Kansas Guide to Learning: Literacy

A comprehensive cross-curricular literacy guide to advance learning from birth through grade 12.

An Executive Summary

Kansas
state department of
Education

leadership and support for student learning

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Introduction

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) strives to support educators, parents, and students across the state of Kansas. In an effort to streamline communication and centralize literacy resources, the leadership at KSDE began an initiative titled the Sunflower Literacy Project. The goal of the Sunflower Literacy Project is to improve literacy learning in children and youth in participating district/communities and to improve academic achievement of Kansas students. KSDE envisions a cross-agency, collaborative approach to providing professional learning and resources to meet the literacy instructional needs of schools/providers/organizations.

The project sought to develop a comprehensive literacy plan for children ages birth through grade 12. This plan, titled the K*ansas Guide to Learning: Literacy*, integrates the Kansas Early Learning Standards for children aged birth to five years and the Kansas Common Core State Standards with recommended research-based curriculum, instruction, and critical questions and considerations for teaching and learning in the literacy strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. Through this guide, educators will be provided professional learning and instructional resources to support teachers in improving literacy instruction. This document brings together important information regarding Student Populations, Common Core State Standards, Effective Instruction, Assessment, and Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports.
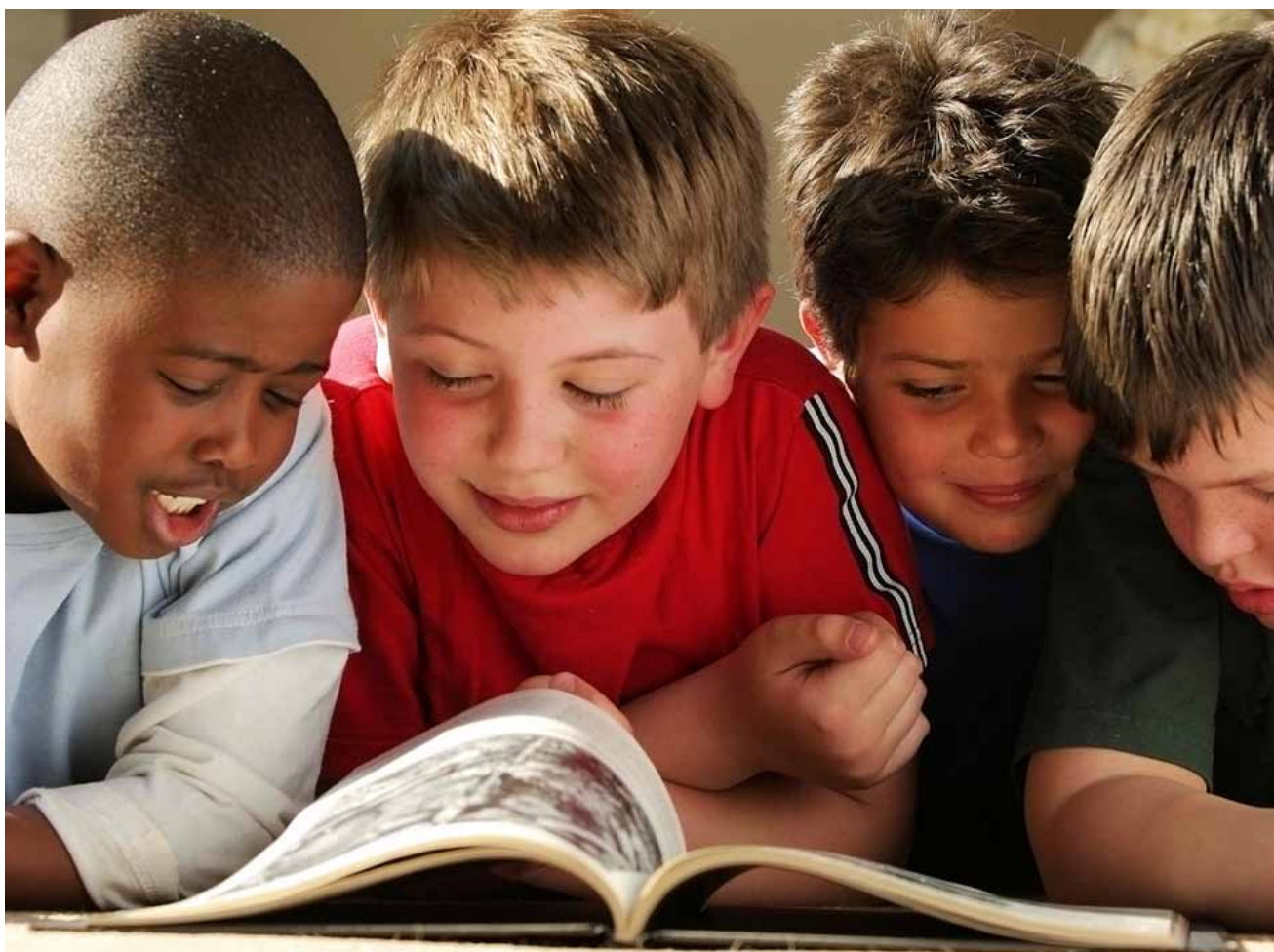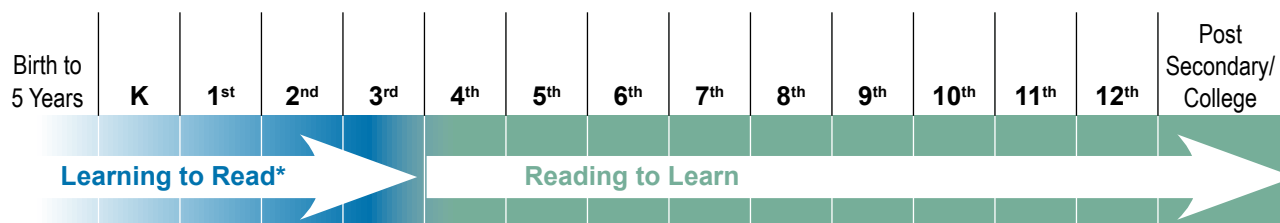
Overview

