

Framework of Competencies for Professional Practice: Literacy Instruction and Support for Literacy Instruction

The Framework of Competencies for Professional Practice identifies competencies—knowledge, skills and dispositions for sound/effective literacy instruction and actions that support sound literacy instruction. The competencies speak to the work of teachers (*Literacy Instruction*) and to the work of others whose roles impact literacy teaching and learning (*Support for Literacy Instruction*) such as principals, executive/cabinet leadership, and instructional coaches and specialists. Presenting competencies in this way invites educators into conversations that lead to focused, effective and coherent professional practices that support literacy achievement for every student.

The Framework outlines a “literacy practice field” in which EI partners with school districts for the purpose of every student achieving high levels of literacy. The Framework answers three questions:

- 1) *What **foundational knowledge** supports sound literacy teaching and learning?*
- 2) *What **actions** embody sound literacy instruction and support for sound literacy instruction?*
- 3) *What **organizational conditions** focus, connect and optimize literacy practice?*

The Framework does not, however, prescribe where to begin, how to begin or a specific pathway for building/strengthening competencies. Its intent is to invite educators into professional learning to build individual and collective competencies and systemwide capacity to enable every student to realize high literacy achievement.

The Framework presents six areas of literacy instruction and actions that support sound literacy instruction:

- Effective/Research-based Literacy Practices
- Continuous Professional Learning
- Collaboration to Support Literacy Learning
- Engaging Families to Support Student Literacy Learning
- Using Data for Instruction and Organizational Improvement
- Building and Acting on Shared Purpose for Advancing Student Literacy.

The Framework of Competencies for Professional Practice identifies practices that researchers, literacy experts and practitioners have found to promote high levels of literacy for students of differing abilities and backgrounds. The document is a work in progress. Further refinement is being informed by ongoing work with school district partners, researchers and experts in literacy education and organizational learning.

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Effective/ Research-based Literacy Practice	
Literacy Instruction	Support for Literacy Instruction
<p>Foundational Knowledge</p> <p>I-1 Know current literacy research in areas pertinent to one’s own practice</p> <p>I-2 Understand how effective literacy practice builds on research-based principles of learning (prior knowledge, cultural background, interest/motivation, and physiological dimensions of memory and cognitive function) in the literacy development of students</p> <p>I-3 Know when, how and why to use literacy instructional strategies and assessments</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>I-4 Diagnose student reading problems</p> <p>I-5 Use informal and formal literacy measures to inform instructional decision making on an ongoing basis</p> <p>I-6 Apply literacy strategies pertinent to one’s own grade/subject area and level of schooling</p> <p>I-7 Use a wide range of instructional strategies to meet the learning needs of every student</p> <p>I-8 Differentiate classroom instruction so that every student has the opportunity to achieve content standards</p> <p>I-9 Create pedagogical structures that ensure that students’ learning needs are appropriately addressed in the context of classroom instruction</p> <p>I-10 Work collaboratively to create and adapt literacy practices to meet the learning needs of students</p>	<p>Foundational Knowledge</p> <p>S-1 Know what research says about supporting effective literacy instruction pertinent to one’s role</p> <p>S-2 Understand how effective literacy practice builds on research-based principles of learning (prior knowledge, cultural background, interest/motivation, and physiological dimensions of memory and cognitive function) in the literacy development of students</p> <p>S-3 Know research and theory regarding an innovation and foster such knowledge among staff involved in and affected by the innovation</p> <p>S-4 Know/anticipate how an innovation will affect curriculum, instruction and assessment practices (literacy and general curriculum)</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>S-5 Provide opportunities for educators to become knowledgeable of and share current research on literacy instruction</p> <p>S-6 Provide opportunities and support that enables educators to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - read and critique current research on literacy instruction - acquire and share effective literacy instructional practices - understand and use literacy assessments appropriately - map instructional practices to current research - understand test development and design and relationship to standards and classroom practice <p>S-7 Ensure coherent and rigorous curriculum, instruction and assessment that enables every student to acquire and apply literacy learning in multiple settings</p> <p>S-8 Provide models of and resources for the development of content area instruction which provides texts that address the individual learning needs of students</p> <p>S-9 Support new ideas, exploration and innovation in literacy instruction</p> <p>S-10 Monitor and report the impact of programs and innovations</p> <p>S-11 Recruit instructional and support staff who are knowledgeable and skilled in literacy instruction</p> <p>Organizational Conditions</p> <p>S-12 Bring coherence to district efforts to improve student literacy</p> <p>S-13 Create school wide structures to ensure that teachers and other specialists (e.g., special education teachers, ELL teachers, social workers) work collaboratively to ensure that classroom instruction appropriately supports student learning needs</p> <p>S-14 Support articulation within and between grade levels, subject areas and levels of schooling</p> <p>S-15 Communicate with stakeholders about ongoing programs and innovations</p>

