

Spotlight on Common Core Literacy - K-8

District 90 is in the third year of our important transition to the Common Core State Standards. In 2013-2014, we are implementing the more rigorous and aligned standards.

Our commitment to student success and a love of literacy has been demonstrated over the years through our high quality instruction. District 90 students have shown their success through classroom assessments, benchmark assessments, and MAP and ISAT testing. However, these assessments are shifting, and each grade level is now addressing the implementation of the new standards.

Overall, the shift to the Common Core Standards is intended to provide a clear progression from one grade level to the next, ultimately leading to what is needed for success in college and careers.

For literacy standards, these shifts can be described in the following ways:

- **More complex texts:** Students will be expected to know more and read more complex texts.
- **More balance of non-fiction/informational reading and fiction:** Students will be expected to read and understand a more hearty mix of informational and nonfiction reading. This does not replace the District's commitment to great literature at all grade levels. It represents an understanding that our children will need to be competent in reading and understanding nonfiction in preparation for college and careers. This includes more integration of reading and writing skills in Science and Social Studies as well.
- **Adoption of the Journeys Common Core K-5 Core Literacy Program:** This new curriculum was adopted by the Board of Education in August 2013, after an intensive informal and formal review process by teachers, specialists, and parents. Its multiple tools address the new standards on a continuum of learning levels. These include multiple measurements of text complexity, a direct link of writing in response to reading, and learning the key vocabulary of the Common Core.
- **More emphasis on a progression of argument writing, research writing, and the use of nonfiction resources:** Students will work with high quality literature and nonfiction materials in grades 6 through 8.
- **Integration of technology as a tool for teaching literacy for the 21st Century learner:** Students in grades K-5 will use technology for learning in multiple ways as part of the Journeys curriculum. Technology integration in grades 6 through 8 includes the use of one-to-one iPads.