



Department of English Language Arts K-12 Program Review Report

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Glossary of Terms

Core Novel - a curricularly-approved extended text read by all students at a given grade level

Independent Reading - Students' reading of material of their own choosing

Lexile Level/Lexile Framework for Reading - a scientific approach to measuring both reading ability and text complexity on the same developmental scale

Pillars of ELA - Reading, Writing, Grammar, Word Study (Vocabulary, Spelling, Phonics), Research, Handwriting

Workshop Model - a student-centered instructional model in which teachers use common text to lead mini-lessons targeting reading/writing skills and strategies. Students apply those skills and strategies to varied texts of their choosing and to their own writing process while receiving ongoing feedback from the teacher.

Introduction

***“Language is the centerpiece of learning. It’s not just another subject
but the means by which all other subjects are perceived.”***

~ Ernest Boyer

It is the goal of the Bridgewater-Raritan Office of Curriculum and Instruction to develop and implement a thorough, data-based process for analyzing curriculum, instruction, assessment, student performance, professional development, and resources in all curricular areas ensuring that professional practice is always current, relevant, and aligned to the most updated standards. Each curricular area will be reviewed on a five-year timeline. The results of each process will be presented publicly.

Acknowledgements

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Name	Position	School
Michelle Datuin	Kindergarten	Adamsville
Jennifer Murphy	Grade 1	Crim
Susan Henning	Grade 1	Adamsville
Karen O'Neil	Grade 2	Crim
Megan Rudolph	Grade 2	Milltown
Carolina Smith	Grade 3	Adamsville
Courtney Rothkugel	Grade 3	Milltown
Chris Houser	Grade 3AI	Hamilton
Danielle Powell	Grade 4	Van Holten
Quinn Whalen	Grade 4	Bradley Gardens
Jeanne Faryna	Special Education Teacher	Crim
Andrea Bongiovanni	Intervention Specialist	JFK
Cynthia Nurse	Intervention Specialist	Adamsville
Patricia Gray	Librarian Media Specialist	Crim/Adamsville
Jutta Seeler	Technology Teacher	Adamsville
Faith Nardella	Elementary Teaching Specialist	Milltown
Daniel Fonder	Principal	Hamilton
Deborah Ronning	Grade 5	Eisenhower
Jennifer Heinbach	Grade 5	Hillside
Gretchen Alvarez	Grade 6	Eisenhower
Inessa Vinukurov	Grade 6	Hillside
Kate Manara	Special Education Grade 6	Hillside
Carol Sohnen	Elementary Teaching Specialist	Eisenhower
Susan Lazar	Elementary Teaching Specialist	Hillside

Megan Alloway	Grade 7	BRMS
Kelley Wallace	Grade 7	BRMS
Kimberly Pratt	Grade 8	BRMS
Melissa Kardos	Intervention Specialist Grade 8	BRMS
Wendy Sheehan	Special Education Grade 8	BRMS
Kristine Shurina	Grade 8	BRMS
Brian Smith	District SE Supervisor	BRHS
Charles Ezell	Principal	BRHS
Denise Cimpko-Beller	Grades 9-12	BRHS
Elizabeth DeMeyer	Grades 9-12	BRHS
Erin Leigh	Grades 9-12	BRHS
James Challandes	Grades 9-12	BRHS
Kathleen Walsh	Grades 9-12	BRHS
Kelly Anderson	Grades 9-12	BRHS
Lauren Fitzsimmons	Grades 9-12	BRHS
Kathalyn Messano	Grades 9-12	BRHS
Farrah Walters	Special Education Grades 9-12	BRHS
Jaimee Kochis	Supervisor of Instructional Technology	District
Jennifer Edge	Supervisor of Social Studies 6-12	District
Mark Jarmon	Supervisor of ELA 9-12	District
Candy Mulligan	Supervisor of ELA K-4	District
Suzanne Wooby	Supervisor of ELA 5-8	District

Program Description

K-4

Our approach to literacy instruction at the K-4 level is best characterized by a balanced literacy model which allows for direct and explicit instruction while ensuring that students have ample opportunities to apply the skills they are learning as readers and writers. Skills and strategies are modeled through whole-class instruction where the teacher is able to demonstrate the skills and strategies that are used by good readers and writers. Students then have the opportunity for guided practice in small-group settings where the objectives for small groups match the needs of the students in each group. This blend of whole-class and small-group instruction allows for each teacher to ensure that grade level skills are taught to all students while still making sure the application of those skills can be differentiated for the needs of all learners. The ultimate goal of a balanced literacy approach is that it allows students to have ongoing opportunities to apply learned skills and strategies to their own independent reading and writing experiences in and beyond the classroom. What we hope is that while strategic instruction begins as teacher-directed, in the end, students should be aware of the strategies they can access as readers and writers so that they can choose and use them independently.