Kansas schools are responsible for providing students with the instruction they need to become literate members of society. In its simplest form, literacy can be defined as the ability to effectively communicate with others through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Most educators include numeracy in this definition to complete the core foundational skills of literacy. Moving into the 21st Century, the term *Information Literacy* has changed once again to become *Contemporary Literacy*. Changes in the workplace demand that workers be able to exist and succeed in a digital world, which requires continual acquisition and development of new knowledge and skills. This greatly expands schools' responsibility to students beyond teaching the basic five components of reading. Literacy instruction also must consider tasks such as information-seeking strategies, synthesizing and evaluating information use and effectiveness to enable efficient communication and intelligent decision-making.

The Kansas Guide to Learning: Literacy (KGLL) defines literacy learning as a life-long process on a socially and culturally constructed continuum. This continuum is characterized by the ability to derive, create, and convey meaning through the use of a variety of socially contextual symbols in oral, written, digital, and other forms. Within various contexts, literate individuals build relationships to solve problems collaboratively and cross-culturally; develop critical perspectives about what they read; comprehend, analyze, and evaluate text and non-text materials; analyze and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information; generate and embrace rich understandings of ideas and concepts; create and share information for a variety of audiences and purposes; attend to the ethical responsibilities required by these complex tasks and environments; and assess their own literacy learning competencies and direct their future growth. The *KGLL* identifies a focus for each of the targeted age levels with guidance for literacy experience, engagement, motivation, curriculum, instruction, and critical instructional questions and considerations.
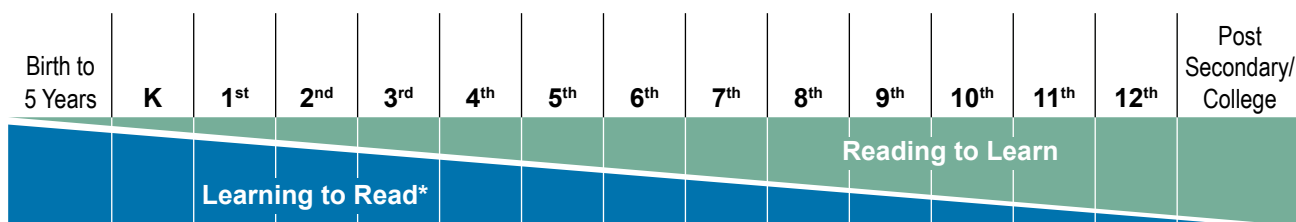
The *Kansas Guide to Learning: Literacy* compiles current research, promising practices, and effective strategies in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and language that lead to higher-order thinking for students aged birth through grade 12. The *KGLL* will shape high-quality literacy instruction in Kansas. Although strong reading skills are certainly a foundational element of literacy learning, this framework also emphasizes that "learning to read" and "reading to learn," Figure 1, must happen simultaneously and throughout the duration of one's life: in the home, in school, and in the larger community. This plan represents a paradigm shift within the context of literacy instruction in Kansas. Rather than a differentiation between learning to read and reading to learn, literacy instruction will be a continuous process from birth through secondary instruction.

