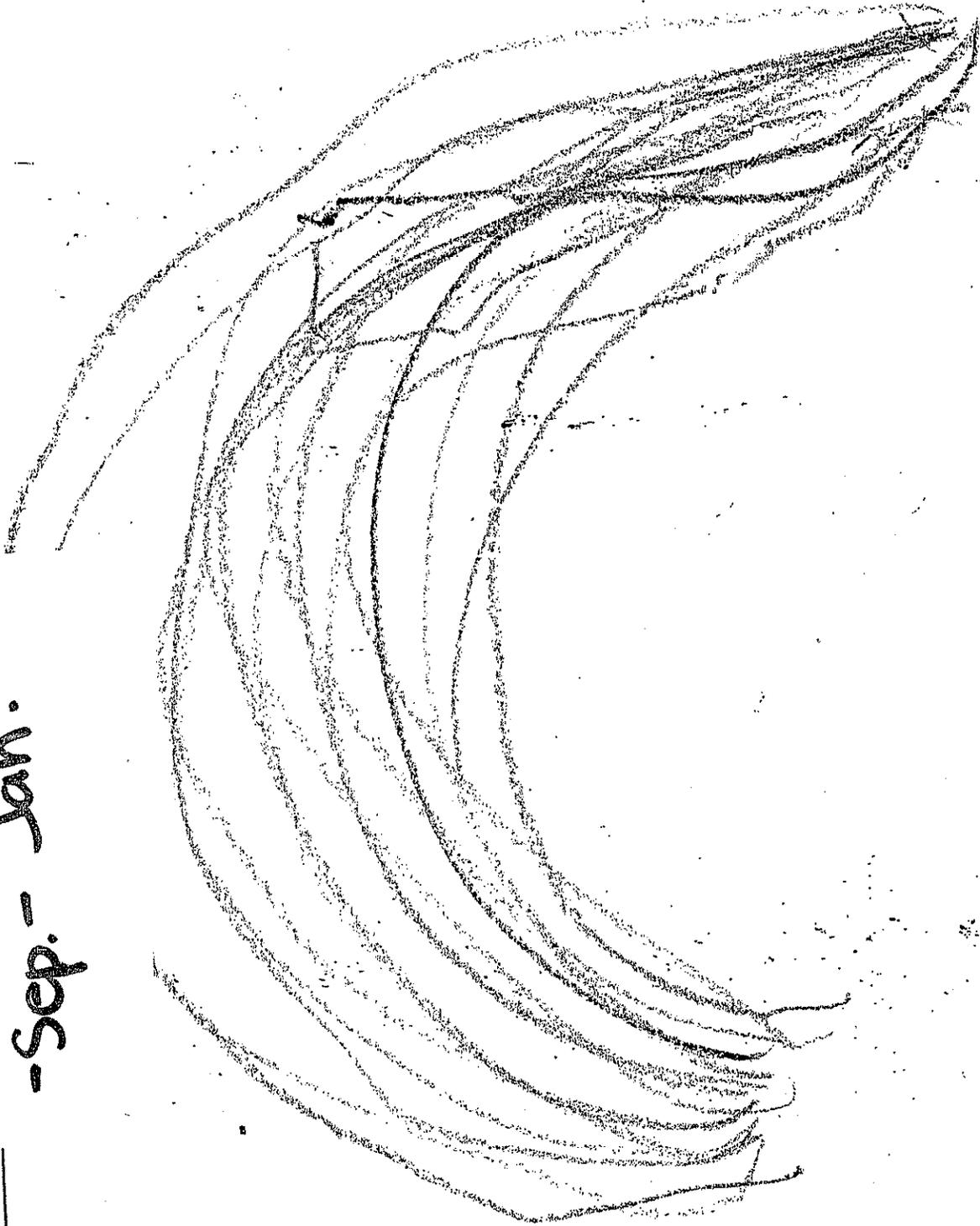
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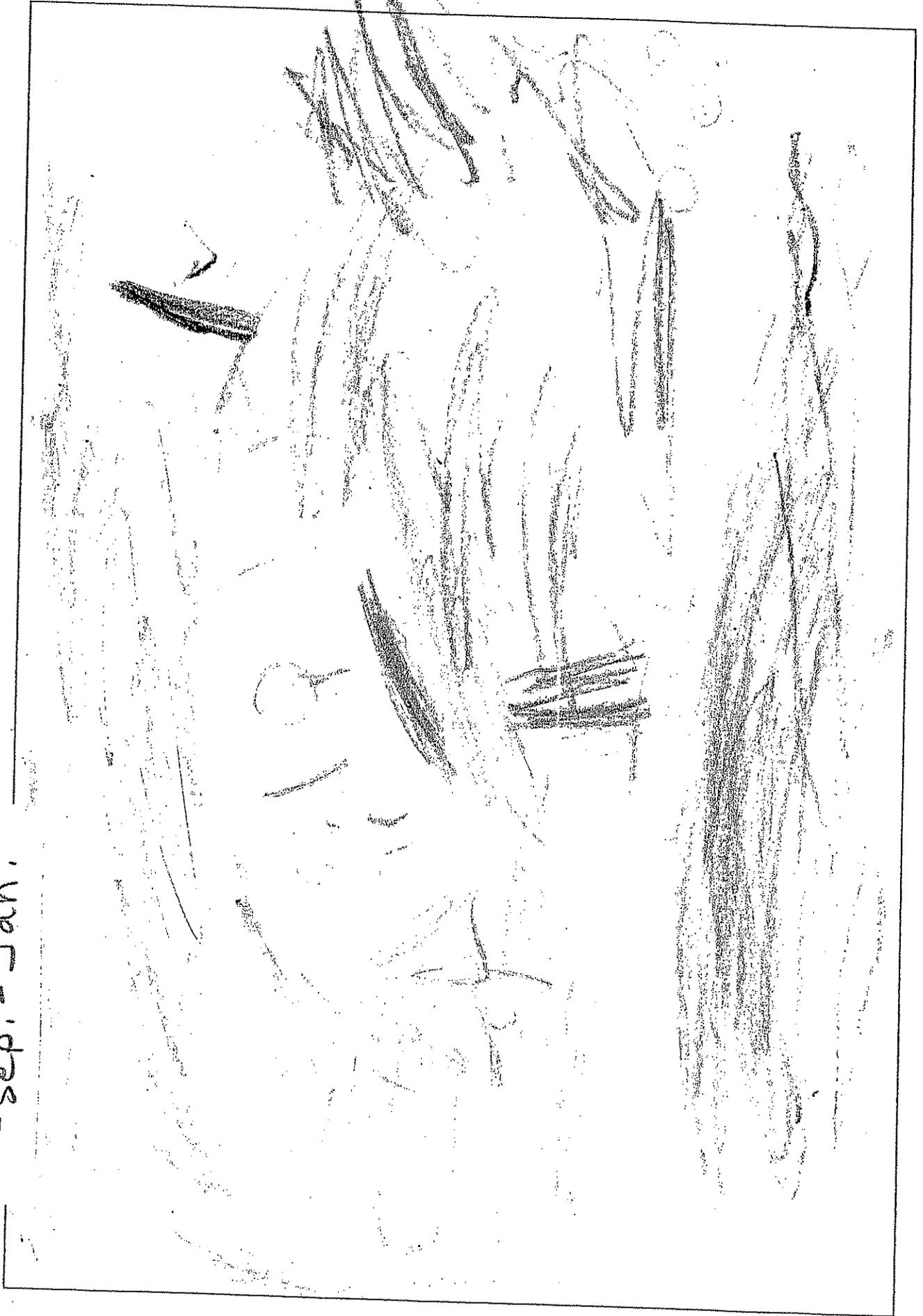
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- ELL

