

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY**

**6-8 LANGUAGE ARTS
PROGRAM EVALUATION**

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**Bernards Township Public Schools
Basking Ridge, New Jersey**

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*This document has been aligned with the
New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.*

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Changes Impacting Language Arts Instruction Since 1996

The most significant changes in Language Arts at William Annin Middle School directly result from the explosive growth in student population. As the school grew from a population of 700 students in 1996 to the current population of 1240, the faculty and administration faced many challenges including multiple hirings of new and, in some instances, less-experienced staff, decrease in classroom space, and increase in class size.

The number of staff has increased proportionally with the student population. The department has a curriculum supervisor who is responsible for kindergarten through twelfth grade Language Arts. Currently the department has twenty-four teachers. Ten teachers are non-tenured with one new hire expected for 2005-2006 to accommodate growth. Six teachers have bachelor's degrees, three have bachelor's-plus-thirty, ten have Master's degrees and five have Master's plus thirty.

As the New Jersey Department of Education and the requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act raised expectations for student performance, several decisions were made to focus attention on quality Language Arts instruction. Cycle courses such as Study Skills and Thinking Skills were replaced with a greater emphasis on integrating such concepts into day-to-day instruction. The increased student population necessitated the shrinking of the cycle courses to six weeks. A new Science Fiction elective will be offered for grade eight in the 2005-2006 school year.

The in-class support model was introduced in 1995-1996 in order to better serve the special education population. Co-teacher teams have been trained on various occasions, and, most recently, co-teaching strategies have been emphasized in multiple in-class support sections. These strategies include the following: parallel teaching, team teaching, alternative teaching, one teaching / one observing, and station teaching.

In order to keep class sizes at a manageable load for the rigorous writing instruction expected at each grade level, additional teachers were hired outside of the grade level team structure to alleviate the pupil load in English classes. Student enrollment in Communication Arts sections sometimes crept up to twenty-seven to twenty-eight students. Additional staff will be added in 2005-2006 to relieve the overcrowding in those sections.

Teachers no longer have the luxury of having their own rooms. World language classes, as well as other courses, frequently fill classrooms during prep, duty, and lunch periods. The additional teachers' desks, chairs, and texts in shared rooms have made space an increasingly rare commodity. Similarly, rooms previously devoted to computer laboratories have been converted to classrooms. Mobile laptop carts (each housing sixteen computers) have been purchased to bridge the gap left by repurposed computer labs.

Language Arts Philosophy -- Grades – 6-12

The Bernards Township School District is committed to student-centered classrooms, which nurture appreciation for the Language Arts, encourage the students' ownership of individual learning, and enhance self-esteem through increased interaction with the language's intricacies.

In order to develop effective communication skills, appreciation of the written/spoken words and enthusiasm for the language, the Language Arts program encompasses reading writing, listening, speaking and viewing. The literature-based, differentiated, student-centered curriculum provides the essential integration. By acknowledging the students' creative risk-taking and encouraging student decision-making/ problem solving, the program strives to help students develop as life-long learners. The increasing global scope of society, the dynamic influence of technology, and the evolving cognitive research all necessitate the continued implementation of the most effective teaching strategies. These strategies provide creative, unique and authentic Language Arts experiences to accommodate various learning styles.

The Bernards Township School District is committed to fostering literacy and communication competency so students can successfully understand and enjoy today's complex world.

Revised 11-17-04

Language Arts District Exit Goals

The students will use appropriate and effective reading process strategies to construct meaning from text.

The students will react, respond and apply critical-thinking/problem-solving strategies to language arts experiences through reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing.

The students will develop as lifelong learners who demonstrate a positive attitude toward reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing.

The students will take risks as communicators.

The students will apply current and emergent technologies to language arts experiences.