Because literacy is more than just reading, similar transitions also would be present for writing, speaking and listening, and language. As a system-wide commitment, the *KGLL* provides a framework for local districts, early-learning facilities, and families to create more specific plans to address their students' literacy learning needs.

A Paradigm Shift

| Birth to 5 Years | K | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | 8th | 9th | 10th | 11th | 12th | Post Secondary/ College |

Learning to Read*   Reading to Learn

The New Paradigm: "Literacy Learning"

| Birth to 5 Years | K | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | 8th | 9th | 10th | 11th | 12th | Post Secondary/ College |

Reading to Learn

Learning to Read*

* *Because Literacy is more than just reading, similar transitions would also be present for writing, speaking and listening, and language as well.*

Figure 1   Copeland (2011)

Understanding Your Students

All Students

> In its simplest form, literacy can be defined as the ability to effectively communicate with others through reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Kansas school demographics may look very different from one location to another. Therefore, educators need to make critical instructional decisions based on the school populations that they serve. The varying and multiple needs of students continually challenge educators to determine the most effective methods of instruction. Core instruction, including curriculum, instruction, and assessment is the foundation for the educational experience for ALL students. Instructional practices are evidence-based and designed so that a maximum number of students will be successful, thereby preventing the need for additional intervention. However, even within a well-functioning core, there will be students who need additional supports in order to continually learn and achieve to high expectations.

Many districts in Kansas use the MTSS framework for academic and behavioral instruction and interventions. This framework supports multi-tiered instruction with an emphasis on early identification, supplemental instruction, ongoing assessment, and the use of assessment data to identify the most effective interventions for students.

Students' needs continually challenge educators to determine the most effective methods of instruction. While there are innumerable differences between all learners, and each student requires attention to his or her individual strengths and needs, some students share commonalities that enable educators to plan in similar ways to best promote their learning. Such subpopulations of students include English learners (ELs), students with exceptionalities, and students at-risk of educational failure.

Students Who are English Learners

> When instructional accommodations within core instruction take into account students' sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic backgrounds, the need for additional levels of intervention may be greatly reduced.

English learners are a diverse group. Although approximately 73% of ELs are Spanish speakers (Migration Policy Institute, 2010), primarily hailing from Latin America (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010), this is not always the case. No two English learners are alike, even within the same culture or home-country background. Additional differences may include length of time in the United States, literacy skills, previous schooling, and students' primary language.

Similarities between learners' home language and English tend to make initial learning of English easier, whereas differences make the process more difficult. Some ELs have a primary language that resembles English in word order, sound system, intonation, or word-formation patterns. Other students' languages may be very different from English in these respects. Therefore educators must make different decisions based upon the makeup of the student population. For example, throughout Kansas we have diverse pockets of ELs. In some areas of our state, we have large populations of ELs who speak mostly Spanish. As a result of this commonality, the use of cognates as an instructional strategy is very helpful. However, other areas of Kansas have a large EL population in which multiple languages are represented.

Some important tasks for educators who work with ELs include:

- Identify whether the school atmosphere is accepting of multiple perspectives that are presented through cultural differences.
- Identify students' biographies.
- Identify the sources and kinds of support students have at home.
- Identify the different languages spoken.
- Determine the proficiency of students in their native language and in English.
- Consider how students approach the reading process and literacy. Their idea of literacy may vary from the mainstream understanding.
- Identify if there are cultural/religious issues to be considered.

- Determine whether English assessments measure ELs' understanding of language or of content.
- Determine the effectiveness of collaboration between EL teachers and homeroom teachers in making instructional and assessment decisions.

When instructional accommodations within core instruction take into account students' sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic backgrounds, the need for additional levels of intervention may be greatly reduced. Pre-assessment, scaffolding of instruction to ensure comprehensibility, and formative assessment enable teachers to best support ELs to attain lesson objectives and to develop the skills measured on summative assessments. Providing opportunities for student dialogue and interaction throughout instruction enables ELs to practice language and literacy skills and to share their diverse perspectives with peers.

Students with Exceptionalities

> " Effective intervention for students with exceptionalities involves choosing effective instructional approaches that require ongoing assessment and analysis of student progress-monitoring data. "
>
> (Rosenshine, 1986; Adams & Carnine, 2003).