In Kindergarten, the suggested daily instructional time for ELA is approximately 80 minutes per day; however, it should be noted that with the recent state mandate for 20 minute recess, it is now impossible to meet that time requirements. In Grades 1-4, the following chart shows the suggested instructional time for ELA:

185 minutes on days when students <u>DO NOT</u> have Library or Technology	145 minutes on days when students <u>DO</u> have Library or Technology
Whole Class Shared Reading - 25 minutes Small Group Reading - 60 minutes Writing Workshop - 60 minutes Word Study - 25 minutes Handwriting - 15 minutes	Whole Class Shared Reading - 20 minutes Small Group Reading - 60 minutes Writing Workshop - 45 minutes Word Study - 20 minutes

It should be noted that while some teachers do have large, uninterrupted blocks of time for a true literacy block, scheduling can sometimes prevent this in many classrooms. When this occurs, teachers will often plan to teach reading and writing at different times during the school day, but they continuously strive to help students see the connections between reading and writing.

Routines for the delivery of instruction in both reading and writing may take on many forms, including:

- Explicit mini-lesson instruction
- Guided or small-group reading tailored to the needs of students in each group
- Independent work time where students can apply what they have learned
- Partner work to promote social learning and additional application
- One-on-one student/teacher conferences to further differentiate the learning for each student

Word Study instruction at the K-1 level is based upon an instructional sequence that was designed at the district level according to the spelling features our New Jersey Student Learning Standards establish should be mastered by the end of Grade 1. In Kindergarten, there is a coordinated effort to teach the name, sound and formation of the letters in the alphabet at the same time, with the goal being that students should know all of their letter-sounds, including short vowel sounds, by the end of Kindergarten. As students move into Grade 1, they continue to explore a variety of additional simple vowel patterns throughout the year.

In Grades 2-4, we use the *Spelling Connections* program to support our Word Study curriculum. Again, grade level spelling features match the expectations established by state standards, but this program allows students to connect the spelling patterns they are learning to a variety of literacy activities. Within each unit, students are asked to: explore the new spelling pattern, discover the meanings of their unit words, apply the meanings of their spelling words to different reading activities (*i.e.*, solving analogies, categorizing words, fact vs. opinion, etc.), and use what they know to proofread and edit writing passages. Word lists are differentiated within each unit to meet students' needs, but all students are challenged to learn the expected grade level spelling patterns.

Grammar instruction is embedded within the existing *Being a Writer* program. There is a scope and sequence of grammar skills aligned to the NJ Student Learning Standards. The focus leans more towards identification of grammar concepts as opposed to application to writing. Students practice learned concepts in a consumable Skills Practice Workbook.

Handwriting instruction is the final component of our literacy program in grades K-4. Manuscript (print) handwriting instruction, supported by the *Handwriting Without Tears* program, is introduced in Kindergarten, with review and practice continuing in Grades 1-2. Beginning in Grade 3, cursive handwriting instruction, supported by the *Zaner Bloser* handwriting program, is introduced. Cursive handwriting review and practice continues through Grade 4, but this is the final year in which students receive instruction related to handwriting. Currently, there is no written Handwriting curriculum.

Our AI Program in grades 2, 3, and 4 offers accelerated learning opportunities for our students. Instruction in all AI classrooms is supported by elevated core Reading (*Good Habits, Great Readers*), Writing (*Being a Writer*), and Spelling (*Spelling Connections*) resources. The level of text used for both whole class and small group reading experiences may also be elevated while continually ensuring that the content is appropriate. Given the accelerated nature of the AI program, writing expectations are also more rigorous in nature as students are working towards mastery of above-grade level standards.