Course Offerings 2004-2005

The Language Arts program offers sixteen courses which are composed of required, elective, and cycle courses. These are divided into 117 sections with an average class size of twenty-three.

| Course Title | Grade Level | Semester/ Full Year/ Cycle |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Reading | 6 | Full Year |
| English | 6 | Full Year |
| Communication Arts | 7 | Full Year |
| English | 7 | Full Year |
| Communication Arts | 8 | Full Year |
| English | 8 | Full Year |

| Course Title | Grade Level | Semester/ Full Year/ Cycle |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Writing | 6 | Cycle |
| Literacy Support | 6 | Full Year |
| Reader's Workshop | 7 | Full Year |
| Reader's Theater | 8 | Semester |
| Essentials of Language Arts | 7 | Semester |
| Essential of Language Arts | 8 | Semester |
| Reader's Workshop | 8 | Semester |
| Advanced Writing | 8 | Semester |
| Writing and Film | 8 | Semester |
| Science Fiction | 8 | Semester (2005-2006) |

Review of Current Program

Instructional Strategies

Over the past five years, the Language Arts staff has explored several instructional strategies via department meetings, staff development, in-services and teacher-supervisor conferencing. Such strategies, which have become standard practices, include the following:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Literature Circles | Elements of Story |
| Cooperative Learning Exercises | Critical Reading |
| Socratic Seminars | Questioning Strategies |
| Writing Workshops | Peer- and Self-Editing |
| Sustained Silent Reading | Test Construction |
| Portfolio Assessment | Word Walls |
| Technology-aided Strategies | Open-ended Responses |
| Summarizing | Visual and Audio Prompts |
| Journaling | Speech/ Presentation Techniques |

Interdisciplinary Provisions

The middle school team structure facilitates cross-disciplinary units at each grade level. Grade six students enjoy the richness and diversity of the Medieval Unit, while grade seven completes a thorough study of the Holocaust and Earth Day. Grade eight directs its attention to the appreciation of diversity and prejudice reduction through thematic units covering the human need for acceptance, belonging, and love.

Remediation, Enrichment, and Acceleration Provisions

Several opportunities currently exist to meet the diverse needs of the Annin student population. In order to meet the remedial needs of students who score below average on standardized reading tests, a Readers' Workshop course is offered as an elective for seventh and eighth graders. Students needing specific assistance with the middle school curriculum are enrolled in the Literacy Support program in order to help identify specific concerns and provide specialized assistance. The Media Center maintains a collection of electronic books to support literature used in class. Language Arts teachers have increased their use of in-class writing conferences to help meet the needs of all students throughout the writing process. Additionally, the increased use of the literature circle strategy provides teachers with opportunities to differentiate instruction. Multiple titles at varied levels help teachers match readers to text.

Opportunities exist to help students enrich their Language Arts experiences via extracurricular programs such as *Viking Times* (the middle school monthly newspaper); Reading, Feeding Frenzy Book Club; and writing contests, including one from the New Jersey Council of Teachers of English.

All sixth and seventh grade students participate in the Enrichment cycle. The coursework incorporates active student learning, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving strategies. Students across all grade levels who further excel in academics may be invited to participate in the R.E.A.C.H. program, which offers the students an opportunity to expand upon some Enrichment cycle topics.

Facilities, Equipment, Technology, and Resources

The Language Arts department is integrated throughout the entire building. The department office is located in William Annin, Room 100, and provides easy access to supervisor resources. The Media Center offers both facilities and instruction that support development of research skills and encourage students to become lifelong readers. The Media Center also houses professional journals, videos, and audio collections, and provides assistance in locating Internet sites, which may facilitate instruction. Classrooms are equipped with dictionaries, thesauruses, computers, overhead projectors, televisions, and VCRs. DVD players and LCD projectors are also available upon request.

Provisions to Address Cultural Diversity

Consideration of cultural diversity permeates ongoing curriculum development and modification processes. Authors representing various geographic regions, gender and social roles, ethnic groups and cultures, and other alternative voices are found in the Prentice Hall anthologies and continue to be implemented within the literary catalogs of William Annin Middle School Language Arts courses. Some titles and authors include the following:

- *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman
- *New Kid in Town* by Janet Bode
- *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor
- “Choice: A Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.” by Alice Walker
- “I, Too, Sing America” by Langston Hughes
- “Two Kinds” by Amy Tan
- “Zlateh the Goat” by Isaac Bashevis Singer
- “The Circuit” by Francisco Jimenez
- “Becky and the Wheels and Brake Boys” by James Berry
- “Jackie Robinson: Justice at Last” by Geoffrey Ward & Ken Burn

Staff Development

The Language Arts staff participates in a range of district-offered staff development opportunities. Staff college courses, including Essential Elements of Instruction, Cooperative Learning, Active Learning in the Language Arts Class, Literature Circles, Learning Styles/Teaching Styles, and Classroom Management, focus on instructional and classroom management strategies as well as specific approaches applicable to Language Arts teaching. The staff also participates in courses to enhance their technological abilities both in the classroom and in preparation work. These include courses such as Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft PowerPoint, Gradekeeper, Inspiration, and Finding and Evaluating Internet Web Pages.

