



West Central Area Schools  
District #2342  
Local Literacy Plan

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# West Central Area Schools

## Local Literacy Plan

### 2011 Minnesota Statute: 120B.12

#### Reading Proficiency no later than the end of Grade 3.

Minnesota State Literacy Goal:

The state of Minnesota legislature seeks to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3 and that teachers provide comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction.

Local Literacy Plan:

A school district must adopt a local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade no later than the end of grade 3. The plan must include a process to:

1. Assess students level of proficiency
2. Notify and involve parents
3. Intervene with students who are not reading at or above grade level
4. Identify and meet staff development needs

Reading Proficiently by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade:

The state mandate requires school districts to design their programming to make sure that students are reading proficiently by the end of grade 3. A review of conducted research consistently reveals a very strong correlation between children's reading proficiency at grade 3 and rate of high school graduation. Students who are reading at grade level by the end of grade 3 consistently perform better in school for the years to come as compared to those students who are not reading proficiently at the end of grade 3. It is our responsibility to ensure that our students are college or career ready when they leave our educational system.

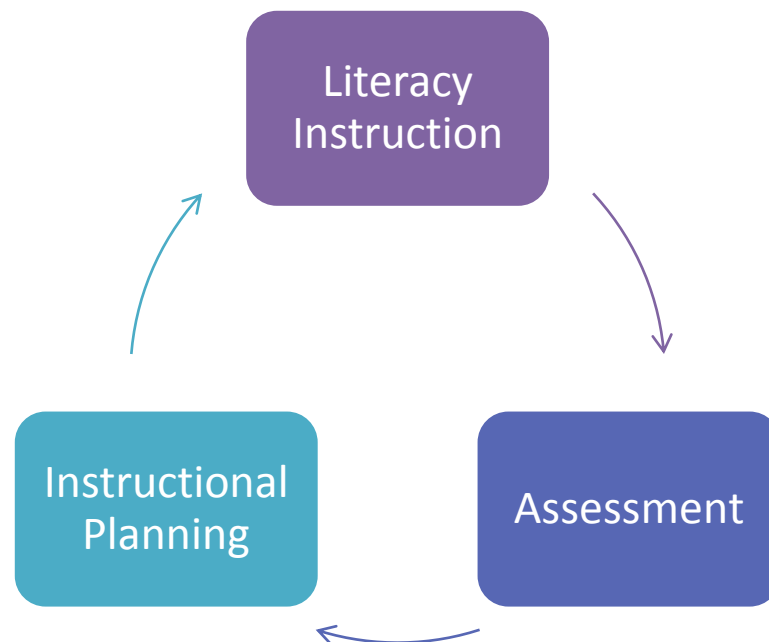
West Central Area schools are committed to ensuring that all children read proficiently by grade 3 and is making sure that all children reach their academic potential, therefore at West Central Area, ensuring that every child can read is our #1 priority.

We recognize that we are living in the information age. Without the ability to read and understand what is being read, a person will have difficulty functioning and succeeding in our society. Over the past decade alone, the amount of information requiring more advanced levels of comprehension, writing skills, problem solving abilities and critical thinking has grown tremendously. As a result, adults with limited reading skills will have fewer opportunities for success in society. Therefore, it has never been

more important to us that every child learns to read and we are committed to do whatever it takes to ensure every child in our district becomes a functional reader.

Written below are the details to the plan that the West Central Area Schools are following to ensure that necessary components are in place so that all children will be reading well by the end of 3rd grade.

Our “Whatever it Takes” philosophy is based on this ongoing model.



### **Literacy Instruction:**

During the 2013-14 school year, a reading committee has been formed to intensely study best practices in the area of elementary reading instruction. From this research, WCA has created Universal Expectations to guide literacy instruction for grades K-6.

- West Central Area Schools expects that all children will be taught at their own instructional level. Differentiation is the key to student growth. (Fountas and Pinnell, 2009).
- West Central Area Schools will use a balanced literacy approach to teach the 2010 Minnesota English Language Arts Standards with the Common Core standards embedded. (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996).
- West Central Area Schools will provide all students with the opportunity to read texts at their independent level and of their own choice every day. (Allington, 2012).