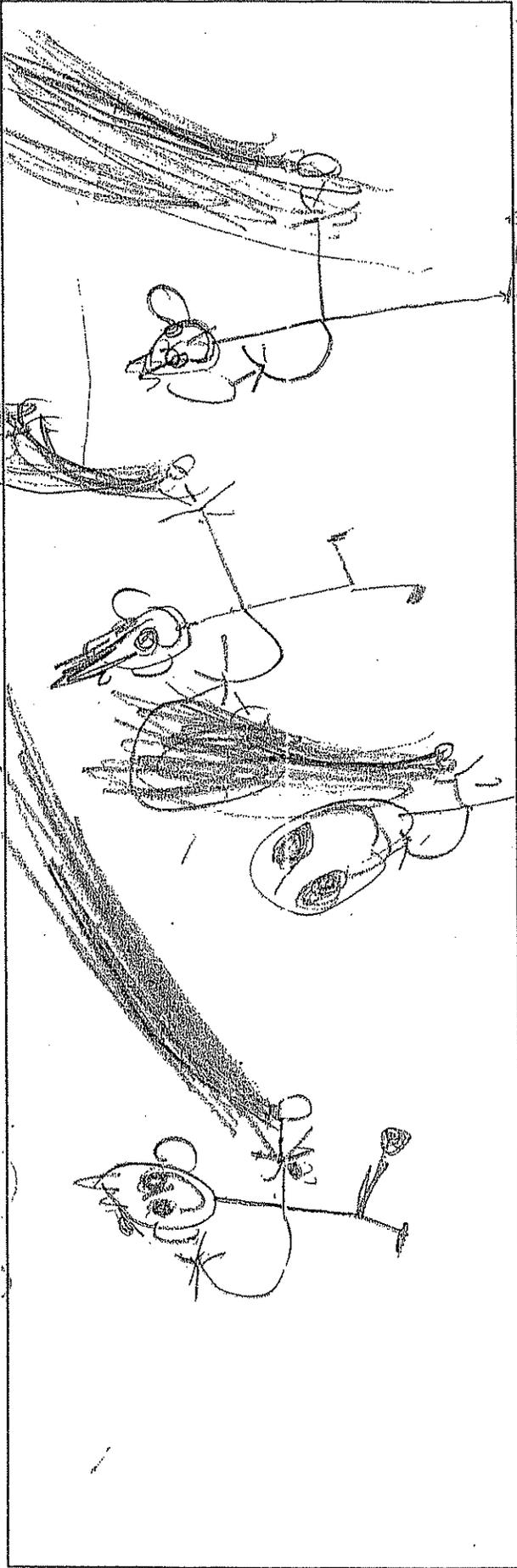
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January

