

Weston Public Schools  
Weston, MA

PK-12 English Language Arts/Drama  
Comprehensive Program Review

**Response to the Report of the ELA/Drama External Review Committee**



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## **Introduction**

Weston has a long-standing process of program review with a structure of a departmental self-study followed by an external review (by a committee of knowledge leaders in the content area). Once the External Review Committee presents their recommendations and suggestions, the department uses information gathered in the self study and the recommendations shared to form a set of objectives and action steps.

In June 2016, the English Language Arts/Drama Self Study Report was presented to the Weston School Committee and a charge was established for an External Review Committee (ERC). This comprehensive report outlined research; responses from surveys of faculty, students, and parents/guardians; and general practices of the entire English Language Arts/Drama department, PreK-12 in the areas of Program, Curriculum, Instruction, and Communication. In November 2016, the ERC spent three days in our district visiting classrooms, conducting interviews and forums for feedback, and examining the materials we provided that support the teaching and learning in our classrooms. Standards and learning goals; course texts; examples of student writing; curriculum maps; and rubrics were some of the materials available to the committee for their feedback. Dr. Mary Ann Cappiello, Chair of the ERC, presented their findings to the School Committee on March 20, 2017.

As noted in the self study, the results of this comprehensive program review inform professional development, programmatic shifts and refinements, and identify areas for improvement over the next several years. What follows is a synthesis of the charge, recommendations/suggestions, and a set of specific objectives and actions.

Kate, Kath, and Pam would like to thank the members of the Self Study Committee, the External Review Committee, and School Committee for their support. The Self Study Committee helped us to look inward; the External Review Committee validated and identified areas for growth; and School Committee has afforded us the time to do this.

## School Committee Charge

### Program

- How might we improve or clarify the phonics, grammar, and writing experiences in our program grades PreK-12 so that all stakeholders feel confident that we are systematically building students' skills in these areas?
- Should we adopt commercial "programs" for the teaching of reading and writing, particularly at the elementary levels? What are the benefits and limitations to such uniformity?
- What can we learn from other schools' course recommendation/override/appeals processes that might benefit Weston students?
- How can we best maintain the current excellence of the secondary Drama program, primarily as a curricular entity but also being mindful that the curricular serves the co-curricular program and vice versa, especially in a time of diminishing enrollment and greater competition for students' elective choices?
- Are the levels we offer appropriate and offered at the appropriate times in the course of the program?
- How do we measure our level of success?

### Curriculum

- How might we best achieve consistent calibration of what student achievement looks like – as part of addressing the need for greater vertical alignment?
- How might we ensure that teachers have sufficient standards-aligned materials for low- and high-achieving students?
- Does our curriculum include sufficient writing experiences of sufficiently varied types?
- Does our reading curriculum include sufficiently engaging texts at varying levels for all learners?

### Instruction

- To what extent is the student experience from teacher to teacher and/or year to year as variable in quality as some respondents (parents and students) report? What might we do to address inconsistencies?
- How well do we provide sufficient differentiation in instruction to reach all learners? How can we support teachers so that they feel they can effectively differentiate?
- How well do we use assessment effectively to provide useful feedback and make instructional choices to benefit students?
- Are teachers effectively equipped with the appropriate tools to foster and provide feedback on student writing?

### Communication

- How might we more effectively communicate with parents about the program and their children's work?

## Program Design

### School Committee Charge

- How might we improve or clarify the phonics, grammar, and writing experiences in our program grades PreK-12 so that all stakeholders feel confident that we are systematically building students' skills in these areas?
- Should we adopt commercial "programs" for the teaching of reading and writing, particularly at the elementary levels? What are the benefits and limitations to such uniformity?
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- How can we best maintain the current excellence of the secondary Drama program, primarily as a curricular entity but also being mindful that the curricular serves the co-curricular program and vice versa, especially in a time of diminishing enrollment and greater competition for students' elective choices?
- Are the levels we offer appropriate and offered at the appropriate times in the course of the program?
- How do we measure our level of success?

