Background
Kansas Instructional Curriculum/Resource Adoption Process

Why is there a Curriculum/Resource Adoption Process?

Kansas teachers and administrators need to feel confident that they are choosing English Language Arts resources that will positively impact their students' achievement. The committee who created this resource was formed to provide an outline for reviewing resources for Math before this document was reshaped for English Language Arts.

Curriculum and other instructional resources play a significant role in the English Language Arts content and skills that are taught and learned. Educators will remember from education courses the various types of curricula explained by research. The types described by Glatthorn, Boschee, Whitehead, & Boschee (2012) are the recommended curriculum, written curriculum, supported curriculum, taught curriculum, tested curriculum, and learned curriculum. When researching and analyzing curriculum keep in mind the outcomes expected for your school or district and how the different types impact what students actually learn.

It is difficult to separate curriculum from the instructional practices employed by teachers when analyzing effectiveness. A quality curriculum should be provided to educators but quality professional development that is continuous and focused must also be provided (National Research Council, 2001). Educators should be aware of the interplay between the curriculum adopted and the instruction provided.

Once a curriculum is provided to educators, a purposeful and thoughtful plan must be utilized when implementing the units and the individual lessons. This does not mean that the curriculum is adhered to without thought toward the needs of the students that are in the classrooms. Educators need to understand those educational needs and make informed modification and adaptations within the curriculum as necessary, without losing sight of the end goal for English Language Arts. Maintaining rigor is essential!

As a group of committed educators we believe that all students can learn at high levels and that all students deserve a robust, rigorous, and appropriate education. Education is constantly evolving, and as a result, resources continually evolve. We recognize that educational resources are an investment for your school and our children, so we are providing this document as a guide for your resource adoption process. We hope this document will assist in focusing on important English Language Arts content and skills for students now and in the future.

### *The cycle of standards adoption and curricula/resources adoptions*

As we all experience different curricular cycles within our districts, it is the opinion of the math committee that the most beneficial timing of this process would be coordinated with the standards adoption cycle. Our state is required by law to review content standards every seven years. This does not necessarily mean that our standards will make significant changes each time, but they will be reviewed. Selected educators from across the state meet to review the current standards and decide if they are good as they are, if they need some revisions, or if they need to be completely rewritten.

Thinking about the seven year cycle, a district would be best served to review new curricular resources in a similar cycle within a year or two of the adoption of new state standards. Utilizing this cycle will allow districts a chance to follow the same process with their curriculum. Educators can review curriculum to determine the following: the curriculum is good to go since it reflects the intent and design of the standards, it needs some revisions, or the curriculum needs to be completely changed.

Phases Flow Chart

This chart lays out the flow from phase to phase with some guidance to the amount of time for each phase. Some phases will be very quick while other phases will take more time. The most important idea is to allow all educators to have the information necessary to collect information about each curricula/resource in action before making decisions.

Phase 1: Create an ELA Team to navigate through the process and establish or revise a district Vision/Beliefs/Philosophy of ELA *(Aug – Sept)*
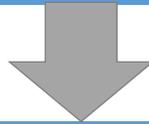
Phase 2: Conduct Content & Pedagogical Training for educators *(Sept – Oct)*

Phase 3: Examine Independent Research concerning ELA curricula/resources *(Oct – Nov)*

Phase 4: Piloting various curricula/resources *(Jan – Mar/Apr)*

Phase 5: Selection of the curriculum/resource *(Mar/Apr – May)*

Phase 6: Educate all Stakeholders in order to implement the curriculum/resource effectively *(May – Aug)*

1. **The ELA team should be vertical and horizontal** - The team should have representation from all grades or at least smaller grade bands. This will depend on the size of the school or district. Each teacher on the team should be very familiar with the standards and should have read the learning progressions, at a minimum, but could also be familiar with other current English Language Arts education research.
2. **Consider asking a teacher from outside the district** - Choose a well-respected educator from outside your district. Try to choose someone who will ask critical questions throughout the process and is well informed concerning English Language Arts education research about the learning and teaching of English Language Arts.
3. **Now you need to educate your team concerning the process -**
   a. **Process** - The team will need to feel comfortable in asking hard questions. In order to build the level of comfort necessary for this work, your team will need to allow for time in setting expectations and teambuilding. The team will also need to know the entire evaluation process with estimated deadlines.
   b. **Roles** - Each member should feel comfortable in the roles that will be defined for them during the training. Teachers will be participating in specific resource trainings, evaluating those resources individually, comparing the resources to each other, and finally determining which ones to submit for approval. Administrators will also participate in resource trainings, but their role should be observing teachers using the resources and asking students about their experiences with the different resources.
   c. **Expectations** - Clear expectations need to be established for all members of the team in line with their roles.