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Continuous Professional Learning	
Literacy Instruction	Support for Literacy Instruction
<p>Foundational Knowledge</p> <p>I-11 Seek out and engage in professional learning opportunities to refine instructional practice based on identification of learning needs</p> <p>I-12 Engage in action research focused on one’s practice</p> <p>I-13 Reflect and self-evaluate to improve instruction</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>I-14 Engage in individual and collective inquiry (formulate a question about instructional practice, seek relevant information and data, plan and implement actions, seek feedback) to improve literacy instruction</p> <p>I-15 Participate in learning networks and other peer-to-peer learning opportunities in ways that support personal instructional queries</p> <p>I-16 Apply new learning by refining literacy strategies pertinent to one’s own grade/subject area and level of schooling</p>	<p>Foundational Knowledge</p> <p>S-16 Engage in individual and collective inquiry (formulate a question about leadership or organizational practice, seek relevant information and data, plan and implement actions, seek feedback) that is focused on strengthening support for continuous professional learning</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>S-17 Use a variety of methods to assess the relationship between teacher knowledge and student performance (e.g. formal and informal assessments, surveys, personal inquiry processes, walk throughs, focus groups, etc.)</p> <p>S-18 Initiate and support professional learning opportunities in areas of identified need</p> <p>S-19 Design and offer learning experiences that reflect characteristics of adult learners</p> <p>S-20 Provide literacy professional learning opportunities that engage professional staff across grade levels, subject areas and levels of schooling</p> <p>S-21 Facilitate professional learning in multiple contexts (workshops, study group, peer collaboration networks, modeling and debriefing sessions, walk throughs, etc.)</p> <p>S-22 Share research findings about literacy teaching and learning</p> <p>S-23 Support teachers as they apply new professional learning in their classrooms</p> <p>Organizational Conditions</p> <p>S-24 Enact a clearly articulated theory of change for organizational capacity building wherein educators acquire, share and apply new knowledge</p> <p>S-25 Initiate and support structures for continuous individual and organizational learning and reflection</p> <p>S-26 Design and support inquiry processes in order to evaluate practices and plan new actions</p> <p>S-27 Evaluate strengths and weaknesses in individual and organizational performance in order to create an asset-based professional learning plan that promotes continuous professional growth for all staff</p> <p>S-28 Dedicate time for deep professional learning and reflection</p>

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Collaboration to Support Literacy Learning	
Literacy Instruction	Support for Literacy Instruction
<p>Foundational Knowledge I-17 Hold dispositions that support collaboration to improve instruction and student literacy</p> <p>Actions I-18 Engage productively in peer coaching and mentoring relationships I-19 Demonstrate collaborative skills in improving instruction and student literacy I-20 Engage productively in (grade level/team/subject area/department, school and district) meetings I-21 Engage in collaborative goal setting and problem-solving to improve instruction and student literacy</p>	<p>Foundational Knowledge S-29 Develop skills in facilitation, conversation processes, dialogue and self-management of teams</p> <p>Actions S-30 Provide coaching and mentoring to improve literacy instruction S-31 Provide opportunities for educators to acquire and apply coaching and mentoring skills S-32 Provide opportunities for educators to learn and apply collaborative goal setting and collaborative problem-solving to improve literacy instruction</p> <p>Organizational Conditions S-33 Create environments that are safe and supportive of collaboration, peer coaching and mentoring S-34 Provide structures that foster collaboration across and within schools, grade levels and departments S-35 Dedicate time for collaboration</p>

Engaging Families to Support Student Literacy Learning	
Literacy Instruction	Support for Literacy Instruction
<p>Foundational Knowledge I-22 Recognize and act on the premise that families as essential partners, not desired extras</p> <p>Actions I-23 Maintain trusting and respectful relationships as the foundation of effective family engagement I-24 Know and apply strategies for learning from and with parents about family literacy practices I-25 Mutually agree upon and share expectations between schools and families I-26 Talk with families about student performance in ways that are meaningful to them I-27 Integrate family and school literacy practices to support student literacy learning</p>	<p>Foundational Knowledge S-36 Recognize and act on the premise that families as essential partners, not desired extras</p> <p>Actions S-37 Provide opportunities for educators to learn strategies for engaging families to support student literacy learning S-38 Provide opportunities for educators to learn how to talk with families from cultures different from their own about learning expectations, instructional practices, and student performance</p> <p>Organizational Conditions S-39 Create welcoming and supportive environments for all families, especially those of traditionally under-represented and of low-achieving students S-40 Ensure staff access to information about families S-41 Identify and build on family and community assets to support student literacy learning S-42 Implement practices that inform and engage parents as full partners in their child’s learning</p>