Students with exceptionalities also have a wide variety of skills, needs, and abilities, that require different instructional strategies targeted to their individual strengths and needs. In Kansas, "Exceptional children" means "children with disabilities and gifted children" (K.A.R.91-40-1(w)).

- *"Child with disability"* means "a child evaluated as having mental retardation, a hearing impairment including deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment including blindness, emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, any other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities and who, by reason thereof, needs special education" (K.A.R.91-40-1 (k), K.A.R.91-40-1(l)).

- *"Gifted"* means "performing or demonstrating the potential for performing at significantly higher levels of accomplishment in one or more academic fields due to intellectual ability, when compared to others of similar age, experience, and environment" (K.A.R.91-40-1(bb)).

Students with exceptionalities have unique needs that influence retention of knowledge, response to instructional strategies, and engagement in instructional activities across the academic areas of reading and writing. Students with exceptionalities likely will require different kinds of instruction to meet or exceed grade- level expectations.

Teachers must have high expectations for all their students, and students with exceptionalities must be included in core reading or math programs for elementary students or content-area classes for adolescents in middle and high school. Early identification of each student's strengths and needs is critical in determining the appropriate level and type of instructional support (including enrichment). This early identification of students' strengths and needs is accomplished through the use of formative assessments that include universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments. When teachers know the learning needs of each of their students and use that knowledge to differentiate their instruction, students will become more engaged and motivated. Universal screening can be used to monitor student progress within the core instruction and to provide data necessary for making instructional decisions. Through this use of data, teachers can identify students who may need intervention. Instruction for the intervention is designed through a diagnostic process that targets specific skills for instruction.

Effective intervention for students with exceptionalities involves choosing effective instructional approaches that require ongoing assessment and analysis of student progress-monitoring data. Direct instruction is an effective approach for students with exceptionalities. Direct instruction is a systematic method of presenting material in small steps, pausing to check for student understanding, eliciting active student participation, and evaluating student performance using curriculum-based measurement to determine if the instruction should be adjusted (Rosenshine, 1986; Adams & Carnine, 2003).

Instruction for all students, and in particular for students with exceptionalities, must focus on the student's strengths and areas of needs so each student can make progress in grade-level expectations. Instruction and interventions should be explicit, systematic, and scaffolded. Students with exceptionalities may need more opportunities for practice and immediate corrective feedback as part of the intervention process. Students who need intensive support should receive targeted skill-based instruction through individualized instruction or in a small group.

Students Who Are At Risk Of Educational Failure

> In the best classroom, students are engaged much of the time in reading and writing, with the teacher monitoring student progress and encouraging continuous improvement and growth, and providing "scaffolded" instruction, in which the teacher notices when students are having difficulty and provides sufficient support so that students are able to make progress. Furthermore, this skillful instruction is based on the exact strategies that students need to work on.
>
> P. David Pearson

Students at risk of educational failure are another population that educators must monitor to ensure adequate academic progress. Many at-risk students come from poverty and/or have other factors (e.g., single-parent families, minorities, level of parent education, student attendance, etc.) that may influence their success. Children who arrive at school with limited experiences with print, books, language, and literacy need the most effective teachers and supportive school environments to become literate members of society. Taylor, Pressley, & Pearson (2002) list school factors that are responsible for high achievement in high-poverty schools:

- Focus on improved student learning
- Strong school leadership
- Strong teacher collaboration
- Consistent use of data on student performance
- Focus on professional development and innovation
- Strong links to parents

Providing the environment for students to attain a high level of literacy requires a school-level system for identifying "at-risk" students and providing them with the interventions they need to become literate. Good classroom instruction should meet the needs of most students, but an efficient system for providing high-quality interventions is required to meet the needs of all students. The most efficient interventions for struggling learners are to provide instruction in smaller groups in addition to core instruction. This allows the instruction to be targeted to the specific needs of the students, who have more opportunities to respond and receive feedback.

Educators who make effective educational instructional decisions for English language learners, students with exceptionalities, and at-risk students create an environment where all students learn to be literate and to utilize efficient communication and intelligent decision making.

Kansas Standards

> A meaningful comprehensive assessment system provides a complete picture of diverse learning goals and how well students are attaining them. This assessment system documents what students know and are able to do.

The KSDE recommends and supports standards for early learning through grade 12. As a guide to early kindergarten readiness, the *Kansas Early Learning Standards* provide an understanding of the skills, knowledge, and abilities young children (birth through age 5) have and can learn with the help of caring and knowledgeable adults. Based on research about young children's language and early literacy development, the *Kansas Early Learning Standards* can be used to improve instructional planning by aligning curriculum and other learning activities.