At department and grade level meetings, teachers cooperatively address topics such as:

- Current literary trends
- Poetry in the classroom
- Active student learning strategies
- District writing sample—planning, implementation and assessment
- Reading comprehension strategies
- Vocabulary development strategies
- Report Style Manual—implementation and updating
- Data analysis of test scores

Teachers new to the district attend seminars and workshops that articulate the district's learning expectations, school procedures, and preferred implementation of Language Arts strategies. Experienced teachers may serve as mentors for their colleagues to guide the development of inexperienced staff.

Teachers attend in-service training on topics such as holistic scoring and rigor and relevance. In addition, staff members may subscribe to publications such as the *English Journal* and the *New Jersey Council of Teachers of English* publications. Thus, improvement is an ongoing process within the department.

Curriculum Evaluation

Strengths

Overall, the curriculum offered by the Language Arts department has several strengths. Genres, such as poetry, drama, novel, short story and essay, vary throughout the courses. In certain courses, students are exposed to nontraditional forms of narratives. Thematic courses focus on multiple genres per unit. Also, most courses offer multifaceted assessments, such as portfolios and cooperative learning, in addition to traditional evaluation. Another positive aspect is that most learning styles are addressed specifically throughout the curricula. A large majority of the curricula have been revised or written since 2002.

Recommendations

- Expand the types of literature available to the students to include modern, contemporary and postmodern offerings.
- Increase in-class writing process time.
- Provide a broad scope of activities related to the district rigor and relevance goals.

Comparisons to Other Districts

| District | School | Structure | Instructional Time | Average Class Size | Grade Enrollment | Cost Per Pupil |
|---------------------|--------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Bernards | WAMS | MS Team 6-8 | 5 H 33 min | 22 | 396 | \$10,991 |
| Chatham | CMS | House Plan 6-8 | 5 H 50 min | 23 | 233 | \$11,858 |
| Hillsborough | HMS | Not Available 7-8 | 5 H 49 min | 25 | 619 | \$10,039 |
| Holmdel | WSI | Not Available 7-8 | 6 H 10 min | 15 | 295 | \$10,127 |
| Livingston | HMS | Not Available 7-8 | 5 H 43min | 19 | 381 | \$13,301 |
| Livingston | MPMS | Not Available 6 | 5 H 43 min | 19 | 386 | \$13,301 |
| Millburn | MMS | MS Team 6-8 | 5 H 40 min | 22 | 337 | \$12,060 |
| Montgomery | MMS | MS Team 6-8 | 5 H 58 min | 25 | 393 | \$9,959 |
| Princeton | JWMS | 2 House Plan 6-8 | 5 H 50 min | 22 | 229 | \$12,915 |

Staff Data

Data is reported in percentages

| Pupil/Teacher Ratio | BA | MA | DR | Years Experience | Turnover |
|---|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Bernards 10.5 | 39.0 | 59.3 | 1.7 | 6 | 14.9 |
| Chatham 11.9 | 41.3 | 58.7 | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Hillsborough 9.8 | 51.5 | 47.7 | .8 | 10 | 11.1 |
| Holmdel 13.1 | 30.4 | 67.4 | 2.2 | 11 | 8.9 |
| Livingston Grade 6 9.5 Grades 7-8 10.3 | 45.2 41.6 | 54.8 54.5 | 0 3.9 | 9 9 | 2.5 0 |
| Millburn 11.5 | 38.5 | 57.3 | 4.2 | 8 | 18.1 |
| Montgomery 12.7 | 57.7 | 41.2 | 1.0 | 6 | 2.2 |
| Princeton 10.9 | 40.3 | 52.2 | 7.5 | 6 | 9.5 |

