
Massachusetts District Literacy Action Plan
Ware Public Schools
Ware, Massachusetts

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Acknowledgments

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Section 1: Connection Between the District Literacy Action Plan and Other District Improvement Plans

The Ware Public Schools District Literacy Action Plan provides goals specifically created to provide the necessary support and tools needed for the improvement of academic achievement for all of our students. Each goal is outlined with a series of action steps required to guarantee its efficacy and success. The plan speaks to the needs of the entire school district, with specific attention paid to implementation in each school, among all grades, with the hope of improving reading and writing of all students across all content areas. The plan will promote the implementation and value of a literacy program that is coordinated between all three school buildings. At the heart of this plan is the intention to actively pursue data analysis to guide and inform the plan in its continuing growth and development.

The goals of the District Literacy Action Plan are aligned with goals #1 and #4 of the Ware Improvement Plan. These goals are as follows:

- Increase MCAS ELA achievement for all students
- Design teaching and learning endeavors and approaches to challenge and support each student towards achieving their potential and maximizing their personal growth.

Section 2: Rationale

A district literacy plan is needed in our district to improve the literacy skills of all students in all grade levels. At the present time, the Ware Middle School and Ware Junior/Senior High School are in corrective action in ELA for subgroups. Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School does not have a designated status and it is the plan's intent to sustain and extend the successful literacy initiatives of the elementary school district-wide.

A district literacy action plan will allow Ware Public Schools to:

- Facilitate consistent communication among school buildings
- Strengthen tiered instruction district-wide
- Improve district assessment tools for writing
- Sustain successful literacy initiatives
- Allow professional development and training in literacy for all content area teachers and allow for literacy coaching
- Establish a district-wide literacy team
- Evaluate scheduling as it applies to literacy instruction
- Explore funding options to allow for a curriculum coordinator and high school reading specialist.

Section 3: Literacy Vision Statement

Ware Public Schools aims to promote the development of mature, inquisitive individuals who are prepared to face the future. Crucial to the cultivation of these students' education is literacy. Ware students who are literate have the ability to use reading, writing and oral language skills to demonstrate understanding and to clearly express and communicate meaning. These abilities transcend setting and are used effectively at school, across content areas and at home. Later, these skills will be transferred to the workplace, and ultimately, to society.

Teachers will work on data teams to identify student need for intervention and to monitor student progress. Teachers will share results with all pertinent staff, students and parents in order to make informed collaborative decisions for each student. Teachers will also use data to adjust instruction accordingly.

Principals will schedule instruction, assign support staff, and provide resources in accordance with agreed upon literacy initiatives. District administrators will ensure that there is adequate funding, staffing and professional development to carry out the literacy plan. Both principals and district administrators will facilitate a system of communication that flows between staff, students and the community.

In this way, Ware students will succeed in school and beyond by demonstrating improved reading, writing, listening, speaking, thinking and problem-solving skills across all content areas to include information and communication technologies.

Section 4: District Literacy Improvement Goals

Goal 1: Strengthen the structure of tiered instruction in English language arts so that all students are better able to meet grade level benchmarks.

Goal 2: Establish and promote continuity and collaboration among grade levels K-12 that will foster an effective literacy program.

Goal 3: Align district-wide literacy curriculum with the Common Core Standards, with a specific focus on improving content area reading and writing.

Section 5: Action Plan Map

Goal 1: Strengthen the structure of tiered instruction in English language arts so that all students are better able to meet grade level expectations.