### External Review Committee Major Recommendations

- **Articulate a clear PreK-12 spiral for Language Arts curriculum and assessment that allows for clarity for all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, administrators, community members) and facilitates greater collaboration and continuity within vertical and horizontal teams within the district. This "spiral" would build off the information that now exists in separate documents (the Weston Language Arts Standards, scope and sequences, and programs of study).**
- **Integrate Drama instruction throughout the elementary schools and middle school, and create a strand of Drama instruction, PreK-12.** (Also related to *Instruction*.)
- **Offer a more varied selection of [ELA/Drama] electives for students (HS), so that all students have the opportunity to explore individual interests and needs.**
- **Embark on a district-wide conversation about how disciplinary and content literacy can support readers and writers who understand how to write for diverse audiences and purposes across disciplines.**
- **Provide a literacy instructional coach in each school.** (Also related to *Instruction*.)

### External Review Committee Suggestions

- Develop a progression that includes: an articulated ELA continuum; clear expectations of student outcomes; identify a range of instructional options; collect exemplars of student outcomes.
- Provide more specificity about the alignment to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Language Arts or Weston's 2013 Language Arts Standards.
- Develop a universal placement and recommendation document.
- Ensure clarity of differentiation and expectations between and within College Preparatory and Honors classes at the HS.

- Develop vertical common assessments that focus on core skills.
- Provide teams with collaborative work time in order to create a program for writing and to articulate the Phonics and Phonological Awareness learning continuum; no need to adopt commercial program.

PROGRAM			
Item	Action/Activity	Expected Start Date	Expected End Date
<b>P-1</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 1.</b> To articulate the PK-12 ELA Standards and Learning Goals vertically, in alignment with the MA Curriculum Frameworks (i.e. reading, writing, speaking & listening, and language).		
P-1.1	Obtain and review new MA Curriculum Frameworks (MA CF) <b>Note:</b> Final version not yet published.	Spring 2017	Spring 2017
P-1.2	Perform a gap analysis of our current standards documents in relation to the revised MA CF.	Fall 2017	Fall 2017
P-1.3	Engage in interactive study of new standards and address any gaps.	2017-2018	Spring 2018
P-1.4	Update and develop, as needed, a progression that includes an articulated ELA continuum of learning goals for each strand (which include phonics, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary) to communicate vertical alignment.	Summer 2017	Spring 2018
P-1.5	Identify a range of instructional options for meeting learning goals.	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
<b>P-2</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 2.</b> To establish and implement a set of vertical common assessments for reading and writing.		
P-2.1	Identify key developmental reading and writing skills on which to base assessments.	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
P-2.2	Research best practices for vertical assessment in reading and writing.	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
P-2.3	Create or adopt common assessments in both reading and writing.	2017-2018	Spring 2018
P-2.4	Implement new common assessments in both reading and writing.	2018-2019	Spring 2019
P-2.5	Analyze student work in grade levels; across grade levels; and holistically, PK-12 to inform next steps, programmatically.	Spring 2019	Spring 2019
<b>P-3</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 3.</b> To include phonics instruction as part of our elementary program.		
P-3.1	Research best practices in phonics instruction.	Spring 2017	Spring 2017
P-3.2	Identify program and professional development opportunities.	Spring 2017	Spring 2017