No Child Left Behind

Comparisons to Other Districts

| District | County | School | Adequate Yearly Progress 2004-2005 | Number of Indicators Met |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Bernards | Somerset | WAMS | Passed | 41/41 |
| Chatham | Morris | CMS | Passed | 41/41 |
| Hillsborough | Somerset | HMS | Failed | 40/41 |
| Holmdel | Monmouth | WSI | Passed | 41/41 |
| Livingston | Essex | HMS | Passed | 41/41 |
| Millburn | Essex | MMS | Passed | 41/41 |
| Montgomery | Somerset | MMS | Failed | 40/41 |
| Princeton | Mercer | JWMS | Passed | 41/41 |

Adequate Yearly Progress for 2004-2005

Information based on data gathered from:

<http://www.state.nj.us/njded/title1accountability/profiles/04>

Instructional Strategies

Strengths

The Language Arts curricula at William Annin Middle School meet or exceed the curricula and content area standards provided by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. Specific areas of strength are directly reflected in specific curricula and lessons offered by the Language Arts teachers. In particular, students encounter a wide range of print and non-print texts and literature. To interpret these texts, students are encouraged to use a variety of strategies that appeal to a wide range of learning styles. Throughout this experience, students use literature and text to compose a variety of writing pieces. Formal research supports their writing and speaking assignments. These real-life skills are then applied to their roles as members of the community, both in and out of class.

Multiple learning styles, such as those accessible through visual, verbal, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches, are implemented through diverse teaching strategies. Students are able to comprehend, interpret, and evaluate various literary forms that are apparent in all Language Arts curricula. These activities include cooperative learning, use of the fine arts, music, and performance.

Through department meetings, teachers have opportunities to communicate instructional skills, share materials, and explore teaching methods used at each grade level. This assures a continuum of student development.

Teachers at William Annin comply with the district practice of active student participation in all courses. Methods are introduced through staff college and implemented in the classroom.

Recommendations

New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards are addressed throughout the Language Arts curricula. Additional improvements are possible in the following areas:

- Provide students further in-class practice using spoken and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
- Allow more department meeting time for cross grade level discussions.
- Incorporate discussion of high school curriculum into department meetings in order to assure adequate preparation of students exiting William Annin.
- Consult rigor and relevance criteria when constructing lesson plans.

Curricular Alignment

The desired outcomes for Language Arts instruction are based on New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards. For Language Arts, there are five standards that must be addressed by the curricula. They include the following:

3.1 (Reading) All students will understand and apply the knowledge of sounds, letters, and words in written English to become independent and fluent readers, and will read a variety of materials and texts with fluency and comprehension.

3.2 (Writing) All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

3.3 (Speaking) All students will speak in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

3.4 (Listening) All students will listen actively to information from a variety of sources in a variety of situations.

3.5 (Viewing and Media Literacy) All students will access, view, evaluate, and respond to print, non-print, and electronic texts and resources.

The curriculum in Bernards Township has been aligned to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards through a program of curriculum revision. Every student graduating from Ridge High School will meet or exceed all New Jersey Core Content standards as measured by the cumulative progress standards.

Bernards Township Schools
District Testing Report
Fall 2004

The Fall 2004 Testing Report includes the New Jersey Department of Education assessments, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA).

Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA)

The GEPA was administered to all eighth-grade students in March 2004. Scores on the GEPA range from 100 to 300 as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Partially Proficient | 100-199 |
| Proficient | 200-249 |
| Advanced Proficient | 250-300 |

Percent at or above State Standards (District) – Grade 8

| Student Population | Percent |
|--------------------|---------|
| LA (GE) | 99.1 |
| LA (SE) | 87.0 |
| LA (All) | 97.4 |

This chart shows the district's GEPA mean scores from 2000 – 2004 for general education, special education and all students.

District Mean Scale Scores by Year

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| LA (GE) | 238.0 | 236.7 | 241.6 | 242.1 | 236.6 |
| LA (SE) | 211.0 | 203.3 | 206.9 | 213.7 | 214.0 |
| LA (All) | N/A | N/A | 236.6 | 238.4 | 233.4 |

Note: All scores were not reported before 2002.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

This chart represents the ITBS scores for William Annin students in grades 6 and 7.