The Kansas State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010. The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and experts to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare children for college and the workforce.

Standards provide teachers and parents with a common understanding of the knowledge and skills students should have within their educational careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs.

The standards:

- Are aligned with college and work expectations;
- Are clear, understandable, and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Are informed by other top-performing countries, so that all students are prepared to compete and succeed in a global economy and society; and
- Are evidence-based (CCSSI, 2010).

The CCSSO recognize that these standards provide guidance for the design of curricula and instructional materials but do not prescribe how they are taught to or learned by students.

States are "allowed to add an additional 15 percent on top of the core" (CCSSI, March 2010). The Kansas Common Core Standards for English Language Arts add standards only to the CCSS College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards. In a separately published document that can be found at www.ksde.org/kscommoncore, Kansas added two anchor standards in Reading and one in Writing, as well as a set of five anchor standards to the Literacy standards for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. The introduction to these added standards notes that "Although many of the concepts included within these standards are present in the CCSS, KSDE wanted to highlight the importance of each one" (KSDE, 2012).

The "Anchor Standards for Literacy Learning" were added by the Kansas Department of Education as part of the KS 15% for English Language Arts. These additional anchor standards underscore the idea that comprehensive literacy instruction should occur both across the curriculum and within each discipline and that all educators share responsibility for the literacy learning of all students. Comprehensive literacy instruction should address skills in reading, writing, thinking, language, listening, and speaking in a cohesive and integrated fashion rather than as discrete skills taught in isolation. Schools across the state are in the process of determining how to support teachers to prepare students to meet these new standards regardless of their challenges.

Curriculum

Curriculum is the scope and sequence of content that students are expected to learn and use for performing in non-school settings. For example, to better understand how curricula are defined, imagine a United States History class discussing the 1960s. Students in this class might be expected to learn curriculum about the following:

1. George Wallace made his "stand in the schoolhouse door" at the University of Alabama,
2. President Kennedy was assassinated,
3. Martin Luther King Jr. made his *I Have a Dream* speech,
4. Civil Rights Act passed the U. S. Congress,
5. riots broke out in many cities/campuses,
6. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated.

1960's

Date	Event
June 11, 1963	George Wallace made his "stand in the schoolhouse door" at the University of Alabama
August 28, 1963	Martin Luther King, Jr. made his *I Have a Dream* speech
November 22, 1963	President Kennedy was assassinated
July 2, 1964	Civil Rights Act passed the U.S. Congress
Mid-1960's	Riots broke out in many cities/campuses
April 4, 1968	Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated
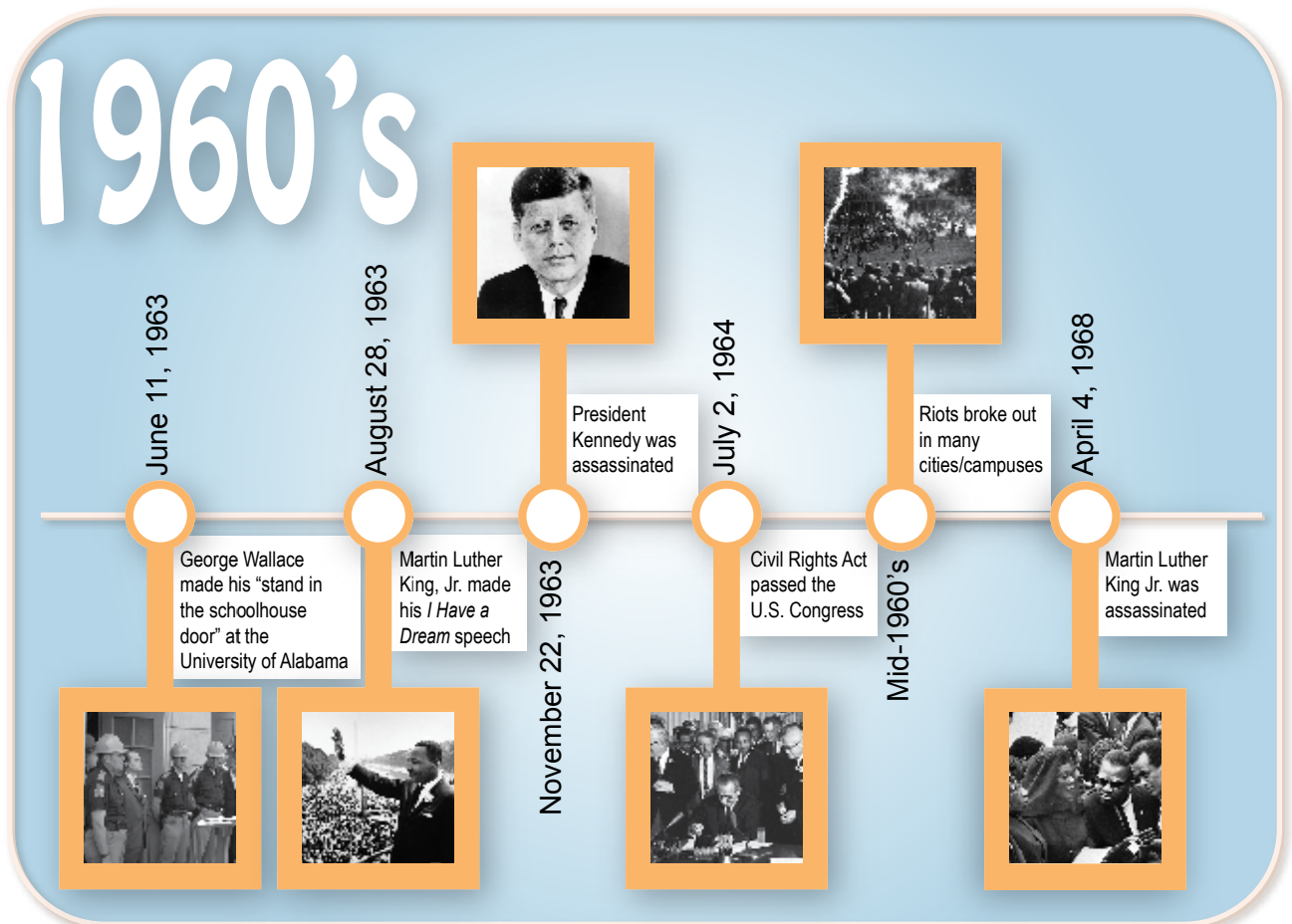
A mistake that some educators make is to think that the Kansas Common Core Standards are their curriculum. Curriculum for schools contains much more than is required by the Kansas Common Core State Standards, which is simply the "What" of teaching.