P-3.3	Provide professional learning to Kindergarten and Grade 1 educators.	Spring 2017-Fall 2017	Fall 2017
P-3.4	Provide professional learning to Grade 2 educators.	Spring 2018	Fall 2018
<b>P-4</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 4.</b> To adopt a vertically aligned writing program, K-8.		
P-4.1	Create formal process for consideration of a writing program (See <i>Curriculum</i> below).	Spring 2017	Complete
<b>P-5</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 5.</b> To articulate a clear course recommendation & override process for ELA and across departments at the HS.		
P-5.1	Collect data from other schools about their ELA course recommendation/override/appeals process.	Spring 2017	Complete (see <i>Appendix A</i> )
P-5.2	Create uniform data points to use in process of assessing students for recommendation/override consideration.	Summer 2017	Summer 2017
P-5.3	Publish data points and recommendation/override process for ELA for the short-term.	Fall 2017	Fall 2017
P-5.4	Implement use of data points in assessing students for ELA placement.	Winter 2018	Spring 2018
P-5.5	Discuss current practices across disciplines at WHS Curriculum Cabinet.	Summer 2016	Fall 2017
P-5.6	Create a sub-committee of DHs to develop a proposal of uniform practices and policies in collaboration with the PreK-12 Curriculum Council.	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
P-5.7	Present proposal to stakeholders -- Curriculum Cabinet, School Council, Principal's Advisory Committee, PreK-12 Curriculum Council -- for suggestions/revisions.	Spring 2018	Spring 2018
P-5.8	Present finalized practices and policies as part of Program of Studies changes to School Committee.	Fall 2018	Fall 2018
P-5.9	Implement uniform practices and policies across departments.	Winter 2018	Winter 2018
<b>P-6</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 6.</b> To create opportunities for greater integration of drama into the ELA classrooms and into the elementary buildings.		
P-6.1	Develop and run Summer workshops: 1. For drama teachers to outline integration offerings;	Summer 2017	Summer 2017



	2. For MS/HS Drama and 6-12 Eng. teachers to plan ways to work collaboratively at the secondary level for greater integration		
P-6.2	Implement integration efforts as identified in summer workshop.	2017-2018	Spring 2018
P-6.3	Research drama integration at elementary levels in comparable districts.	Spring 2018	Spring 2018
P-6.4	Develop plan to implement integration at elementary level including assessing any staffing implications.	Summer 2018	Fall 2018
P-6.5	Propose to Admin Council and School Committee new integration model/plan.	Fall 2018	Fall 2018
P-6.6	If approved, implement integration model/plan in elementary schools.	Fall 2019	Ongoing
P-6.7	Refer ERC recommendations related to co-curricular aspects of drama to relevant leaders for consideration during contract negotiations, budget process, etc.	Spring 2017	Ongoing
<b>P-7</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 7.</b> To expand variety of course offerings in the HS Theater Arts program.		
P-7.1	Revise current HS drama classes to create a revised, differentiated curriculum content for each.	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
P-7.2	Present revised course descriptions to HS Curriculum Cabinet and PK-12 Curriculum Council for approval.	Fall 2017	Fall 2017
P-7.3	If approved, present to SC as part of Program of Studies revision process.	Fall 2017	Fall 2017
<b>P-8</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 8.</b> To consider the addition of Instructional Coaches.		
P-8.1	Concurrent with the leadership study in the elementary and middle schools, consider the addition of instructional coaches.	2017-2018	Spring 2018
P-8.2	If Instructional Coaches are added, define specific expectations in relation to the role of a Curriculum Specialist.	2017-2018	Spring 2018
<b>P-9</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 9.</b> To review and assess current course level offerings (CP/Honors/AP) and articulate differentiation between CP and Honors/AP courses.		
P-9.1	Review current course offerings and compare with like districts, keeping in mind the tension created between increased course offerings and the impact of shrinking enrollment.	Summer 2017	Summer 2017
P-9.2	Review current documentation of differentiation between levels and revise as needed for clarity and accuracy.	Fall 2017	Summer 2018

P-9.3	As curricular/instructional changes are developed and implemented (see <i>Curriculum</i> and <i>Instruction</i> below), incorporate articulation of differentiation between levels for grades/courses in which different levels exist.	2017-2019	Ongoing
<b>P-10</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 10.</b> To undertake inter-disciplinary review of content-specific literacy development.		
P-10.1	Undertake discussion of content-specific literacy skills across disciplines to identify areas of similarity and differences.	Summer 2017	Ongoing
P-10.2	Develop curriculum to build students' content-specific literacy skills in alignment with MA CF (see <i>Curriculum</i> objective 6).	2017-2018	Spring 2019

## Curriculum

### School Committee Charge

- How might we best achieve consistent calibration of what student achievement looks like – as part of addressing the need for greater vertical alignment?
- How might we ensure that teachers have sufficient standards-aligned materials for low- and high-achieving students?
- Does our curriculum include sufficient writing experiences of sufficiently varied types?
- Does our reading curriculum include sufficiently engaging texts at varying levels for all learners?