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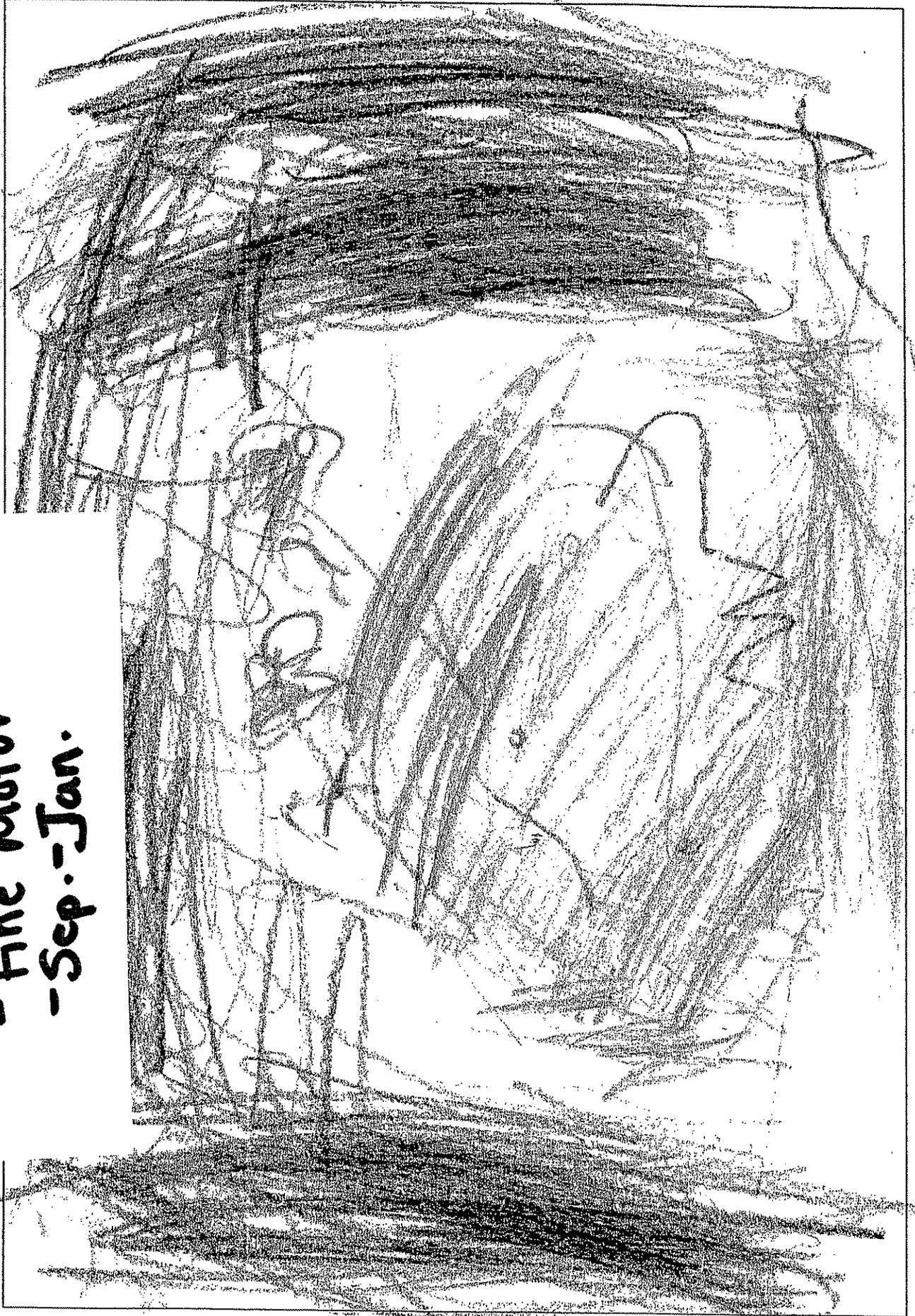
Student: Low

-ELL

-Fine Motor

-Sep.-Jan.