Effective Instruction

Effective instruction is critical if students are to learn the curriculum. For young children, it is particularly important that instruction follow a developmental sequence, however, it is not always necessary to wait for mastery of each task before progressing. Providing instruction of skills in a developmental sequence and then cycling back through also supports young children's learning. Embedded instruction helps children learn how to apply skills within authentic literacy activities, and should occur throughout the day.

Effective instruction for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers looks different than instruction for school-age children. The guidance on instruction provided here for the birth to five-year-old population includes how to talk with young children and how to integrate opportunities for rich language and literacy exposure into everyday routines, including book sharing, circle time, play, center time, and mealtimes. Guidance in effective instruction indicates ways to ensure that children receive opportunities for language and literacy exposure and practice that promotes their language and cognitive development and their growing independence and self-regulation. Research literature about effective instruction for young children is summarized in the corresponding *Kansas Guide to Learning: Literacy* tables for Birth through Age 5.

Research about effective instruction for kindergarten through high school identifies that teachers must engage in explicit instruction, scaffolded learning, and active contextualized coaching (CIERA, 2001; NICHD, 2000; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983; Vygotsky, 1978). "Explicit teaching refers to the practice of deliberately demonstrating and bringing to learners' conscious awareness those covert and invisible processes, understandings, knowledge, and skills over which they need to get control if they are to become effective readers" (Cambourne, 1999, p. 126).

Attributes of teacher-based instruction that have improved reading and writing performance include:

- Clear teacher presentations,
- Direct explanation (includes **what** skill or strategy is being taught, **how** readers use the skill or strategy, **when** they will use the skill or strategy, and **why** they should use this skill or strategy),
- Modeling and guided practice with scaffolding,
- High levels of active student involvement (e.g., collaborative construction of meaning, improved thinking through conversation and discussion),
- Review of feedback (Lipson & Wixson, 2009).

Extensive research on scaffolding by Pearson & Gallagher (1983) and Vygotsky (1978) suggests a need for teachers to structure lessons that provide modeling to students and then gradually release responsibility for task completion to students. Scaffolding combined with a simultaneous focus on self-regulated learning (Paris & Paris, 2001) helps students become independent self-sufficient readers, writers, speakers, and listeners.