Percentile Rank of Average Standard Scores 2002-2004

| Year | Total Reading | | Total Language | |
|------|---------------|----|----------------|----|
| | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| 2002 | 77 | 84 | 80 | 80 |
| 2003 | 78 | 82 | 82 | 78 |
| 2004 | 79 | 81 | 83 | 79 |

Analysis of the Standardized Test Scores

Strengths

William Annin students consistently score above state standards for both the ITBS and GEPA tests. In addition, students equal or surpass the schools that are in the same district factor group as Bernards Township (refer to “Other District Data” chart).

Recommendations

While test scores are strong, they indicate that additional improvement in reading instruction should focus on critical thinking skills, such as drawing conclusions and critiquing literature. In addition, results show that special education students require the same type of test preparation as regular education students for optimal results.

Perceptions of the Language Arts Program Climate Survey Issued in 2004

Response choices are Strongly Agree (SA)/ Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D)/ Strongly Disagree (SD), or Not Applicable (N/A). *The following data is reported as percentages.*

| Statement | SA/A | N | D/SD | N/A |
|---|-------------|----------|-------------|------------|
| Parent Opinion Inventories | | | | |
| Our school is preparing students to deal with issues and problems they will face in the future. | 67.9 | 18.3 | 12.1 | 1.7 |
| Our school is doing a good job in preparing students to continue their education at more advanced levels. | 83.5 | 8.7 | 5.2 | 2.6 |
| Our school is doing a good job in preparing students to enter the work force. | 53.1 | 20.9 | 9.5 | 16.5 |
| In our school students have access to a variety of resources to help them succeed in learning, such as technology, media centers, and libraries. | 92.1 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 0.9 |
| Our school is doing a good job in English/ Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening). | 87.7 | 4.4 | 6.1 | 1.8 |
| The educational program offered to students at this school is of high quality. | 88.5 | 7.0 | 4.5 | 0.0 |
| Teachers hold high expectations for student learning. | 86.7 | 9.7 | 3.6 | 0.0 |
| Student Opinion Inventories | | | | |
| My schoolwork is challenging and requires my best effort. | 65.0 | 25.1 | 9.2 | 0.7 |
| Our school provides students with educational programs that are appropriate to our learning needs. | 74.6 | 16.3 | 7.5 | 1.6 |
| Our school is preparing students to deal with issues and problems they will face in the future. | 62.7 | 22.2 | 14.0 | 1.1 |
| Homework that I am expected to complete helps me improve my learning. | 41.5 | 26.5 | 31.4 | 0.6 |
| In our school students have access to a variety of resources to help us succeed in learning, such as technology, media centers, and libraries. | 87.5 | 7.7 | 3.7 | 1.1 |
| I use additional resources, beyond the textbooks for my classes, to help me with my schoolwork. | 58.9 | 23.6 | 16.1 | 1.4 |
| Technology is incorporated into instruction in many classes. | 56.6 | 25.8 | 14.8 | 2.8 |
| In addition to written tests, students are provided with a variety of ways to demonstrate their learning such as completing projects or portfolios. | 76.6 | 14.7 | 7.9 | 0.8 |
| The evaluation of my work, through various assessments and tests, provides me information about how I can improve my learning. | 54.8 | 27.4 | 15.5 | 2.3 |

| Statement | SA/A | N | D/SD | N/A |
|---|------|------|------|-----|
| Teacher Opinion Inventories | | | | |
| Students are provided with educational programs that are appropriate to their learning needs. | 98.4 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Our school is preparing students to deal with issues and problems they will face in the future. | 78.5 | 15.3 | 6.2 | 0.0 |
| A variety of teaching strategies and learning activities is provided to students to help them learn. | 96.9 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 0.0 |
| In our school students have access to a variety of resources to help them succeed in learning, such as technology, media center, and library. | 98.5 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 0.0 |
| Our school is doing a good job in Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening). | 87.7 | 6.2 | 4.6 | 1.5 |

Climate Survey Conclusion

Strengths

- Parents are pleased with the wide variety of resources offered to students.
- Parents and teachers strongly agree that the educational programs offered at William Annin are of high quality.
- Students are satisfied with the alternative ways in which they are evaluated (projects and portfolios).
- Students feel that the school provides programs that are appropriate to their learning needs.
- Teachers strongly agree that students are provided with educational programs that are appropriate to their learning needs.

