

Overall Comments on Oklahoma English Language Standards

It is clear that a great deal of thought and work has gone into the development of these standards. It is particularly good to see separate standards for Research and Multimodal Literacy. I have, however, noted some areas that could still use some refinement. My main concern is that for some standards, there is not sufficient specificity at each grade level to ensure a steady progression or consistency across schools and classrooms. Below is a general overview of the issues I noticed. I have made specific comments, edits, and suggestions on the document itself. I hope you find these helpful.

1. Language in parts of the introductory and Guiding Principles sections difficult and unclear for lay readers.
2. Grammar/syntax errors throughout the document (although perhaps it has not yet gone through a thorough style edit).
3. There could be a stronger emphasis on citing appropriate evidence to support conclusions.
4. Since there will be a certain amount of overlap across standards, will items be able to be aligned to multiple standards for the purposes of assessment?
5. Inconsistent labeling of headers. For example, in the Speaking/Listening section, the row headers on the first page are "Reading/Listening" and "Writing/Speaking," but the headers on the remaining pages of the Speaking/Listening section are just "Reading" and "Writing." On a related issue, if the subsections of Speaking/Listening are organized with Listening standards followed by Speaking standards, then I suggest renaming the overarching standard "Listening and Speaking" to be consistent with the individual standards in the section.
6. It is difficult to track the vertical progression of the standards across the grades since the numbering convention is not consistent across the grades. While I realize that not all standards have counterparts in all grades, it would be beneficial for users of the standards if there were more consistency in the numbering system.
7. Some standards need additional clarification, while the language in others can be simplified.
8. There is some confusing overlap between the Listening and Speaking standards. For example, in the Pre-K Reading standard, the description for PK.1.R.1 is "Students will actively listen and speak. . . .", even though other speaking standards fall under the Writing section. It seems as though the division between Listening and Speaking is somewhat difficult to cleanly maintain.
9. Factors distinguishing one grade level of a standard for another are not always present in the language of the standard. For example, the same description may be used for several grades in a row. This might make it difficult for teachers to adjust curriculum appropriately to show reflect progress as the grades ascend.
10. Except for the standards for Reading Foundations for the younger grades, Standard 2 (Reading and Writing Process) devotes three standards to a relatively small reading focus (summary, main idea and genre) in which each of the standards has a rather limited scope, while Standard 3 (Critical Reading and Writing) encompasses a larger number of standards, with many of those standards encompassing a wide variety of aspects. This creates the necessity to keep these standards general enough so as not to be unwieldy, but this generality also makes it difficult to see the growth from grade to grade. In addition, while the heading for Standard 2 Reading refers to texts from a variety of historical and cultural perspectives, there are no statements within the standard that support or provide guidance for this. Rather, the emphasis seems to be on summary, main idea, and genre.

11. Standard 3, Reading: The description of the standard refers to “all literary and informational genres (*e.g., fiction, nonfiction, informational text, poetry, & drama*) from a variety of historical, cultural, ethnic, and global perspectives.” However, there are few specifics regarding particular genres (*e.g., when or how to focus on which genres*) and little mention of how to use historical/cultural perspectives. More guidance would be helpful to teachers.
12. Standard 3, Writing: Teachers and students could use more specific guidance re composing writing in the different modes. Also, while counterclaims are recognized at 8th grade, the standards don’t ask students to actually address them until 11th grade.
13. Standard 4: Will there be tools (*e.g., an appendix*) to help teachers and parents understand the level of complexity and sophistication expected at the different grades? Since the standards language does not change that much within blocks of grades and does not offer many specifics, that kind of a tool would be helpful.
14. Standard 5, Language: More specificity would help provide guidance to teachers and students. For example, at what grade should students focus on relative pronouns or progressive verb tenses? As another example, the description for 2.5.R.2 reads: Students will recognize different types and tenses of verbs. However, it is not clear what types and tenses students are expected to know by 5th grade.
15. Glossary: suggest adding definitions for academic vocabulary and for informative/explanatory writing.
16. Glossary: I’ve made a number of suggested edits on the document in order to maintain a consistent style among the entries.
17. Minor note: check to be sure spacing, font and font size is consistent throughout the document. There seem to be some shifts currently.