### External Review Committee Major Recommendations

- **We recommend that the district focus attention on creating a more transparent PreK-12 writing strand that allows for clear outcomes and common writing experiences within and across grade levels, provides students with the opportunity to build on a foundation from year to year, and offers authentic audiences for student writing throughout the community.** (Also related to *Instruction* and *Communications*)
- **We recommend that the district provide a broader diversity of texts at all levels, offering contemporary and canonical texts in a range of genres and modalities.**

### External Review Committee Suggestions

- Create consistent curriculum articulation across and within the three elementary schools.
- Identify opportunities for more varied writing assignments across genres and styles to move beyond the analytical essay, particularly at the secondary level.
- We recommend that writing curriculum and rubrics should be designed to guide students in how to create writing pieces in distinct genres and disciplines with examples and explanation.
- Review the structure of the 6th grade curriculum -- 6th Grade English and Reading & Writing Connections -- and consider modifications.
- At the secondary level, we recommend moving away from a curriculum centered on the single narrative as the norm, and a move away from teaching a book to a move towards teaching a concept, skill, or theme more explicitly via a range of texts taught concurrently.
- At the elementary level, provide more opportunities for writing instruction and for students to write.

CURRICULUM			
Item	Action/Activity	Expected Start Date	Expected End Date
<b>C-1</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 1.</b> To provide universal and targeted professional development for educators.		
C-1.1	Provide Benchmark Assessment training PK-3 and 4-5.	Summer 2016	March 2017
C-1.2	Provide Project Read training, PK-Grade 3 educators.	January 2017	March 2017
C-1.3	Provide Foundations training, Kindergarten and Grade 1 educators.	Spring 2017	Fall 2017
C-1.4	Provide Foundations training, Grade 2.	Spring 2018	Summer 2018
C-1.5	Provide introductory training in Teachers College Writing Units of Study, K-5 and “refresher” for Grade 6 educators (2 6th ELA teachers have already attended a Writing Units of Study workshop).	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
C-1.6	Provide a Teachers College Writing Units of Study Institute, K-5 educators.	Summer 2018	Fall 2018
C-1.7	Provide introductory training in Teachers College Writing Units of Study, Grades 6-8 educators.	Summer 2018	Fall 2018
C-1.8	Provide a Teachers College Writing Units of Study Institute, Grades 6-8 educators.	Summer 2019	Fall 2019
<b>C-2</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 2.</b> To create a vertical, standards-based strand of writing that builds from year to year.		
C-2.1	Research K-8 research-based writing programs.	January 2017	April 2017
C-2.2	Form committee of faculty and administrators charged to review, research, and recommend writing program.	March 2017	Complete (See Appendix B)
C-2.3	Utilize work with Teachers College program to inform review of current 6-12 writing instruction.	Summer 2017	Summer 2017
C-2.4	Provide professional development to support roll out of program implementation for K-6. ( <i>See above</i> )	Summer 2017	Ongoing