As a district and/or building begins the process of selecting ELA resources, it is important that they take the time to intentionally and purposefully think about their vision/beliefs/philosophy of mathematics.
- Why is it important to teach English Language Arts?
- What kind of thinkers are we trying to develop in our English Language Arts classrooms?
- Why is English Language Arts important in the development of those thinkers?

Simon Sinek in his book Start with Why says,
> "Knowing your WHY is not the only way to be successful, but it is the only way to maintain a lasting success and have a greater blend of innovation and flexibility. When a WHY goes fuzzy, it becomes much more difficult to maintain the growth, loyalty and inspiration that helped drive the original success." p.50

Access this link to Simon Sinek's TedTalk concerning "Starting with WHY" - https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action

Phase 2
Content Training for Educators

1. **Kansas English Language Arts Standards**

    A. ***Kansas* English Language Arts *Standards*** - Members need to have access to all standards. It may be beneficial to have both the electronic version and a hard copy for taking notes.
    https://community.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=g4s0HZxjYF4%3d&tabid=5559&mid=13575

    B. ***Vertical Alignment Documents*** - This document is meant to help educators better see and understand how skills progress in depth and complexity across the grades in the different domains. The K-12 standards state what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade. While our goal is for every student to be at grade level by the end of each grade, this document was created to assist educators in scaffolding students up to grade level proficiency as they move through the grade bands. When evaluating potential resources, evaluate the resource to make sure that its linear progression matches, and prepares students for the standards and above and below each grade.
    https://community.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=5559

    C. ***Fluency*** - Members need to understand the difference between fluency and rote memorization detached from meaning. The KSDE published White paper should be referenced and shared during the training session.
    http://community.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=PvDI8LdQAbI%3d&tabid=6036&mid=14879

2. **English Language Arts Five Foundational Practices**
    1. Write, speak, read, and listen appropriately in all disciplines.
    2. Seek out and work to understand diverse perspectives.
    3. Use knowledge gained from literacy experiences to solve problems.
    4. Create multimodal versions of texts for a range of purposes and audiences.
    5. Self-regulate and monitor growth in writing, speaking, reading, and listening.

These five foundational practices are intended to support a philosophy aligned with the Kansas State Board of Education's vision and goals, which are intended to ensure that, through their PreK-12 experiences, Kansas kids are equipped with the academic, cognitive, metacognitive, technical, and employability skills required for postsecondary success, as well as the capacity to positively impact the world around them.

Pedagogical Training for Educators

In 2010, the Kansas State Department of Education partnered with the University of Kansas to produce and publish the state's literacy plan in the [Kansas State Literacy Plan and Kansas Guide to Learning: Literacy](#). This plan is meant to outline and describe the stages of literacy development (birth through grade 12) with corresponding teaching practices that promote best-practice, intervention, and considerations for teaching the four domains of literacy: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The document states:

> "The KGLL intends to shape literacy instruction for each Kansas student by identifying foci for targeted age groups, and by providing parents, educators and other caretakers with guidance related to engagement, motivation, curriculum, and instruction for student literacy experiences from Birth through Grade 12. The KGLL is informed by current research on literacy learning, evidence-based practices, and key questions and considerations for stakeholder groups."

The document includes the following sections for each domain:
Environment
Motivation and Engagement
Learning Objectives
Text Selection
Critical Analysis and/or Domain Awareness
Strategies for Growth
Elements of the Domain
Vocabulary

Each section then focuses on the following topics:
Effective Instruction and Elements of Curricula across All Content Areas
Critical Questions and Considerations for Teaching and Learning
Standards Connections
Considerations

This Literacy Guide allows educators to develop a common understanding of what literacy development looks like from a child's beginning to his or her completion of the public school curriculum. Additionally, it creates a common understanding of what a literacy classroom looks like and includes. When considering a classroom resource, review its content for how well it accomplishes the goals of literacy education as laid out in our state plan.

3. **Growth Mindset in English Language Arts**
   The term 'growth mindset' comes from the groundbreaking work of Carol Dweck. She identified that everyone holds ideas about [his or her] own potential. Some people believe that their intelligence is more or less fixed in reading/writing- you are literate, or you are not. About 40% of students have these damaging 'fixed mindset' ideas. Another 40% have a 'growth mindset' –

they believe that they can learn anything and that their intelligence can grow. The other 20% alternate between the two mindsets.