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Using Data for Instruction and Organizational Improvement	
Literacy Instruction	Support for Literacy Instruction
<p>Foundational Knowledge I-28 Understand data on student literacy performance</p> <p>Actions I-29 Recognize trends and patterns in student performance data I-30 Interpret diagnostic data to identify students' literacy instructional needs I-31 Plan/modify instruction based on student performance data I-32 Use data to inform inquiries into instructional practice</p>	<p>Foundational Knowledge S-43 Know and use instructional and organizational literacy data (students, student performance, school/district effectiveness) to improve literacy instruction</p> <p>Actions S-44 Provide opportunities for educators to enhance their understanding and use of literacy data to improve literacy instruction S-45 Engage teachers, support staff and administrators in data analysis and interpretation for the purpose of instructional planning S-46 Support teachers and administrators in using diagnostic assessments for planning and instruction S-47 Support data-based inquiries into instructional practice S-48 Provide student performance data that is timely, accurate, complete and in formats that educators find meaningful and useful to them S-49 Ensure that data on student learning and teacher practice continuously informs decisions about-students with learning needs</p> <p>Organizational Conditions S-50 Provide student and organizational (school and district) data to parents and the community in formats that are meaningful and useful to them S-51 Support stakeholders in understanding student performance and organizational data S-52 Engage stakeholders (internal and external) in data analysis for the purpose of school and district improvement</p>

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Building and Acting on Shared Purpose for Advancing Student Literacy	
Literacy Instruction	Support for Literacy Instruction
<p>Foundational Knowledge</p> <p>I-33 Uphold (articulate and be an advocate for) a vision of high expectations for all students and staff</p> <p>I-34 Recognize and act on the premise that all educators are literacy educators</p> <p>I-35 See oneself and one’s role in relation to grade level/subject area, school and district commitments and actions to improve literacy for all students</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>I-36 Engage with colleagues in finding meaning and role in advancing the district’s mission</p> <p>I-37 Engage with colleagues in defining and acting on the role of literacy in the district’s mission</p> <p>I-38 Use classroom strategies that address the public policy requirements (e.g. standards based education system, accountability practices) and incorporate effective research based literacy practices to meet the needs of every student</p> <p>I-39 Ensure that efforts to address public policy requirements are responsive to the social, economic and cultural context of students</p>	<p>Foundational Knowledge</p> <p>S-53 Recognize and act on the premise that all educators are literacy educators</p> <p>S-54 Uphold (articulate and be an advocate for) a vision of high expectations for all students and staff</p> <p>S-55 Recognize and act on the premise that all stakeholders are essential partners in achieving the district’s mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate in ways that are meaningful to all stakeholders - Build trusting and respectful relationships among all stakeholders as the foundation for organizational learning and change - Support all stakeholders in seeing themselves and their roles in relation to school and district commitments (mission and goals) and actions to improve literacy for all students <p>Actions/Organizational Conditions</p> <p>S-56 Build shared meaning and agreements related to literacy teaching and learning</p> <p>S-57 Hold each other accountable for improving (instructional, organizational and leadership) practice</p> <p>S-58 Be clear about authority, responsibilities and role for literacy improvement across the district</p> <p>S-59 Bring coherence to policies, procedures and resource allocation to support literacy and other organizational improvement goals</p> <p>S-60 Create conditions (through change processes and social structures) that foster understanding and involvement in literacy and district improvement/change efforts</p> <p>S-61 Seek and acquire resources to support literacy improvement</p> <p>S-62 Develop school and district wide support to meet the public policy educational requirements (e.g. standards based education system, accountability practices) and incorporate effective research based literacy practices</p> <p>S-63 Ensure that efforts to address the public policy requirements are responsive to the social, economic and cultural context of the community and the school</p>

References

Consensus Documents

The consensus documents outline practices and conditions that researchers, experts and practitioners hold as contributors to high achievement for all students. Several of the documents speak specifically to literacy achievement and more specifically to literacy achievement for students whose primary language is not English (ELLs).

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Studies of Comprehensive School Reform

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