C-2.5	Develop writing curriculum that builds on Teachers College Writing Units of Study program for grades 9-12.	Summer 2018	Ongoing
C-2.6	Review, reflect, and refine implementation to improve.	2017-2019	Ongoing
<b>C-3</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 3.</b> To create a set of vertical exemplars of student writing and feedback.		
C-3.1	Share and explore the information from Writing Standards in Action ( <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/wsa/">http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/wsa/</a> ) with educators.	Spring 2017	Spring 2017
C-3.2	Collect and analyze student exemplars in order to create a vertical understanding of the progress of students as writers (see <i>Instruction</i> as well)	Fall 2018	Ongoing
<b>C-4</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 4.</b> To implement a variety of types of writing assessments; at secondary, including but not limited to analytical writing.		
C-4.1	Identify and assess current, specific common writing assignments at secondary level. (Note: elementary work will dovetail with implementation of Teachers College program.)	Spring 2017	Complete
C-4.2	Undertake research on optimal balance between analytical and other forms of writing assessment at secondary level.	Summer 2017	Fall 2018
C-4.2	In conjunction with Teachers College program introduction and implementation, assess gaps and opportunities for expansion of variety and alignment of writing assessments across PreK-12.	Summer 2017	Summer 2018
C-4.3	Develop revised writing curriculum to incorporate sufficiently varied, differentiated writing assessments that include opportunities for authentic audiences (see also <i>Communication</i> below).	Fall 2017	Spring 2019
C-4.4	Review, reflect, and refine implementation to improve.	Spring 2018	Ongoing
<b>C-5</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 5.</b> To integrate more varied and differentiated reading opportunities in the ELA curriculum.		
C-5.1	Review current range of reading opportunities to identify extent of variety and differentiation.	Spring 2017	Summer 2017
C-5.2	Develop new or revise current curriculum at each grade level to expand variety and differentiation of reading materials.	Summer 2017	Fall 2018
C-5.3	Implement revised or new curriculum, esp. student-choice reading units.	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
C-5.4	Review, reflect, and refine implementation to improve.	Summer 2018	Ongoing

<b>C-6</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 6.</b> To assess current 6th grade ELA courses and determine any appropriate revisions.		
C-6.1	Review current structure of 6th grade ELA and RWC courses and curriculum to determine efficacy in achieving current grade-level learning goals.	Fall 2017	Fall 2017
C-6.2	In conjunction with other curricular work outlined here and with the work of the committee examining school schedules, determine if an alternate structure for use of ELA time in 6th grade is appropriate.	2017-2018	Summer 2018
<b>C-7</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 7.</b> To articulate and implement curriculum for developing literacy across the curriculum (ELA, history/SS, Science) per MA CF.		
C-7.1	ELA, SS/History, and Science DHs along with elementary specialists and Asst. Superintendent meet to review and discuss literacy development across the curriculum and develop timeline for integration and implementation.	Fall 2017	Fall 2017
C-7.2	Develop new or revise current curriculum within and across disciplines that clearly identifies links and clarifies differences of literacy development in each discipline.	Summer 2018	Summer 2018
C-7.3	Implement revised or new curriculum across disciplines.	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
C-7.4	Review, reflect, and refine implementation to improve.	Summer 2019	Ongoing

## Instruction

### School Committee Charge

- To what extent is the student experience from teacher to teacher and/or year to year as variable in quality as some respondents (parents and students) report? What might we do to address inconsistencies?
- How well do we provide sufficient differentiation in instruction to reach all learners? How can we support teachers so that they feel they can effectively differentiate?
- How well do we use assessment effectively to provide useful feedback and make instructional choices to benefit students?
- Are teachers effectively equipped with the appropriate tools to foster and provide feedback on student writing?

### External Review Committee Major Recommendations

- See relevant recommendations in *Program and Curriculum* sections that will inherently impact Instruction

### External Review Committee Suggestions

- Upon completion of a Standards-based reading and writing spiral of curriculum, grade-level teachers should be provided with sufficient time and resources to collaborate and ensure relative consistency of instructional practices from class to class within the same grade.
- With the support of instructional literacy coaches, increase use of differentiated instruction in all grades.
- Replace Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) for all students with Scholastic Reading Inventory, and use the BAS system only for students who need further assessment.