	Action Step 1	Action Step 2	Action Step 3
→ Action Step	Educators will be able to define tiered instruction	Define strengths and challenges of current scheduling and practices with stakeholders	Based on data from Action Steps 1 and 2, develop recommendations to strengthen the structure of tiered instruction
1. Timeline	August/Sept. 2011	Fall 2011-Winter 2012	Spring 2012
2. Lead Persons	Principals, reading specialists, district literacy team	Principals, District Literacy Team	District Literacy Team, administrators
3. Resources of Implementation	Time: 1 hour, scheduling	Staff assignments, schedules for classroom teachers, specialists and interventionists, union contract, completed surveys	Substitutes for members of the District Literacy Team as needed
4. Specifics of Implementation	PLC/faculty meetings	Monthly meetings, walkthroughs, analysis of surveys	Review analysis and make final recommendations to the superintendent and building staff.
5. Measure of Success	Survey level of understanding	T-chart identifying strengths and challenges of current schedules and practices	Document outlining the recommendations for tiered instruction
6. Check in/review date	October 2011	November, 2011	Spring 2011
	Action Step 4		
→ Action Step	Implement the recommended changes for tiered instruction and interventions in reading district-wide.		
1. Timeline	Phase 1: Fall 2011 Phase 2: Fall 2012		
2. Lead Persons	Building principals		

3. Resources of Implementation	Phase 1: Changes that do not require funding will be implemented (i.e. scheduling, "Walk to Read") Phase 2: Changes that require funding will be addressed by the FY 2013 budget and then implemented. (i.e. curriculum coordinator, high school reading specialist)	
4. Specifics of Implementation	Specifics will be defined by the recommendations from the findings	
5. Measure of Success	An increase in the percentage of students meeting the benchmarks for reading at all grade levels as a result of having received the needed support and interventions	
6. Check in/review date	Phase 1: October, January, May 2011-2012 Phase 2: October, January, May 2012-2013	

Goal 2: Establish and promote continuity and collaboration among grade levels K-12 that will foster an effective literacy program.

	Action Step 1	Action Step 2	Action Step 3
→ Action Step	Establish a district literacy team	Provide data analysis training for building-based data teams	Analyze, interpret, and share building-based data to identify areas of needed intervention and to monitor student progress
1. Timeline	Completed by early fall 2011	Completed by early fall 2011	After each grading quarter
2. Lead Persons	Principal or vice-principal, classroom teacher from each building, reading specialists, special education representatives from each building	Director of Accountability and Title I Services District Literacy Team members according to school	District Literacy Team members according to school (building-based data teams)

3. Resources of Implementation	Scheduling, space and staff participants	Release time and/or substitutes as needed. Trainer and/or resources for study groups	Release time and/or subs as needed. Access to technology to manage assessment and intervention data
4. Specifics of Implementation	Team will meet in Sept., Jan. and June.	District Literacy Team will be trained on how to use technology to access student assessment data	Establish a process for gathering and recording data electronically. Establish within the team who will analyze specific assessments and write recommendations for interventions based on data. Share summaries with all stakeholders
5. Measure of Success	Attendance and participation at all meetings, meeting minutes	Planning and implementation of training	Individual teachers, building principals, and district administrators will receive assessment summaries. Full implementation of electronic data recording
6. Check in/review date	June 2012	November 2011	Midway through each grading quarter
	Action Step 4	Action Step 5	
→ Action Step	Train additional teachers to analyze building-based data	Bridge the sharing of data among buildings	
1. Timeline	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	
2. Lead Persons	Building administrator, building-based data teams	Superintendent, building administrators, representatives from the District Literacy Team	
3. Resources of Implementation	Release time, faculty meeting time, and/or subs as needed. Teacher coaches and/or trainers	Allocated time during faculty meetings.	
4. Specifics of Implementation	All teachers will be trained on how to use technology to access	Superintendent and District Literacy Team will collect and prepare	

	student assessment data	data for dissemination. Superintendent will share data with all stakeholders	
5. Measure of Success	100% of faculty receives training	Schools review data and adjust curriculum, instruction, and interventions accordingly	
6. Check in/review date	Mid-November 2011	June 2012	

Goal 3: Align district-wide literacy curriculum with the Common Core Standards, with a specific focus on improving content area reading and writing.