5-8 Overview

The ELA 5 through ELA 8 courses intend to thoughtfully integrate student experiences in reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and listening. The goal at each grade level is to produce strategic, fluent, analytic and effective readers, writers, speakers, viewers, and listeners. The curricula of the ELA 5-8 courses are carefully aligned to meet or exceed all New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts. Further, each level integrates reading and writing instruction within common themes, challenges students to think critically, structures common/core experiences for all learners, embeds inquiry and research, follows a grammar scope and sequence, and nurtures language acquisition through word study, spelling, and/or vocabulary programs.

Across all four grade levels, availability of resources varies. Teachers often resort to developing their own materials or utilize resources found on the internet. While professional discretion is an important consideration of any program, when materials and approaches vary greatly, classroom to classroom, teachers are denied important opportunities for professional dialogue related to planning and instruction. Inconsistency across buildings, grade levels, and classrooms has ensued in terms of both pacing and approach.

Intermediate Level, 5-6

ELA 5

The ELA 5 curriculum encompasses six units of study, including a preliminary launch unit which introduces students to expectations within the workshop model as well as protocol and procedures for reading like a writer and writing like a reader. The following five units are thematically and/or genre-based and pair reading and writing experiences in ways that allow for integration. For example, as students explore nonfiction text as readers, they are called upon to use these models to craft informational text of their own through research.

The ELA 5 program is supplemented by the Zaner-Bloser *Spelling Connections* workbook as well as the Sadlier *Grammar for Writing* consumable text. In Spelling, units are explored on a weekly basis with students routinely assuming the responsibility for independent completion of unit activities. The grammar text is utilized per teacher discretion. A guided-reading model is common in resource centers in Grade 5. Students in general sections experience two whole-class, core novels. There is no vocabulary program. While a grammar scope and sequence exists, there is no common grammar resource at the grade level. Grade appropriate novels, online informational text resources, and pieces of short fiction make up the additional resources within each unit. Most teachers supplement the materials found linked to the curriculum with current informational text articles found through online resources and/or works they come upon on their own that serve to advance student learning and expose students to current issues in the world around them. Both schools purchase subscriptions to StoryWorks and/or Scope Magazine, which often become the focus of instruction due to the text-dependent questioning they provide, as well as other available curricular materials that link to unit themes and outcomes.

In Grade 5, students at both intermediate schools in district have between 80-120 minutes of ELA instruction daily. Reading and writing tend to be their own designated 40-minute blocks while the “extra” 40 minutes every other day is typically used for spelling instruction and/or working on carry-over tasks in progress from the reading and writing periods. Library is a scheduled learning time in the weekly cycle for all Grade 5 students, and each building’s media specialist is a resource for independent reading recommendations and research projects.

The E ELA 5/AI 5 program differs slightly from the ELA 5 program in that additional texts are recommended within each unit and some skills, including those in grammar, composition, and reading strategies, are condensed so that students are afforded opportunities for independent application earlier. Compacting depends greatly on the readiness of students each year. Texts shared may be elevated, and the *Spelling Connections* resources are a level ahead (Grade 6) for students in enrichment classes.

ELA 6

The ELA 6 curriculum consists of four units of study, including a start-of-year launch unit which introduces students to the practices, procedures, and essential understandings of the workshop model for both reading and writing. Each unit is highlighted by inquiry approaches to grammar and centered around essential and enduring questions as a part of thematically-based ELA instruction.

Students are issued a consumable copy of Sadlier’s *Vocabulary Workshop, Level A*. Units are explored on a weekly basis with students routinely assuming the responsibility for independent completion of unit activities. A hardbound text, Sadlier’s *Grammar for Writing*, is a class resource utilized per teacher discretion. Grade appropriate novels (there are two core novels in grade 6), short stories, informational texts, and works of poetry comprise the resources used by teachers and students in ELA 6. Book clubs are utilized to help continue the discussion and investigations into unit themes and provide students application opportunities for important skills and strategies. Choice of titles is limited, particularly for students reading above or below grade level. Both schools purchase Scope Magazine subscriptions to provide teachers with current fiction and nonfiction text resources to support targeted learning. Most teachers supplement the materials found linked to the curriculum with additional articles found through free online resources such as CommonLit, ReadWorks, and NewsELA in order to advance student learning and expose students to current issues in the world around them.

In Grade 6, students have 80 minutes of ELA instruction daily. The library and its media specialist are a resource to students and staff for both independent book selection and research projects, but students do not have scheduled time within the weekly cycle to attend library for instruction.