INSTRUCTION			
Item	Action/Activity	Expected Start Date	Expected End Date
<b>I-1</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 1.</b> To enhance the consistency of instructional practices.		
I-1.1	Research the role of instructional coaches and consider their addition. (See above in <i>Program</i> )	2017-2018	Spring 2018
I-1.2	Continue to provide support to K-5 educators in using Fountas & Pinnell’s Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) to shorten implementation time without sacrificing instructional data that can be ascertained from this tool.	2017-2018	Ongoing
I-1.3	Develop shared understandings of structures such as Reading and Writing Workshop and Guided Reading.	2017-2018	Ongoing
I-1.4	Define and create opportunities for students to pose and investigate their own questions in response to what they read.	Fall 2017	Ongoing
I-1.5	Using MA CF and new writing curriculum, groups of PreK-12 teachers will identify, align, and share common (horizontally and vertically) language for student writing.	Fall 2018	Ongoing
<b>I-2</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 2.</b> To refine differentiation and feedback practices in order to support students at all instructional levels.		
I-2.1	Refine our battery of research-based universal screeners for early identification of students at risk for literacy learning.	Winter 2017	Spring 2018
I-2.2	Collect data via student surveys, observations, grade-level and department-level analysis, etc. to assess current efforts to support students at all instructional levels.	2017-2018	Spring 2018
I-2.3	Identify gaps in instructional support derived via data collection (see 2.1) and develop instructional approaches to address those gaps. (DCAP, reference to UDL principles, etc.).	Summer 2018-Spring 2019	Spring 2019
I-2.4	Utilizing input from other experts -- Special Education teachers/leaders, instructional coaches, and possibly external experts -- review differentiation efforts and outcomes to identify any remaining underserved cohorts.	2018-2019	Spring 2019
I-2.5	If necessary, undertake additional training in differentiation of instruction depending on results of item 2.3.	Summer 2019	Ongoing



<b>I-3</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 3.</b> To strengthen use of assessments and assessment data to inform instruction.		
I-3.1	In grade-level and department-level meetings, use DESE’s Writing Standards in Action to discuss student written work and feedback needed to foster student growth. ( <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/wsa/">http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/wsa/</a> ).	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
I-3.2	Using Weston student writing samples, educators meet to discuss and calibrate feedback.	2017-2018	Ongoing
I-3.3	Upon implementation of revised writing curriculum (see <i>Curriculum</i> above), provide teachers with grade-level and department-level meetings and release times to assess student work collaboratively, develop common exemplars, norm expected outcomes, and revise curriculum and instruction as needed.	2017-2019	Spring 2019
I-3.4	Review, reflect, and refine feedback processes as needed.	Summer 2018	Ongoing

## Communication

### School Committee Charge

- How might we more effectively communicate with parents about the program and their children’s work?

### External Review Committee Major Recommendations

- We recommend that the district improve communication about Language Arts and Drama curriculum, instruction, and assessment with the Weston community.

### External Review Committee Suggestions

- Develop electronic portfolios that will follow students year-to-year and enable greater reflection and individual goal-setting.
- The Committee recommends that teachers, department heads, literacy coordinators, and principals communicate with parents regarding student work, sharing what writing assignments students have been working on.
- The Committee encourages all teachers and administrators within the district to consider student writing for authentic purposes and audiences. Writing should be available in and out of school.
- Develop communication habits and methods with one another, within and between schools.

COMMUNICATION			
Item	Action/Activity	Expected Start Date	Expected End Date
Co-1	<b>OBJECTIVE 1.</b> To foster communication about student experiences, both annually and over the entire PK-12 continuum.		
Co-1.1	Identify an appropriate tool to create individual, digital student portfolios with Technology Department.	Spring 2017-Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Co-1.2	Provide professional development to educators on how to best use a digital portfolio and the expectations of use.	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Co-1.3	Present portfolios to parent/guardians through conferences, back-to-school-nights, principal coffees, etc.	Spring 2018	Ongoing