Recommendations

- Parents feel that William Annin needs to better prepare students for the work force.
- Students feel that homework should help them better understand class concepts.
- Teachers believe that William Annin should better prepare students for issues or problems they may face in the future.

Program Evaluation Recommendations – Grades 6-8

| | Recommendation | Implementation | Timeline | Constraints | Current Status |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| Reading Assessment Strategies Recommendations | | | | | |
| 1 | Implement more non-fiction articles and books throughout all courses in order to establish a stronger real life connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a reading matrix • Select appropriate pieces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005-2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Resources • Planning Time • Budget | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
| 2 | Include more reading literature circles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select appropriate pieces • Create a reading matrix | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Budget • Summer Curriculum Writing • Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
| 3 | Include more variety in reading pieces as related to thematic units (plays, poetry, journalism) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select appropriate pieces • Create a reading matrix | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Budget • Summer Curriculum Writing • Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun |
| 4 | Explore current young adult literature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select appropriate pieces • Include modern and post-modern eras • Create a reading matrix • Attend out of district workshops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Budget • Summer Curriculum Writing • Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| 5 | Expand word study | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create word walls • Plan lessons about word roots and bases • Identify relevant word lists | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun |
| Writing Assessment Strategies Recommendations | | | | | |
| 6 | Increase in-class writing process time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for more writing process time in school (rather than at home) • Conduct more student/teacher conferences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
| 7 | Write for a variety of audiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a writing matrix • Instruct students on diction and style related to target audiences • Reflect on current writing assessments and modify | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005-2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|--|---|
| 8 | Implement mini-lessons focusing on writing mechanics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a writing matrix or checklist for specific skills • Assess student needs • Implement assignments that address students' needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
| 9 | Integrate current technology into writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require students to use a variety of communication technologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Time • Budget | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun |
| 10 | Develop students' skills pertaining to emerging technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the avoidance of plagiarism in student writing • Instruct students on methods for finding relevant articles from periodicals • Teach correct citation of sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time in computer labs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun |

| Learning Styles Recommendations | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| 11 | Infuse a variety of instructional strategies, genres and assessments in thematic units | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide short story, poetry and non-fiction writing in each unit • Integrate reading, writing, speaking and viewing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005-2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Resources • Staff Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun |
| 12 | Provide a broad scope of activities related to the rigor and relevance district goal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate activities that span across each quadrant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning in 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Resources • Curriculum Writing • Budget | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning 2005 |
| 13 | Address the multiple intelligences when constructing assignments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide choices in writing and project assignments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Curriculum Writing • Budget | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
| Cultural Diversity Recommendations | | | | | |
| 14 | Incorporate short stories and poetry from other cultures to compliment a primary unit text (novel, play or longer work) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing • Within courses, identify potential places of integration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing • Budget • Time | |

Miscellaneous Recommendations

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|--|--|
| 15 | Update Language Arts elective courses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Curriculum Writing • Budget • Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun |
| 16 | Schedule 19-23 students per section | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with scheduling and guidance to balance pupil load | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Staff Availability | |
| 17 | Reconsider the availability of computers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey students and staff about computer labs vs. laptop carts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005-2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Time • Shortage of Classrooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning 2005 |
| 18 | Prepare 6 th and 7 th grade students for new state testing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct students in test taking strategies and skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Lack of information about the test • Shortage of practice testing materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning 2005 |

Program Evaluation Questions

- How does the 6-8 Language Arts program differentiate instruction for students?
- How does the 6-8 Language Arts program ensure consistency and establish guidelines for effective reading and writing instruction?
- How does the curriculum align with the program's goals and objectives?
- What affect does the curriculum and instruction have on the district's standardized test scores?
- How does the 6-8 Language Arts program affect students' attitudes towards mathematics?
- How does the anthology, other texts and ancillary materials address the needs of the students?
- How do the instructional strategies of the Language Arts program provide students with meaningful and comprehensive activities (relevance and rigor)?
- How does the 6-8 Language Arts curriculum and instruction articulate between grades and transfer skills to other content areas?

**Program Evaluation Committees
6-8 Language Arts**

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