Longitudinal studies revealed that effective teachers spend a great deal of time coaching students who are actively engaged in reading and writing (Allington & Johnston, 2002; Langer, 2004; Pressley et al., 2001; Taylor et al., 2000). Coaching may happen at any time in the instructional process. Teachers should utilize assessment data to determine where students are at in the learning process and what differentiated and specific coaching they need.

Effective instruction is where the "art" of teaching shows itself. Teachers who are masterful at providing effective instruction that includes explicit instruction, scaffolded learning, and active contextualized coaching prepare students to be self-regulated, literate members of society.

Assessment

Evidence gathered from evaluation and assessment(s) provides the groundwork for instructional decisions. Although *evaluation* and *assessment* often have been used interchangeably, they have different meanings.

Evaluation is the process of making judgments about the evidence (assessments) collected. Evaluation allows teachers to:

- set learning goals based on the knowledge of the student;
- plan specific learning experiences;
- determine the effectiveness of the teaching;
- show the student's progress towards meeting the learning goals; and
- guide the setting of the new instructional goals.

Assessment refers to the process of observing and accumulating evidence of an individual student's progress. All assessment should provide feedback to inform instruction, monitor progress, or form the basis for evaluation. Assessment allows teachers to:

- identify the student's strengths and instructional needs;
- observe and record learning behaviors and strategies; and
- provide feedback and support to the learner.

Assessments must meet two basic requirements:

Validity	The degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure; and also, the extent to which a test will provide information needed to make a decision.
Reliability	The degree to which a test yields consistent results. In other words, if administration were repeated multiple times/places, the results would be the same or very similar.

decisions about instruction, and evaluates effectiveness of programs and instructional strategies. A meaningful comprehensive assessment system provides a complete picture of diverse learning goals and how well students are attaining them. This assessment system documents what students know and are able to do.

Hall (2007) suggests developing a comprehensive assessment system that includes five steps:

1. identifying specific types of assessments that include both summative and formative assessments;
2. determining who will conduct the specific assessments and the professional development for those conducting assessments;
3. developing an assessment schedule;
4. establishing a data-management system; and
5. planning and delivering professional development for teachers to provide an overview of the comprehensive assessment system and how to use the data to make instructional decisions.

Carefully chosen assessments are integral to developing a comprehensive assessment system. Different types of assessments are needed to inform both programmatic and instructional decisions. It is critical to understand that assessment tools are designed and built for specific purposes and only valid when used for those purposes. Evaluation of the results of these types of assessment informs and directs the selection and utilization of resources and materials, assists practitioners in determining appropriate teaching strategies, and increases the likelihood that all students will receive optimal instruction. In general, there are two broad types of assessments, formative and summative.

Formative Assessments

Using a formative assessment process provides explicit feedback related to student performance. Teachers can use formative assessments to make immediate instructional decisions on behalf of individuals or groups of students. Formative assessments include universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic measures.

Types of Formative Assessments	Purpose
Universal Screening	identify students who are at risk of not successfully learning grade-level content
Progress Monitoring	inform educators of student growth in content knowledge and skills
Diagnostic	provide precise, detailed, and instructionally relevant information regarding a student's knowledge and skill. This information must be useful for decisions regarding instruction.

As Kansas educators review this document they will notice that specific assessments, materials, or programs are not recommended. The KSDE has been consistent in maintaining that districts have local control over decisions regarding assessments and materials.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are administered after instruction to measure students against a defined set of grade-level content standards. They are designed to evaluate student performance after instruction has been completed and are useful in determining the overall effectiveness of a given program for individual students or groups. Examples of summative assessments include outcome assessments, such as state or district mandated tests that measure specified outcomes.

An example of a summative assessment in Kansas is the Kansas Computerized Assessment (KCA), which is offered at the end of the semester or school year to evaluate student performance against a defined set of grade-level content standards. Other examples of summative assessments are end-of-instruction assessments, such as unit or end-of-chapter tests.

Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports

Figure 2
Kansas MTSS visual representation

MTSS is a decision-making process recently initiated and used by Kansas schools to provide supports to enable each child to be successful. MTSS is a coherent continuum of evidence-based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision making to empower each Kansas student to achieve high standards. The focus of MTSS is system-level change across the classroom, school, district, and state. The principles and practices of the MTSS are based upon Response to Intervention (RTI) and what research has shown to be effective both in creating successful and sustainable change and in providing the most effective instruction for all students (KSDE, 2009). It is important to note that a MTSS is designed to address the needs of all students, regardless of whether they are struggling or have advanced learning needs.