Co-1.4	With the website committee, create a district-wide (teaching and learning) webpage of student, products, presentations, and successes.	Summer 2017	Ongoing
<b>Co-2</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 2.</b> To provide opportunities for dialogue between the ELA/Drama Program and the community.		
Co-2.1	Increase use of school and district webpages and other public forums (Twitter, local publications) to promote awareness of ELA/Drama program, curriculum, and student outcomes.	Fall 2016	On-going
Co-2.2	Upon completion of revised standards, learning goals, and curriculum documentation, publish via district web pages and make known via various public forums (parent coffees, back-to-school nights, etc.).	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
Co-2.3	Provide public forums for families and community members about specific programs that exist currently and that are more recently added (i.e., Benchmark Assessment System; Foundations; Teachers College Writing Units of Study; Project Read; reading interventions; etc.).	Fall 2017	Ongoing
Co-2.4	Undertake targeted data gathering from recent graduates about preparedness for post-secondary experiences	Spring 2018	Ongoing
<b>Co-3</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 3.</b> To expand the use of authentic audiences for student work within and beyond the community.		
Co-3.1	Assess current use of authentic audiences for PreK-12 ELA/Drama students' work.	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Co-3.2	Identify and develop additional opportunities for authentic audiences for students' work, especially those that will connect students to the community (eg., MacBreakfast; publishing celebrations K-6; integrated projects).	2016-2017	Ongoing
Co-3.3	Implement use of additional authentic audiences for students' work.	Spring 2019	On-going
<b>Co-4</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 4.</b> To enhance communication across elementary schools.		
Co-4.1	Create a district calendar of grade level and cross-grade level meetings to focus on shared practices and looking at student work.	Spring 2017	Spring 2018

**Appendix A**

**Current Course Recommendation/Override Processes  
 “Like” School Districts**

District	Process
Belmont	Teacher recommendation for level; parent/student can request override to be reviewed by DH; if placed, must stay in course for a quarter before dropping level.
Dover-Sherborn	Upperclass students in CP with a B+ average who desire to enter the Honors program may submit a writing portfolio that includes both in- and out-of-class writing for review and consideration by the English Department. The English Department will also seek comments from the student’s present and past English teachers.
Lexington	Must have teacher recommendation but parents can request override; students must complete a writing sample process for placement review by committee. Teachers also explain why NOT recommended, student has to write something about why they want it, and Guidance has some input, too. A small % of students are placed out of this.
Lincoln-Sudbury	Incoming freshmen must have A- avg. and teacher rec. for automatic placement in Honors; those with a B+ average may request a portfolio review by the department; in all other years, students must have A- average at the end of first semester in order to be recommended, and they must maintain that average 2nd semester to secure their placement. Those with B+ can request a portfolio review for consideration.
Needham	Teachers make recommendations based on what they consider the most appropriate level/course; students can select other levels if they disagree.
Wayland	For Honors/AP: must have B- in same level prior year or A- in lower level and obtain teacher recommendation; overrides can be requested but are not guaranteed, and not allowed if student received less than a C+ at Honors level or a B+ in CP level in prior year.
Wellesley	Teachers make recommendations, but students can select based on their preferences.

**Appendix B**

<p><b>Why?</b></p> <p><b>Writing matters – and we need both horizontal and vertical alignment in WPS.</b></p> <p><b>Our Charge</b></p> <p><b>Recommend a set of curricular materials that will become our “backbone” to the experiences students have in writing, PK-5.</b></p>		
Date	Time	Agenda/Topic
March 17	2:30-3:30 pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share Why?</li> <li>2. Scope of the Work</li> <li>3. Introduction of two curricula</li> <li>4. 30,000 ft. view               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strengths</li> <li>b. Challenges</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
March 27	2:20-4:00 pm	<p><b>Looking at Student Work (writing samples from two curricula)</b></p> <p><b>WHY? Student product may help us to understand process and focus of specific curriculum foci.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome and Review of Charge</li> <li>2. Introduce protocol</li> <li>3. Review student work using protocol</li> <li>4. Reflect and synthesize learning</li> <li>5. Preview Thursday</li> </ol>

