

Purpose of the Literacy Study Group

We recognize the importance of literacy as a gateway skill which provides access to **lifelong learning** across all content areas.

In the spirit of **continuous improvement**, the Byram Hills School District will engage in a yearlong study of literacy *to deepen our knowledge and understanding of how young children learn to read and write.*

The information we learn -- in collaboration with our K-5 faculty -- will guide our future decisions as we **review and revise our literacy curriculum** to best *meet the needs of all our students.*

Overview

- Facilitated by two **expert literacy researchers**
- Five evening meetings
- Teachers, administrators, and parents
- Four additional public meetings
- Created resource page on the District [website](#) →
- *Examples of some actions to date:*
 - Trained all K-5 special education teachers in Orton-Gillingham
 - Trained teachers on *Foundations*
 - Offering various literacy PD this summer and next year
 - Developing a 3-5 year literacy plan with specific goals
 - Engaging all faculty in discussion and planning of our goals



Examples of Topics Studied

- How the brain learns to read.
- What the science of reading is and is not.
- The “pillars” of reading, i.e., the Scarborough’s reading rope.
- Oral language development of **emergent readers** (birth to mid-K.)
- Building phonological awareness and letter recognition.
- Using read alouds to build listening comprehension, background knowledge, and vocabulary.
- The traits of **novice readers** (mid-K to early grade 2) including, require systematic and explicit instruction in blending and common word patterns; apply comprehension strategies; development of vocabulary; develop automaticity in the most common words.
- Ways to teach phonics patterns.
- How orthographic mapping of words and language occurs.
- Ways to improve comprehension and vocabulary.
- The use of disciplinary units for **transitional readers** (grades 2 - 3.)
- The elements of fluency, including rate, prosody, and expression, and fluency instructional model (FORI.)
- The elements of writing, including critical thinking, syntax, text structure, writing craft, and transcription.
- Teaching the **post transitional readers and writers** grades 4 - 8), including, communicating in the disciplinary content areas; comprehension strategies; fluency; the nuances of multisyllabic words.
- The use of content-driven units of study in grades 3 and beyond.
- What is dyslexia and ways to support struggling readers through a strong MTSS model.
- Using an evidence-based approach to support and respond to student needs.

District Next Steps

Literacy Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

We will review our literacy curricular, instructional, and assessment practices, building upon previous work conducted over the past several years and using the knowledge and experience of our K-5 faculty. We will engage in a continuous improvement process over the next three to five years to reflect upon current practices, consider research and best practices in reading and writing, and revise/refine current practices and curriculum as necessary.

Specifically, we will:

- a. Share our takeaways with the Board of Education, parents, and K-5 faculty.
- b. Develop a three to five year plan in collaboration with K-5 administrators and faculty to identify specific literacy goals and intended student outcomes,.
- c. Continue discussions with parents as we implement the plan.

District Next Steps

Areas of focus may include:

- Review **alignment** within and across grades of our curriculum scope and sequence.
- Evaluate the use of **research-based** instructional strategies.
- Conduct an **assessment audit** and review screening and diagnostic tools.
- Assess the need for additional **high quality texts** for classrooms.
- Examine the integration of **content knowledge** in the literacy curriculum.
- Review the curriculum **alignment** between general education and the special education program.
- Revise the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (**MTSS**) plan.
- Consider the **continuity** of the literacy curriculum **beyond K-5**.

BYRAM HILLS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



***Thank
you!***



Creating the Leaders of the Next Generation