

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS PHILOSOPHY**

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The English Language Arts program in District 20 is intended to prepare all students to be successful readers, writers, speakers, and listeners at their appropriate grade level. The District 20 Graduate Profile and the Illinois Learning Standards for English Language Arts guide the program so that students leave District 20 as literate individuals. The program incorporates the best practices identified in research regarding teaching and learning strategies for Language Arts.

**CURRICULUM**

The program is driven by a rich curriculum, relevant and timely staff development, and sufficient materials and resources needed to implement and sustain the program. The Language Arts curriculum provides a balanced framework of strategies in a variety of contexts, both fiction and nonfiction, in which to learn and practice those skills associated with the four areas of literacy: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Within the reading curriculum, the four block system or the Reader's Workshop format is advocated for structuring classroom instruction. Either format emphasizes word analysis skills, guided and independent reading, and writing that is connected to what is being read. The writing curriculum will be based upon the Illinois Writing rubric and be related to what is read. The speaking and listening curriculum will focus on those skills that will help our students communicate orally to a variety of audiences. This Language Arts curriculum will address all of these areas with equal attention.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Staff development will be based upon the latest information as it relates to best practices for teaching children reading, writing, speaking, and listening and data gathered at both the district and building levels.

**MATERIALS**

The materials used in our Language Arts program will reflect the best practices identified in current research. The literature-based anthologies (Houghton-Mifflin in kindergarten through sixth grade and McDougall-Littell in seventh and eighth grade) will be used to provide whole group demonstrations and whole group practice of basic reading skills appropriate for each grade level. Leveled reading materials at students' instructional level will be readily available in each classroom so all students have the opportunity to read and practice those basic literacy skills taught to the whole group. The Accelerated Reading Management System provides additional practice in reading for students.