Central to the Kansas MTSS framework, Figure 2, is the tiered approach, providing strategies for conducting assessment, selecting curriculum, and providing instruction based on an identification of student need and characteristics. The base of the triangle, what is often referred to as Tier 1 instruction, is designed as the foundation for the educational experience for ALL students, including curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Instructional practices for ALL are evidence-based and designed so that a maximum number of students will be successful, thereby preventing the need for additional intervention. However, even within a well-functioning MTSS there will be students who need additional supports in order to continually learn and achieve to high expectations. These varying degrees of intervention are represented by processes addressing the more extensive needs of SOME students, and those addressing the more significant needs of a FEW students. Additional support for interventions can be found at www.kansasmtss.org and www.ksdetasn.org. Assessments, curriculum selection, and instructional processes have been identified to support literacy interventions for students across the three tiers, from kindergarten through grade 12.

Key features of the Kansas MTSS are involvement of leadership and the reliance on professional development to change the culture of school. Leadership is an essential component in creating sustainable change within the system and is of particular importance in structuring and implementing a MTSS. When moving to a multi-tier system, there are formal structures of leadership that are necessary to ensure consistent communication and support to all stakeholders, including staff. The work of the leadership team is to create these leadership structures and sustain them over time. High quality, research-based professional development is designed so that all staff receive initial training and implementation support, particularly in data analysis. The MTSS process is designed to improve educators' ability to collect, manage, and analyze data to improve instruction. The data continually drives the problem-solving process that educators engage in to meet the needs of all students. This process fosters individual and collective responsibility of school staff to improve academic achievement and reflects an empowering culture. An empowering culture is one in which staff, students, families, and stakeholders have a shared understanding of goals and processes and are actively involved in the process of school improvement. The leadership team encourages active involvement of others in making decisions.

The Kansas Common Core Standards and Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports

> " Key features of the Kansas MTSS are involvement of leadership and the reliance on professional development to change the culture of the school. "

As the Kansas State Department of Education transitions to the Kansas Common Core Standards (KCCS) it is important to recognize and integrate this effort with previous and ongoing initiatives across the state. With this idea in mind, it is essential to understand that the KCCS and the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) framework are integrated to support and complement one another.

KCCS provides the standards that describe what students should know and be able to do in content areas. Some schools make the mistake of thinking that the standards are the curriculum. A research-based curriculum, including scope and sequence of content and materials, is needed to bridge the standards to an instructional framework. Kansas MTSS provides a framework for how to properly implement instruction and interventions.

The goals and intent of both KCCS and Kansas MTSS are clear: to advance instruction and improve student learning. These initiatives complement each other, and the Kansas State Department of Education's intent is to continue to update resources for both. These resources will interact constructively to benefit all students and all education stakeholders.

Instruction

Instruction is the purposeful direction of the learning process for all students in a school. The KCCS allows renewal of opportunities to advance instruction for all students. Instruction of the KCCS should be based on the conceptual understanding, knowledge and skills that will help students succeed. Because the instructional process is a major class activity for teachers, implementation of instruction should be consistent with research-based practices and include differentiated instruction. Student performance data are utilized to inform the teacher and student about next steps in teaching and learning. The KSDE recommends the implementation of these practices through the Kansas MTSS initiative.

Intervention

The KCCS provides the vision for the conceptual understanding, knowledge, and skills that will help students succeed. The KCCS, as with any set of content standards, does not define the intervention methods or materials necessary to support students who are well below or well above grade level expectations. Kansas MTSS provides a framework for delivering interventions to students who require more explicit, systematic, and focused instruction to acquire the knowledge and skills represented in the KCCS. The Kansas MTSS recommends that students who need supplementary (Tier 2) or intensive (Tier 3) supports receive small-group instruction in addition to the core instruction provided in the classroom. Interventions are based on student need as determined by diagnostic assessment, focused on specific skills and strategies, providing more opportunities for students to respond and receive immediate feedback. To ensure consistency of knowledge and skills being taught to students, core instruction and the instruction provided during intervention should be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) continues to collaborate across the agency to streamline communication and centralize literacy resources by creating a comprehensive literacy plan for children ages birth through grade 12. This plan, titled the *Kansas Guide to Learning: Literacy* was constructed to be an easy-to-read document that administrators, teachers, parents, child-care providers, and others could use to easily find information and guidance regarding the literacy development and learning for children birth through high school. The KGLL is organized by age levels and provides curricula and instructional strategies in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language.

For more information on the Kansas Common Core Standards:
http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4754

For more information on the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports:
http://www.kansasmtss.org

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Additional Resources for Students with Exceptionalities

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