



Responsible Office: Office of Academics

BOARD POLICY 6200

LITERACY

PURPOSE

The Board of Trustees (“Board”) believes that literacy, the ability to read, write, speak, listen, and to be lifelong readers, is fundamental to the success of all students. A primary responsibility of the Washoe County School District (“District”) is to provide educational programs in literacy and related services for all students to achieve continued academic success. Literacy provides the foundation of academic success by developing students’ abilities to speak, listen and communicate, think, explore, and organize.

POLICY

1. Guiding Principles

- a. Literacy comprises a complex set of knowledge and skills that must be developed throughout the years of schooling. Literacy is not a subject in its own right, but is fundamental to all areas of learning.
- b. The District promotes rigorous, high-quality, research-based instruction in literacy to ensure all students achieve academic success. A comprehensive literacy program ensures that all students have the necessary skills to read fluently and for meaning. This includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening in order to build strong communication skills.
- c. The District recognizes that culturally responsive instructional practices serve as a foundation for literacy learning and success.
- d. Literacy skills continually expand and diversify to meet the rapidly changing social and economic environment of the 21st century, which requires competence in a range of new communication forms and media.

2. Guiding Practices

- a. The Board recognizes that literacy constitutes the basic foundation for learning and seeks to provide students the basic skills needed to become proficient readers. The District shall:

- i. Provide high-quality effective instruction that prepares all students to become proficient readers, independent thinkers, and effective communicators.
 - ii. Consistent with District assessment practice, identify literacy needs of students using data from ongoing and embedded assessment to ensure timely and equitable support and access to effective programs and pathways for academic success.
 - iii. Incorporate explicit and systematic instruction in the skills, knowledge, and understandings required for students to be literate. Literacy is taught in a balanced and integrated way. Based on assessment data, teachers employ flexible grouping for specific instruction.
 - iv. Prepare all students to graduate from high school with the ability to integrate literacy skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), which are necessary to pursue college or highly skilled career opportunities.
 - v. Provide ongoing professional learning opportunities focused on the Nevada Academic Content Standards, consistent with the District's comprehensive professional development plan, which is geared to prepare all teachers for the diversity of literacy abilities in a classroom.
 - vi. Offer targeted support services and strong partnerships that ensure families are welcomed as full members of the educational community and in the educational decision-making process for students. In addition, the District decisions reflect the voices of ethnically and linguistically diverse parents.
- b. The District's early literacy program is designed to ensure that students are able to read at a proficient level by the end of third grade. To reach this goal, a balanced and comprehensive Literacy/ English Language Arts program shall be developed and implemented that includes:
- i. Skill development for beginning readers that includes phonemic awareness, phonics and decoding skills, and sufficient practice and repetition of these skills;
 - ii. A strong literature, language, and comprehension program that includes a balance of oral and written language;
 - iii. Ongoing diagnosis of individual students' skills; and

- iv. An early intervention program that provides assistance to children at risk of not meeting grade level proficiency.
- c. The Superintendent shall create regulations, procedures, and practices necessary to implement the provisions of this policy. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Required licensing and continuing professional learning for teachers;
 - ii. Providing necessary support and intervention to students in need of remediation;
 - iii. Ensuring literacy instruction and materials are aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards; and
 - iv. Selecting instructional materials that are based on student learning and achievement data and are consistent with the District's instructional materials selection procedures.

DEFINITIONS

1. College and career ready: A high school graduate who is ready to pursue preparation for a highly-skilled career and is admissible to and prepared to succeed in first-year, credit-bearing classes without remediation at a 2- or 4-year college, technical or trade school, or apprenticeship program. A "career" differs from a "job" in that a career offers the opportunity to advance and develop professionally.
2. Literacy is the ability to use text to communicate by reading, writing, listening and speaking.
3. 21st Century Competencies: The skills and abilities deemed essential for a person to lead a successful life in the context of the demands of the 21st Century, such as the applied skills of critical thinking, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2009; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2011).

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. All students graduate from high school with the ability to use reading, writing, listening, and speaking to be contributing members of society who are self-directed learners, effective communicators, collaborative workers, critical and independent thinkers, and therefore appreciate the value of literacy.

2. Improve the academic achievement of all students in all demographic groups, at all grade levels, and at all current academic performance levels.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
 - a. Administrative Regulation 6201, Literacy
 - b. Board Policy 5025, Student Placement and Communication of Progress
 - c. Board Policy 6400, Assessment
 - d. Board Policy 6160, Instructional Materials: Selection, Adoption, and Disposal
 - e. Board Policy 6725, English Learners
2. This policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), to include:
 - a. Chapter 388, System of Public Instruction, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 388.157, Plan to improve literacy of pupils enrolled in certain grades: Contents; ...
 - b. Chapter 389, Examinations, Courses, Standards and Diplomas
 - c. Chapter 391, Personnel, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 391.500 – 391.556, Regional Training Programs for the Professional Development of Teachers and Administrators; Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Programs
 - d. Chapter 392, Pupils, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 392.750 – 392.775, Literacy Requirements
3. This policy complies with federal laws and regulations, to include:
 - a. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act as reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act

REVIEW AND REPORTING

1. This document shall be reviewed as part of the bi-annual review and reporting process, following each regular session of the Nevada Legislature. The Board of

Trustees shall receive notification of any required changes to the policy as well as an audit of the accompanying governing documents.

2. Administrative regulations, and/or other associated documents, will be developed as necessary to implement this policy.
3. Data relevant to student literacy and academic success shall be presented to the Board of Trustees via strategic plan updates, the annual Data Summit and other reporting methods.

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision	Modification
12/10/2002	1.0	Adopted
6/24/2014	2.0	Revised: converted to new format; title change to "Literacy"
1/15/2019	3.0	Revised: added language related to early literacy