	Action Step 1	Action Step 2	Action Step 3
→ Action Step	Investigate and compare current curriculum frameworks against the Common Core Standards	Based on notes from the March 9 th Professional Development day, faculty will meet at selected staff meetings to review and revise district curriculum	Based on recommendations from previous action step, selected faculty members will meet to review and revise district curriculum
1. Timeline	March 9 th 2011	April-June 2011	Summer 2011
2. Lead Persons	Director of Accountability, Professional Development Coordinator, Facilitators for grade-level groupings	Administrators, Faculty	Building administrators, and selected applicants
3. Resources of Implementation	Professional Development Day	Scheduling	Stipends
4. Specifics of Implementation	Assigned lead individuals will facilitate meetings with all staff. Staff will analyze the “crosswalks” and record challenges of	Administrators will coordinate studies of needed grade-level changes in each content area	Initiate changes to ELA curriculum in priority areas according to the “crosswalks”

	implementation.		
5. Measure of Success	Recorded notes of suggested changes in instructional practice	Written product of these meetings	Recorded written changes to curriculum
6. Check in/review date	March 9 th 2011	June 2011	August 2011 Professional Development Day
	Action Step 4	Action Step 5	Action Step 6
→ Action Step	Present revised curriculum on opening day faculty meetings in individual buildings	Update staff on transition phase pertaining to MCAS exams for 2012	Implement revised curriculum in all classrooms
1. Timeline	August 2011	November Professional Development Day 2011	Ongoing throughout school year 2011-2012
2. Lead Persons	Summer Committee	Director of Accountability; Administrators	Building principals
3. Resources of Implementation	Scheduling	Scheduling	Supplemental materials and technology
4. Specifics of Implementation	Staff will return to buildings to meet with respective committee members	Staff will study and discuss state documents outlining interim changes in moving toward the Common Core	Departments/grade-levels meet regularly to share information and resources pertaining to implementation of the Common Core
5. Measure of Success	Attendance at meeting	Professional Development Evaluation form	Informal and formal evaluations; administrator walkthroughs
6. Check in/review date	August 2011	Ongoing throughout the school year	Ongoing throughout the school year

Section 6: Plan for Assessing and Reporting District Progress

Goal 1: Strengthen the structure of tiered instruction in English Language Arts so that all students are better able to meet grade level benchmarks.

Pursuant to the check-in dates noted in each action step, lead person(s) will gather and measure evidence of progress toward this goal. Assigned lead persons from the District Literacy Team will be available to facilitate meetings with all stakeholders for the purpose of ensuring that necessary resources needed to carry out each step are available. In addition, staff will participate in activities designed to strengthen the concept of tiered instruction by discussing its strengths and weaknesses and making recommendations for improvement. Based on these recommendations, changes that do not require funding will be implemented in Phase 1, while changes requiring funding will be sought in the budget process for FY 2013.

Goal 2: Establish and promote continuity and collaboration among grade levels K-12 that will foster an effective literacy program.

The district plans to establish multiple teams that are able to analyze data that will then be shared within the building and among schools. By analyzing, interpreting, and sharing data with all stakeholders, teachers, building staff, and the district will be better able to identify areas of needed intervention and monitor student progress. As student progress is monitored, teams will evaluate intervention methods. Adjustments to curriculum and instruction will be carried out as necessary. Progress towards this goal will be measured as indicated by the check-in dates of the action plan. Lead persons will be assigned to facilitate the completion and subsequent evaluation of each goal. Crucial to the success of this goal is the sharing of data and practices among buildings as relevant to the sustainability of a district-wide literacy program.

Goal 3: Align district-wide literacy curriculum with the Common Core Standards, with a specific focus on improving content area reading and writing.