<b>March 30</b>	<b>8:00-4:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Visits and Videos (visit district and watch videos)</b></p> <p>8:00 Visit to Peirce School, Newton          1:00 Welcome Back and Shift to Core Ready          1:10 Video ELA Writing introduction (NC teachers)          1:15 Explore ToolKit website          1:45 Share findings          2:00 Classroom Video (Grade 1)          2:15 Break          2:30 Refine Questions for Core Ready leaders          2:45/3:00 Phone call          3:30 Wrap up</p>
<b>March 31</b>	<b>2:20-4:00 pm</b>	<p><b>Synthesis and Recommendations</b></p> <p>2:20 Individual: Silent writing reflections          2:30 Partner/Small Group: Review two curricula with Strengths and Challenges          3:00 Whole Group: Share out Recommendation and Rationale</p>

**Evaluation Criteria:**

- Free from bias
- Rigor of student experience
- Who does the thinking? (teacher or student?)
- Accessibility
  - For students (with disabilities, ELL)
  - For teachers
    - PD availability
    - Clarity
    - Ease of implementation
    - Time to implement (not too much to “cover”)
- -Alignment/Complement to other content
  - Within ELA (spelling, vocab, reading)
  - Outside of ELA (science, social studies)
- Variety of experiences/texts
- Support materials (graphic organizers, rubrics)
- Assessments
- K-8?
- Opinions of other users
- Cost

## Appendix C

### Massachusetts Adopts Revised English Language Arts and Math Standards

#### *State educators contributed to standards unique to Massachusetts*

**MALDEN** - The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted unanimously today to adopt revised learning standards in math and in English language arts and literacy. The revised standards are unique to Massachusetts and embody the Commonwealth's commitment to maintaining the highest quality curriculum standards in the nation.

The [revised standards](#) are the product of [more than a year of work by Massachusetts educators](#) and ESE staff. Educators drew from their experience with the existing standards, and the recommendations also reflect feedback received through public comment, including through an online survey.

In English language arts and literacy, the changes include:

- Multiple cross-references to make the reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language standards more coherent;
- Instructional examples and samples of student writing from Massachusetts classrooms to clarify the meaning of the standards; and
- An explanation of how literacy instruction — particularly in the early elementary years — is intertwined with mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, and other subjects in a well-balanced curriculum.

In math, the changes include:

- Stronger learning progressions for pattern recognition in the early grades; the measurement of circles in the middle grades; and ratio, rate and proportions in the middle grades; and
- Added guidance for making decisions about course sequences that includes pathways to calculus and other advanced mathematics courses.

"Massachusetts' ability to continually adapt and update our educational standards is an important part of why our students and public schools lead the nation in many categories," **Governor Charlie Baker said**. "I am confident that the standards adopted today, with collaboration from educators, will continue to help successfully guide our students throughout their Massachusetts education."

"I am happy to have voted for these revised standards, and I believe they continue Massachusetts' tradition of high expectations for all students," **said Education Secretary James Peysers**.

"While many people have expressed concerns about the role that the Common Core State Standards played in developing our 2010 standards, I want to make it clear that the 2017 standards are the Commonwealth's own," **said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester**. "These revised standards were developed by Massachusetts educators and represent the input of hundreds of the Commonwealth's preK-12 and higher education faculty. I am confident that the standards adopted today will help prepare students for success after high school."

The standards adopted today describe what students should know and be able to do in English language arts and literacy and in math at each grade level. The standards are not a curriculum, and they do not specify which materials teachers should use. In Massachusetts, curriculum, materials and methods are determined at the local level.

The revised standards are the result of a vote the Board took in November 2015 on Commissioner Chester's recommendation to work with Massachusetts preK-12 educators and higher education faculty to identify changes to the English language arts and literacy and math standards that would ensure the Commonwealth's standards match those of the most aspirational education systems in the world and prepare students well for college, careers, and civic participation.

The Department will help districts implement the new standards starting with the 2017-18 school year. The next-generation MCAS will be aligned to the standards starting in spring 2018.