Students with a fixed mindset are those who are more likely to give up easily, whereas students with a growth mindset are those who keep going even when work is hard, and who are persistent. The two mindsets are associated with different achievement pathways . . . .

<div align="center">Jo Boaler's website YouCubed</div>

Research from Boaler (2016) shows that every time we make a mistake, our brains grow. This is counterintuitive to a performance culture with a focus on "correct answers." The vast majority of classrooms are structured to give work that students will get correct. Additionally, our performance-based culture devalues mistakes, punishing students for mistakes and wrong answers. Yet studies of business people show that the most successful individuals make more mistakes than those who are less successful. These findings should prompt educators to reconsider the value of mistakes and change the messages received about mistakes.

According to Dweck (2007), for the last few decades many parents and educators have been more interested in making students feel good about themselves in their academics than in helping them achieve. The focus needs to be on learning.

As with an absence of mistakes, **productive struggle** is often nonexistent in classrooms. Productive struggle doesn't mean that you just allow students to learn without any type of guidance or support. It does mean, however, that we provide students tasks and situations that will allow them to stretch their brains. We ask questions that aren't easily answered but not impossible to answer. Students should understand that struggling is learning and should be an expected part of their education.

When it comes to developing a growth mindset in our readers, Gravity Goldberg (MindShift) outlines four practices of the teacher to help promote student ownership of their learning and reading. These roles include:

> **Miner**: In this role, the teacher must examine how a student interacts with a text in order to help them reexamine their strategies and become more aware of what does and does not work for them as readers and learners.
> **Mirror**: The teacher provides feedback for students that directly relates to reading strategies and student thinking.
> **Model**: Teachers can also model reading strategies and ways of thinking that students can then use individually during their own interactions with a difficult text.
> **Mentor**: Here, the teacher serves as a coach who works to motivate students as they begin to explore new strategies for reading and thinking. The teacher encourages students to adapt and grow without feeling defeated.

Phase 3
Examine Independent Research Concerning English Language Arts Curricula

Using research studies to gain more information about curricula is important. Publishers will provide research studies but it is important to find out if these studies were paid for by the publishing company or if this was done by an independent research organization to provide a more unbiased review.

The following should be used to gather information:
- Websites
  - EdReports -
  - Evidence for ESSA -
    https://www.evidenceforessa.org/programs/reading/elementary
  - What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) -
    https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW/Results?filters=,Literacy
- Non-local control states such as
  - Hawaii:
    http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/CommonCore/Curriculum%20Materials%20Review%20Summary%20Report.pdf
  - Louisiana:
    https://www.louisianabelieves.com/academics/ONLINE-INSTRUCTIONAL-MATERIALS-REVIEWS/curricular-resources-annotated-reviews
- Other districts

Tools for evaluating resources
- Achievethecore.org Research and Articles over ELA Instruction
- Achievethecore.org ELA/Literacy Instructional Practice Toolkit
- Achievethecore.org Grade Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool
- Achieve.org ELA Tools
- IES Rubric for Evaluating Reading/Literacy Materials
- NCTE Position Statements on Teaching Materials
- NCTE Position Statements on Selecting Publishers of Instructional Materials
- Review all of NCTE's Position Statements

Phase 4
Piloting the Curricula/Resources

1. **Teachers need to pilot more than one curriculum/resource.** If teachers use only one resource, then they don't have anything to compare it with and will automatically be biased toward the curriculum/resource that they piloted. In order to provide comparisons, more than one should be tried out by each teacher.

2. **Make sure you set up Pilot Cycles that include opportunities for the teachers to provide feedback about each curriculum.** Each curriculum/resource should receive a predetermined number of weeks to be piloted by the teachers with a feedback session scheduled immediately after each cycle. Once two cycles have been completed, the feedback session should add in a comparison between the two piloted curricula/resources. If you are able to do three or more cycles, then feedback sessions should include comparison opportunities for all curricula/resources piloted up to that point.

Piloting curricula/resources is similar to buying a car. You can sit in a car, touch the car, smell the car, but if you don't DRIVE the car, you really don't know what it is you are purchasing. This isn't about driving in the parking lot but on the highway to really test it out.

This applies to resource adoptions too! In order to effectively use a resource, teachers need a voice in the process, and the opportunity to truly "try out" the resource in order to evaluate it. This isn't *flipping/clicking through* the resource (like driving in the parking lot). Rather, this is committing to using a pilot resource in an upcoming unit of instruction and fully committing by using all the parts and pieces (strategies, practice opportunities, assessments, etc.). Then, and only then, will teachers be able to evaluate a resource for strengths and weaknesses.

