



LITERACY

“As the currency used in schools, literacy provides access to literate institutions and has an impact on cognition, or thinking processes; it also shapes the way we think.”

Programme for International Student Assessment

LITERACY

City Schools students thrive as learners in classrooms where highly effective, culturally relevant literacy instruction, grounded in the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, is evident every day. Students' literacy development is guided by teachers who use research-based instruction and assessment practices and who engage in extensive learning and reflection about pedagogy and the content they teach. Literacy activities that are authentic and reflect real-life experiences encourage and support students to achieve beyond their own expectations and to view learning as meaningful.

EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

SCHOOLS PRIORITIZE literacy as the foundation for all learning.

SCHOOLS IMPLEMENT coherent, rigorous, standards-based curricula in pre-k to 12th-grade English language arts and in literacy across each and every content area.

TEACHERS HAVE TIME in their daily schedules for professional learning, reflection, and collaboration to improve instruction.

SCHOOLS IMPLEMENT a comprehensive framework for literacy instruction that includes whole group instruction, small group instruction, and time for students to work independently.

TEACHERS DIFFERENTIATE instruction to meet the needs of all learners (including English learners, students receiving special education services, and gifted/advanced learners).

SCHOOLS IMPLEMENT a comprehensive, standards-based assessment system (including diagnostic, formative, interim, and summative assessments) to guide instruction and professional development.

SCHOOLS ENSURE that print and digital texts are abundant across genres, with a balance of informational and narrative texts.

EVIDENCE: WHAT YOU SHOULD SEE AND HEAR

IN CLASSROOMS

STUDENTS are on task and engaged in challenging and meaningful learning.

TEACHERS use every minute efficiently.

INSTRUCTION meets grade-level standards, is relevant to students' lives, and demands student voice and choice.

TARGETED INTERVENTIONS are determined through regular review of data.

STUDENTS' oral and written discourse is grounded in evidence.

STUDENTS develop deep capacity for narrative technique, empowering student agency and voice in a range of oral and written forms.

STUDENTS establish goals for their own learning across the year.

WORK SAMPLES in student portfolios document growth across the year.

AROUND THE SCHOOL

JOYFUL LEARNING and celebrations of success are evident.

A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE of open teaching practice and commitment to continuous improvement is the norm.

COACHING CONVERSATIONS take place every day among teachers, school leaders, and students.

AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM guides improvement in instruction across the school and ensures that teachers receive targeted, timely feedback.

EXPERT-LED TEACHER TEAMS collaborate in planning, practice, looking at student work, data analysis, and peer coaching.

THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT plan and schedule reflect clear prioritization of teachers' development of content knowledge and pedagogical expertise.

DISPLAYS of student work make learning visible throughout the school and in the community.



EXPECTATIONS FOR THE DISTRICT OFFICE

DISTRICT STAFF PROVIDE research-informed expertise in content and pedagogy and create structures and opportunities for teachers and school leaders to deepen their content and pedagogical knowledge, leading to continuous improvement in schools.

DISTRICT STAFF CREATE structures and opportunities for teachers and school leaders to collaborate across schools and share best practices.

DISTRICT STAFF ENSURE that teachers have common planning time and extended opportunities to learn about and become skilled in planning and teaching the curriculum.

DISTRICT STAFF TAKE PART in weekly learning walks.

DISTRICT STAFF PROVIDE ongoing, targeted, content-specific feedback that improves student achievement.

DISTRICT STAFF INSTITUTE cycles for evaluating and revising literacy materials, curriculum, and assessments to ensure they support meeting standards for all students across the continuum of need.

DISTRICT STAFF PROVIDE a user-friendly online platform for collecting, reporting, and analyzing data.

DISTRICT STAFF ENGAGE internal and external experts to gather feedback on literacy implementation priorities.

ENGAGEMENT OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

SCHOOLS DESIGNATE a parent liaison who ensures family engagement efforts include meetings focused on the literacy work in the school.

FAMILY MEMBERS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE on school committees and advisory groups.

SCHOOLS PROVIDE resources for families to encourage regular reading at home, including during the summer.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS PARTICIPATE in classroom celebrations of learning that are led by students.

FAMILY MEMBERS REGULARLY MEET with teachers to discuss student progress and ways to ensure it is on track.

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT WORK that meet standards are regularly shared and discussed with family and community members.

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

EVERY SCHOOL'S INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM (ILT) sets clear expectations for implementation of literacy instruction that are reflected in school improvement plans and individual student learning objectives for all instructional staff.

SCHOOLS MONITOR and adjust implementation efforts across all content areas based on self-assessment data, student achievement data, and observational data.

SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS ANALYZE DATA (from formative, interim, and summative assessments) during school team meetings.

ILT MEMBERS VISIT CLASSROOMS regularly to ensure all teachers receive support to implement the literacy curriculum and literacy expectations fully across all content areas.

CONSISTENT ANALYSIS of student work results in improved classroom practice.

THE ILT REVIEWS FEEDBACK about professional development, ensures instructional staff implement newly learned content and pedagogy, and adjusts professional development plans based on trends in data.

THE DISTRICT REGULARLY REVIEWS aggregated school-based data to monitor progress in implementation and to make adjustments as needed.

THE ILT ANALYZES and adjusts curriculum based on students' needs.

SURVEYS OF STAFF AND FAMILY MEMBERS SHOW increased understanding of standards and curriculum implementation.

THE ILT PARTNERS with staff in the district's Achievement and Accountability Office to participate in school effectiveness reviews and to review data reports from school visits.