Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards

COLORADO
Department of Education

Overview

The Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards are part of the Elementary Education Endorsement (K-6) outlined in the Colorado State Board of Education Rules. An Elementary Education Endorsement is intended for educators interested in teaching at the elementary level in Colorado. In 2016, this endorsement was updated in State Board Rule to ensure alignment with both to the Colorado Academic Standards as well as the Reading to Ensure Academic Success Act (READ Act). The Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards outline and describe what all K-6 teachers need to know and be able to do to teach all students to read proficiently.

The Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards are required for K-6 educators in addition to the Teacher Quality Standards.

To navigate the K-6 Teacher Literacy Standards:

- Use the buttons on the right to select a literacy competency area.

- Use the 'back to the top' link to return to the first page and K-6 Teacher Literacy Competencies navigating menu.

Purpose of the Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards

Teaching reading effectively requires considerable knowledge and skill. In a time of increased focus on standards for student achievement, Colorado's Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards fill a crucial need by comprehensively addressing the nature of effective teaching of reading by addressing the teacher behaviors that lead to student behaviors.

This tool can be used to guide the preparation and professional development of those who preparing to teach reading and related literacy skills. In addition to the initial endorsement process, this tool can be used as a self-assessment to identify areas to support continuous professional development.

K-6 Teacher Literacy Standards

- Literacy Development

- Structure of Language

- Assessment Administration and Interpretation

- Phonology Development

- Phonics and Word Recognition Development

- Develop Fluent, Automatic Reading

- Text Comprehension Development

- Vocabulary Development

- Handwriting, Spelling and Written Expression

Literacy Development

An elementary educator that is highly knowledgeable about literacy development is also able to develop oral and written learning, as well as:

- *Understand and explain the language processing requirements of proficient reading and writing including:*
    - phonological (speech sound) processing
    - orthographic (print) processing
    - semantic (meaning) processing
    - syntactic (sentence level) processing
    - discourse (connected text level) processing

- *Understand and explain other aspects of cognition and behavior that affect reading and writing including*
    - attention
    - executive function
    - memory
    - processing speed
    - graphomotor control

- *Define and identify environmental, cultural and social factors that contribute to literacy development* (e.g., language spoken at home, language and literacy experiences and cultural values).

- *Know and identify phases in the typical developmental progression of oral language* (semantic, syntactic, pragmatic); phonological skill; printed word recognition; spelling; reading fluency; reading comprehension and written expression.

- *Understand and explain the known causal relationship among phonological skill, phonic decoding, spelling, accurate and automatic word recognition, text reading fluency, background knowledge, verbal reasoning skill, vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing.*

- *Know and explain how the relationships among the major components of literacy development change with reading development* (i.e., changes in oral language, including phonological awareness; phonics and word recognition; spelling; reading and writing fluency; vocabulary; reading comprehension skills and strategies; written expression).

- *Know reasonable goals and expectations for learners at various stages of reading and writing development.*

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Structure of Language

An elementary educator is knowledgeable about the structure of language including:

- *Phonology (the speech sound system), and is able to:*
    - Identify, pronounce, classify and compare the consonant and vowel phonemes of English.

- *Orthography* (the spelling system), and is able to:
    - Understand the broad outline of historical influences on English spelling patterns, especially Anglo-Saxon, Latin (romance) and Greek

- o   Define grapheme as a functional correspondence unit or representation of a phoneme
- o   Recognize and explain common orthographic rules and patterns in English
- o   Know the difference between "high frequency" and "irregular" words
- o   Identify, explain and categorize six basic syllable types in English spelling.
- *Morphology, and is able to:*
  - o   Identify and categorize common morphemes in English, including Anglo-Saxon compounds, inflectional suffixes and derivational suffixes
  - o   Latin-based prefixes, roots and derivational suffixes
  - o   Greek-based combining forms

- *Semantics, and is able to:*
  - o   Understand and identify examples of meaningful word relationships or semantic organization.

- *Syntax, and is able to:*
  - o   Define and distinguish among phrases, dependent clauses and independent clauses in sentence structure
  - o   Identify the parts of speech and the grammatical role of a word in a sentence.

- *Discourse Organization, and is able to:*
  - o   Explain the major differences between narrative and expository discourse
  - o   Identify and construct expository paragraphs of varying logical structures (e.g., classification, reason, sequence)
  - o   Identify cohesive devices in text and inferential gaps in the surface language of text.