It is important to pilot more than one resource. Typically two cycles of piloting work the best for most schools/districts. After the first cycle is complete and feedback is received, teachers then try a second resource using the same process as above.

Depending on the size of the district, it might look different. There should be participation in every grade level and course that will be adopting with all options on the table that meet the basic guidelines and pass the non-negotiables for your district. Evaluation of resources needs to be beyond "I like this one." Rubrics are usually a good idea (such as the rubrics listed in Phase 3), so there is some quantitative and qualitative data to look through when making a final decision.

Here is a general guideline from the CA Department of Education (2015) on best practices for piloting curriculum with districts of various sizes. Link to full document:

Small Districts: (1A, 2A)
1. Form a committee including admin, teacher(s), parents or other district personnel to choose at least two curricula to try out.
2. Contact publishers for piloting freebies
3. Choose 1-2 teachers to decide on using all (or selected) components of each curricula for one academic year. If only one teacher is piloting, the committee will need to decide which of the two, or more, curricula to pilot at this time.
4. May want to compile a list during, or at the end of the semester, to make notes of pros/cons along the way.
5. After the trial year, have the teachers compare/contrast results (might include pre/post-tests, anecdotal evidence from pilot classrooms, student/parent feedback)
6. Make a decision as a group for the following academic year

Medium & Large Districts: (3A, 4A, 5A, 6A)
1. Form a committee including admin, teachers, parents or other district personnel to choose at least two curricula to try out.
2. Contact publishers for piloting freebies
3. Choose 4-5 teachers to decide on using all (or selected) components of each curricula for one academic year.
4. Have the teachers attend a PD session (ideally provided by the publisher) to learn about the different components of the curricula and agree on what pieces will be used or not used.
5. May want to compile a list during, or at the end of the semester, to make notes of pros/cons along the way.
6. After the trial year, have the teachers compare/contrast results (might include pre/post-tests, anecdotal evidence from pilot classrooms, student/parent feedback)
7. Make a decision as a group for the following academic year

Forms and Documents for Collecting Information
We are providing some documents in the next few pages that could be used by your team to assist in collecting data concerning the curricula/resources used in the pilots. These should be modified to fit the needs of your district/school.

Overall rating:	0	1	2	3

Program Implementation Feedback Form

Program Name: _____   Date: _____

Team members:

_____

Strengths:

Challenges/Obstacles:

Comparison of Programs Form

Name of Programs: _____

Date: _____

Team members:

_____

Rank the Programs below:

1.

2.

3.

Explain why program number 1 ranked the highest. Be specific and give comparisons based on the standards and the learning progressions.

Phase 5
Selection of Curriculum/Resource

1. Once the pilots (at least 2 cycles) have been completed then the feedback must be compiled by the facilitators of the pilot committee.
2. A meeting should be scheduled so district leaders and building leadership teams are presented with the information collected. Discuss the overall thoughts and takeaways, then collect feedback from these groups.
3. After meetings to share the initial data are completed, the data needs to be synthesized and taken to district administration to be shared.
4. A discussion of the data and the financial considerations should take place and a final recommendation can then be determined and taken to the local board of education.

A final thought from past NCTM President, Diane Briars (2014) – "Rate and discuss rather than score. Analysis of materials is qualitative rather than quantitative; that is, reviewers are judging the quality of content treatment, instructional activities, and so forth, in different materials. Categories such as "not found", "high" and "low" can be more useful than numerical scales."

Phase 6
Educate All Stakeholders in Order to Implement the Curriculum/Resource Effectively

Board members, site councils, special presentations - all will be necessary to answer questions and provide information about a way of teaching that differs from what most parents and community members experienced. This will require time and the willingness to address all questions. It might be beneficial to bring in someone from outside the community who might lend an air of expertise that some stakeholders will need to experience.

Another group of stakeholders that must be recognized and educated are the teachers who will be using the material. All training that was used with the original English Language Arts team should be provided to all teachers. The importance of supporting the new choice when speaking outside of the educational community is essential to the success of the new program.

How Does This Process Connect to KESA and the SBOE Vision and Goals?

Kansas State Board of Education Vision: *Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.*

Kansas State Board of Education Goals:
A successful Kansas high school graduate has the academic preparation, cognitive preparation, technical skills, employability skills and civic engagement to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry recognized certification or in the workforce, without the need for remediation.

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