

Spotlight on Common Core Literacy - K-8

District 84.5 is in the second year of our important transition to the Common Core State Standards. In 2013-2014, we began implementing the more rigorous and aligned standards.

Our commitment to student success and a love of literacy has been demonstrated over the years through our high quality instruction. District 84.5 students have shown their success through classroom assessments, benchmark assessments, and Terra Nova and ISAT testing. However, these assessments are shifting, and each grade level is now addressing the implementation of the new standards.

Overall, the shift to the Common Core Standards is intended to provide a clear progression from one grade level to the next, ultimately leading to what is needed for success in college and careers.

For literacy standards, these shifts can be described in the following ways:

- **More complex texts:**
Students will be expected to know more and read more complex texts.
- **More balance of non-fiction/informational reading and fiction:**
Students will be expected to read and understand a more hearty mix of informational and nonfiction reading. This does not replace the District's commitment to great literature at all grade levels. It represents an understanding that our children will need to be competent in reading and understanding nonfiction in preparation for college and careers. This includes more integration of reading and writing skills in Science and Social Studies as well.
- **Use of the Pearson Literacy Program:**
This curriculum offers multiple tools that address the new standards on a continuum of learning levels. These include multiple measurements of text complexity, a direct link of writing in response to reading, and learning the key vocabulary of the Common Core. We anticipate continued changes and improvements to the curriculum in the area of Common Core moving forward.
- **More emphasis on a progression of argument writing, research writing, and the use of nonfiction resources:**
Students will work with high quality literature and nonfiction materials in grades 6 through 8.
- **Integration of technology as a tool for teaching literacy for the 21st Century learner:**
Students in grades K-5 will use technology for learning in multiple ways as part of the Journeys curriculum. Technology integration in grades 6 through 8 includes the use of one-to-one Google Chromes that will remain in their classrooms.