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Assessment Administration and Interpretation

An elementary educator is knowledgeable about the administration and interpretation of assessments for planning instruction, including:

- *Understanding the differences among screening, diagnostic, outcome and progress monitoring assessments.*

- *Understanding basic principles of test construction including reliability, validity, norm-referencing and criterion- referencing.*

- *Understanding the principles of progress monitoring and the use of graphs to indicate progress.*

- *Knowing the range of skills typically assessed in terms of phonological skills, decoding skills, oral reading skills, spelling and writing.*

- *Recognizing the content and purposes of the most common diagnostic tests used by psychologists and educational evaluators.*

- *Interpreting measures of reading comprehension and written expression to make appropriate instructional recommendations.*

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Phonology Development

An elementary educator is able to develop phonology, and is able to:

- *Identify the general goal of phonological skill instruction and be able to explicitly state the goal of any phonological teaching activity.*

- *Know the progression of phonological skill development (i.e., rhyme, syllable, onset-rime, phoneme differentiation).*

- *Identify the differences among various phonological manipulations, including identifying, matching, blending, segmenting, substituting and deleting sounds.*

- *Understand the principles of phonological skill instruction: brief, multisensory, conceptual and auditory-verbal.*

- *Understand the reciprocal relationship among phonological processing, reading, spelling and vocabulary.*

- *Understand the phonological features of a second language, such as Spanish, and how they interfere with English pronunciation and phonics.*

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Phonics and Word Recognition Development

An elementary educator is able to develop phonics and word-recognition knowledge related to reading including:

- *Knowing or recognizing the appropriate sequence of phonics concepts from basic to advanced.*

- *Understanding principles of explicit and direct teaching; model, lead, give guided practice and review.*

- *Stating the rationale for multisensory and multimodal techniques.*

- *Knowing the routines of a complete lesson format, from the introduction of a word-recognition concept to fluent application in meaningful reading and writing.*

- *Understanding research-based adaptations of instruction for students with weaknesses in working memory, attention, executive function or processing speed.*

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Develop Fluent, Automatic Reading

An elementary educator is able to develop fluent, automatic reading of text, in addition to:

- *Understanding the role of fluency in word recognition, oral reading, silent reading, comprehension of written discourse and motivation to read.*

- *Understanding reading fluency as a stage of normal reading development, as the primary symptom of some reading disorders and as a consequence of practice and instruction.*

- *Defining and identifying examples of text at a student's frustration, instructional and independent reading level.*

- *Knowing sources of activities for building fluency in component reading skills.*

- *Knowing which instructional activities and approaches are most likely to improve fluency outcomes.*

- *Understanding techniques to enhance a student's motivation to read.*

- *Understanding appropriate uses of assistive technology for students with serious limitations in reading fluency.*
- *Understand the relationship between accuracy and reading fluency.*

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Vocabulary Development

An elementary educator is knowledgeable about vocabulary development related to reading instruction, in addition to:

- *Understanding the role of vocabulary development and vocabulary knowledge in comprehension.*

- *Understanding the role and characteristics of direct and indirect (contextual) methods of vocabulary instruction.*

- *Knowing varied techniques for vocabulary instruction before, during and after reading.*

- *Understanding that word knowledge is multifaceted.*

- *Understanding the sources of wide differences in students' vocabularies.*

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Text Comprehension Development

The elementary educator is able to develop text comprehension including*:*

- *Being familiar with teaching strategies that are appropriate before, during and after reading and that promote reflective reading.*

- *Contrasting the characteristics of major text genres, including narration, exposition and argumentation.*

- *Understanding the similarities and differences between written composition and text comprehension, and the usefulness of writing in building comprehension.*

- *Identifying in any text the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and "academic language" that could be a source of miscomprehension.*

- *Understanding levels of comprehension including the surface code, text base and mental model (situation model).*

- *Understanding factors that contribute to deep comprehension, including background knowledge, vocabulary, verbal reasoning ability, knowledge of literary structures and conventions, and use of skills and strategies for close reading of text.*

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Develop Handwriting, Spelling, and Written Expression

An elementary educator is able to develop handwriting, spelling and written expression, in addition to:

- *Handwriting:*
  - Knowing research-based principles for teaching letter naming and letter formation, both manuscript and cursive.
  - Knowing techniques for teaching handwriting fluency.

- *Spelling:*
  - Recognizing and explaining the relationship between transcription skills and written expression
  - Identifying students' level of spelling development and orthographic knowledge
  - Recognizing and explaining the influences of phonological, orthographic and morphemic knowledge on spelling.

- *Written Expression:*
  - Understanding the major components and processes of written expression and how they interact (e.g., basic writing/transcription skills versus text generation)
  - Knowing grade and developmental expectation for students' writing in the following areas: mechanics and conventions of writing, composition, revision and editing processes
  - Understanding appropriate uses of assistive technology in written expression.

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Where can I learn more?

- Colorado State Board of Education Rules – Elementary Education Endorsement (K-6)
- Colorado State Board of Education Rules - Teacher and Special Services Professional Licensure Standards
- View all CDE fact sheets