Progress will be measured and reported to the lead person(s) as indicated by the check-in dates of the literacy action plan. The original notes dated March 9th 2011 of faculty-designated changes in the new Common Core Standards will be reviewed by each building principal and then returned to staff for discussion and review at selected faculty meetings. A committee will be formed to meet during the summer of 2011 to review and revise the district curriculum based on the recommendations from Action Step 2. A revised curriculum will be presented at school level meetings during the opening days of school year 2011-2012. The first professional day in November will give staff the opportunity to analyze the transition phase pertaining to MCAS exams for 2012. The end product will be implementation of the revised district curriculum reflecting the new Common Core Standards. Evidence will include, but not be limited to, collaborative sharing during grade or department level meetings; monitoring and mentoring by literacy facilitators; teacher evaluations per union contracts; and non-evaluative, informal walkthroughs by building administration.

Section 7: District Expectations and Supports for Schools

Expectations for Schools in Relation to the District Literacy Action Plan

Each building will be responsible for alignment with the District Literacy Action Plan by:

- Evaluating effectiveness of current interventions
- Evaluating scheduling and effective use of staff
- Defining tiered instruction and what it looks like at each school
- Developing an assessment schedule K-12
- Extending “Walk to Read” where appropriate
- Implementing a standardized system of report cards K-12

District Supports for Schools in Relation to the District Literacy Action Plan

The District and building principals will provide the necessary training, resources, and funding to establish a District Literacy Team.

The District and building principals will provide the necessary training, resources, and funding for all new interventions and assessments as called for by the Literacy Action Plan.

The District will provide release time and hire substitute teachers as needed to allow for teacher training.

The District will provide funding and professional development to support the position of Curriculum Coordinator K-12 and Reading Specialist for grades 7-12.

Section 8: District Literacy Team Membership, Development Process, and Plan for Monitoring Implementation

District Literacy Team Membership

Name	Title/Role	School	Email
Kathy Adams	Reading Specialist	Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School	kbadams@ware.k12.ma.us
Jennifer Bean	Grade 5 Teacher	Ware Middle School	jbean@ware.k12.ma.us
Holly Moren	English Teacher 9-12	Ware Junior / Senior High School	hmoren@ware.k12.ma.us

Developing the Plan

In January of 2011, Ware Public Schools was invited by the Collaborative for Education Services to participate in the development of a District Literacy Action Plan as part of Grant Fund Code 738: Literacy Professional Development Partnerships. Building principals, upon the request of the Superintendent, identified and selected literacy experts from each school building to form a District Literacy Team.

The team began its work by using the protocol and software created and provided by DESE for the purpose of this work to carefully review the current status of literacy programs in the three schools in our district. The analysis of the district programs was focused on three key areas:

1. The status of a tiered system of instruction and its function throughout the district.
2. The status of continuity and collaboration on literacy programs among grade levels K-12.
3. The status of current curriculum documents as they relate to the new Common Core Standards, particularly in areas of reading and writing.

In order to assess areas of strength and need, the team documented existing district assessments, instructional practices, and tiered instructional systems. A priority was then placed on the areas of challenges and needs identified through this process. These concerns were then cross-referenced with the District goals written in this District Literacy Action Plan. The Ware Public Schools District Literacy Action Plan is based on the issues raised as being the most critical to improving literacy instruction throughout the school buildings and across the district.

The Interim District Literacy Team crafted three goals and created action maps toward reaching these goals, each of which focused on improved literacy instruction and improved student success in meeting all literacy demands.

Communication of the Plan

In early March of 2011 the Interim District Literacy Team shared a draft version of the Ware Public Schools District Literacy Action Plan with the Superintendent, Director of Accountability, and building principals. Feedback was given and the plan was finalized on March 14th 2011. During the Spring of 2011 the Superintendent will present the plan to the School Committee and ask for support of the plan. Pending approval, building principals will present the plan to staff of their respective schools and answer questions about implementation. Furthermore, a copy of the plan will be published on the school's website in order to inform parents of the new procedures and programs that will be implemented in the near future.

Monitoring of the Plan

The District Literacy Team will schedule meetings throughout the coming school year to monitor implementation of the District Literacy Action Plan. Members will review the District's progress in meeting each goal's objectives, paying particular attention to the check-in dates articulated in the action plans.