

Superintendent Hofmeister and State Board of Education,

January 21, 2016

As members of the English Language Arts Consortium, we would like to express our support of the new Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts. Throughout the instructional design and process of formulating new standards, members of the consortium have actively participated. During the window when draft 3 of the standards was open for public comments, we shared the draft with the English teachers in our districts. Based on our careful analysis of the standards, we provided feedback.

Currently and looking ahead to the future, we know Oklahoma students will need to be proficient in communication, reading, and writing. Every standard now includes a reading and writing strand delineated by grade-level. This inclusion supports the importance of teaching writing tied to text.

Realizing these academic standards require longevity to meet the needs of our students both now and in the future, standard 7 “Multimodal Literacies” addresses how students will acquire information. As information continues to be shared digitally, in print, and in interactive texts, standard 7 will enable teachers and students to interact with text in multiple ways both now and in the future. Standard 7 will assist in preparing students for the skills necessary in the 21st Century and beyond.

Collectively, we are enthusiastic about the prospect of working with the 8 English Language Arts Standards. We appreciate the inclusion of standard 8 “Independent Reading and Writing” because it validates the high priority we feel is necessary to promote reading for a variety of purposes. We know that a typical college freshman must have reading stamina to read 600-800 words on average, per week. Standard 8 ensures students will have multiple opportunities to read and explore text for both academic and personal reasons.

We remain optimistic as we await the final legislative approval of the Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts.

Respectfully,
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