- West Central Area Schools expects reading instruction to include the essential pillars of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension. (National Reading Panel, 2000).
- West Central Area Schools expects reading instruction to span at least 90 minutes daily and contain a balance of large group, small group and/or individualized reading instruction. (Allington 2002).
  - Core whole group instruction should span 20-30 minutes daily.
  - Small group 1:1 instruction and independent reading will be approximately 60 minutes daily.
- West Central Area Schools expects children to have writing instruction and writing practice every day for a minimum of 30 minutes. (Research on Writing 2012). In addition, all students will write to persuade, explain and convey experiences as outlined by the 2010 Minnesota English Language Arts Standards.
- West Central Area Schools expects all students to read a variety of texts both fiction and non-fiction. (MN ELA Standards, 2010). We will work to read similar amounts as recommended in the 2009 study from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Washington DC. It is recommended that 4<sup>th</sup> grade students' reading is 50% literary and 50% informational. Eighth grade students should read 45% literary and 55% informational texts and seniors are recommended to read 30% literary and 70% informational.
- Scientific, research-based literacy interventions for selected students will be provided in addition to core literacy instruction and will directly target student needs. (Buffum, Mattos & Weber, 2010).

### **Assessment and Intervention:**

At WCA, we are committed to ensuring assessments administered assist us in providing instructional changes to best meet student needs. Assessments provide screening and diagnostic measures as well as monitor the progress of students performing below grade level.

Screening assessments are administered 3 times/year to provide data in the fall, winter and spring of the year. This data is used to identify any students performing below grade level.

Diagnostic assessments are given to students performing below grade level to identify the most significant area of need. This data is used to help target instruction for individual students.

Progress monitoring assessments are given to students that are identified in need of intervention. Measuring student progress is completed and reviewed on a weekly basis.

Data meetings take place monthly in each grade level and building to assist in identifying student needs and target instruction. A team consisting of the principal, classroom teachers and interventionists meet to discuss data and make changes in instruction based on student data.

Intervention Block occurs daily at both WCA North and South sites. During Intervention Block, each grade level receives 30 minutes of additional support from district interventionists to 'flood' the grade

with support. Students are broken into instructional groups based on data and are taught at their instructional levels.

Intervention for students in reading consists of small group strategy instruction based on district identified Essential Learning Outcomes based on Minnesota's 2010 ELA standards. In addition to strategy instruction, those requiring more intensive needs as determined by diagnostic assessments participate in Leveled Literacy Instruction. To assist our intervention instructors, WCA also participates in Minnesota Reading Corps where members perform specific interventions targeted to improve student reading capacity.

### **Parent Involvement:**

All Parents are provided a copy of their child's fall screening scores (IGDI's, AIMS, NWEA) at the fall Parent Teacher Conferences. If, prior to that conference, a child has been placed into an intervention based on data, the parent will receive a personal contact from the child's teacher, describing the assessment data and current performance of their child's academic progress as it relates to the need for intervention and the programming that will take place for that child. Once the initial contact has been made and the parent has verbally agreed to services, the interventionist will proceed with contacting the parent to obtain the needed parent permission in order for the child to receive the intervention. Along with the permission slip, parents will receive newsletters from school which will include helpful strategies and ideas for working on reading skills at home.

### **Professional Development:**

Quality teachers are the single greatest determinant of student achievement. In order to remain informed and up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, and new curriculum resources, providing opportunities for teachers to learn is essential.

Professional Development opportunities in reading are provided to meet universal expectations identified earlier in the Local Literacy Plan. A variety of Professional Development experiences are provided through the school year with a hybrid of traditional PD days and after school hours. In addition, professional development opportunities are part of staff meetings and Professional Learning Communities. Staff members also participate in summer learning opportunities and conferences.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

In the past years, West Central Area has identified the need for a balanced literacy approach to teaching reading in the elementary. This work is reflected in the WCA Literacy Expectations above. Through the implementation of the Literacy Expectations, WCA staff has learned and implemented the Daily 5 literacy framework as well as small group reading instruction. In addition, we are in the beginning phases of implementing Benchmark Literacy materials to meet MN ELA standards. Our preschool teachers have worked with their current Indicators of Progress and participated in Professional Learning Communities to explore and discuss Kindergarten Standards. Based on this work as well as others, the preschool staff has identified kindergarten ready expectations for those who will be beginning kindergarten.

## **English Learners**

At WCA we are in the process of understanding current EL learning trends and continuously identifying ways to meet the needs of these learners. English Learner instructors work to build opportunities for vocabulary acquisition, building of oral language and opportunities for students to be successful with reading and writing both inside and out of the traditional classroom setting.

## **Communication for Annual Reporting**

WCA shares annual reports in a variety of ways with stakeholders. The WCA Local Literacy Plan is posted on the WCA website. In addition, progress with literacy is reported in the World's Best Workforce plan also found on the WCA website.