September



January

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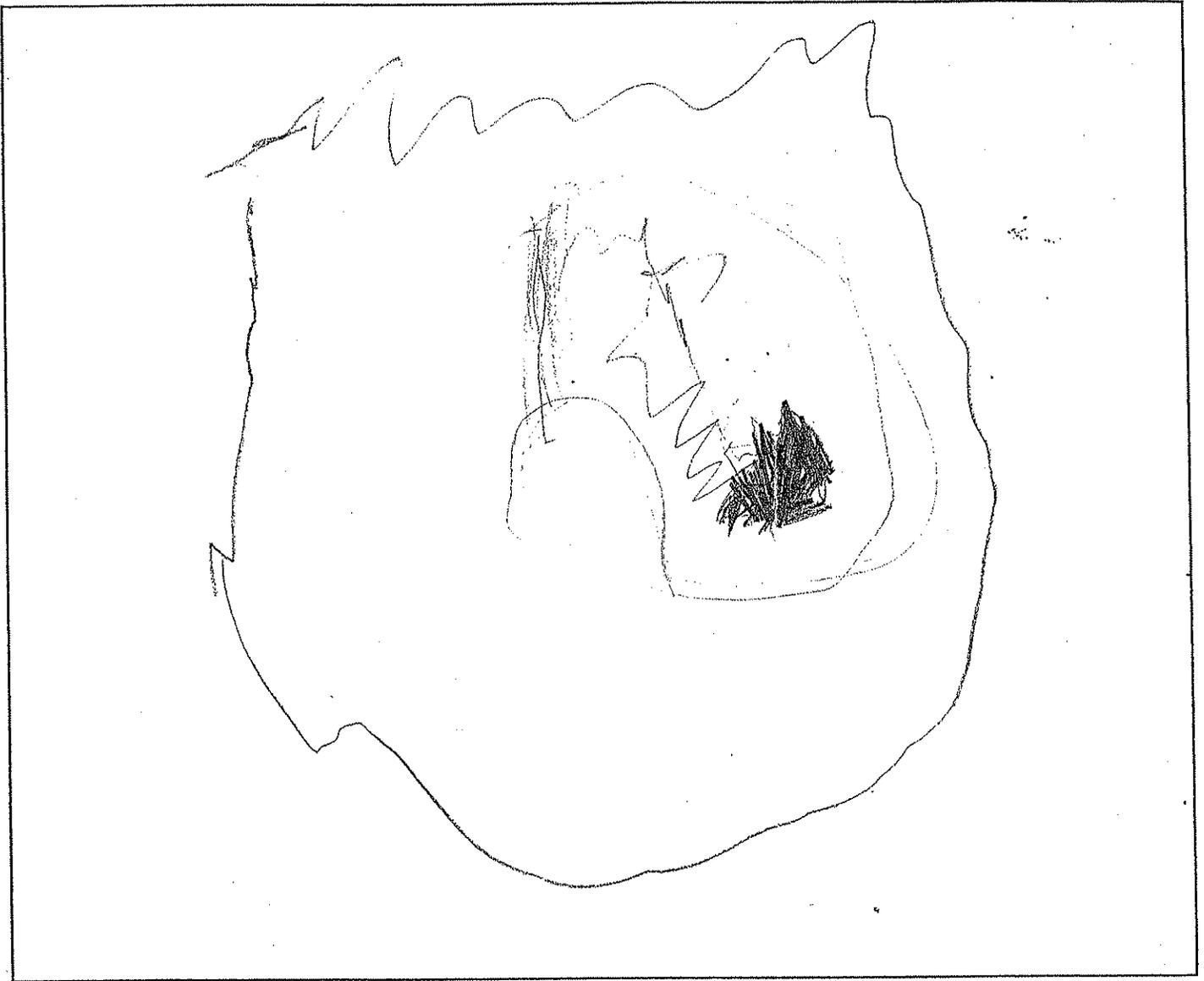
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Student: Low
-ELL
- Fine motor
- Sep. - Jan.

September



• January



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