Despite the breakdown and highlighted inquiry approaches to grammar that exist within the curriculum, there is inconsistency in how grammar is taught in Grade 6. There are also differences in terms of curricular fidelity between the two intermediate schools and teacher to teacher within each in many cases.

The E ELA 6 course outlines a year-long research project across the unit themes. Overall, while additional suggestions exist for E ELA 6, the program itself looks quite similar to ELA 6 in terms of materials and assignments.

Middle School, 7-8

ELA 7

In grade 7, students have 80 minutes of ELA instruction daily. The ELA 7 curriculum consists of four thematically-based units of study. Each is framed by a unique essential question. There are no purchased resources for instruction aside from supplemental and core novels. Teachers utilize a range of supporting materials for vocabulary and grammar instruction including Vocabulary.com and NoRedInk.com. Though a grammar text was purchased in 2010 (Sadlier *Grammar for Writing, Level Purple*), teachers tend to seek out other resources that better

integrate grammar instruction into reading and writing, differentiate learning for individual students, and provide more genuine opportunities for the transfer of skills. The curriculum contains a scope and sequence for grammar, as well as a recommended vocabulary component featuring designated Greek and Latin Roots and vocabulary related to unit themes and core texts.

The two core novels are taught as whole-class experiences in ELA 7. For the remainder of the year, students explore unit themes and apply strategies and skills to various supplemental novels that are usually shared in a book club format. Choices are limited, particularly for students reading above or below grade level. The ELA 7 curriculum includes several smaller suggested inquiry experiences and one major research project/paper as a requirement. There are four core writing tasks in ELA 7, ranging from narrative/personal memoir to expository/argument essays. Teachers incorporate favorite projects in addition to, or instead of, those detailed within the units of study. While some variation is rooted in familiar practice prior to the past round of curricular revisions, most comes as a response to teachers not having been provided the resources or time that they need to reconsider the way that they currently teach, assign tasks, assess growth, or utilize materials.

E ELA 7 looks much the same as ELA 7, as no additional texts are required or suggested within the curriculum. Teacher-created projects are the norm within E sections as better resources to challenge student-thinking are sought out.

ELA 8

In grade 8, students have 80 minutes of ELA instruction daily. The ELA 8 curriculum consists of four thematically-based units of study. Each is framed by a unique essential question. There are no purchased resources for instruction aside from supplemental and core novels. Teachers utilize a range of supporting materials for vocabulary and grammar instruction including Vocabulary.com and NoRedInk.com. Though class copies of a grammar text were purchased in 2010 (*Sadlier Grammar for Writing, Level Yellow*), again, teachers tend to seek out other resources that are a better fit for both their instruction and their students. The curriculum contains a scope and sequence for grammar, as well as a recommended vocabulary component featuring designated Greek and Latin Roots and vocabulary related to unit themes and core texts.

The two core novels are taught as whole class experiences in ELA 8, as are all other texts that teachers elect to utilize. Most “units” revolve around the novels’ content and not the themes of the units themselves. Choices of novels are limited, particularly for students reading above or below grade level. The ELA 8 curriculum includes several smaller suggested inquiry experiences and one major research project/paper as a requirement. Some teachers elect to make

the research paper an interdisciplinary project, teaming with their partner social studies teacher to manage content and writing expectations. Teachers incorporate favorite projects in addition to, or instead of, those detailed within the units of study. While some variation is rooted in familiar practice prior to the past round of curricular revisions, most comes as a response to teachers not having been provided the professional development, resources, or time that they need to reconsider the way that they currently teach, assign tasks, assess growth, or utilize materials. There are four core writing tasks in ELA 8, ranging from narrative to expository/argument essays to poetry explication.

E ELA 8 looks much the same as ELA 8, with the addition of the text, *Julius Caesar*. Teachers adjust their expectations for the level of independence and rigor, based on their E groups' levels of maturity and readiness.

High School, 9-12

The English 9 through English 12 courses focuses on classic and contemporary literature to establish a framework for enabling students to use language as a tool for exploring the world actively, communicating effectively, and growing intellectually. Through reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and critical thinking, learning becomes a multidimensional and transactional process through which students continually expand their repertoire of knowledge.

Students have 40 minutes of English instruction daily. The English 9-12 curriculum encompasses 4 units of study which are typically anchored through a core or supplemental extended text with a unique essential question at each grade level. Teachers have the option of choosing supplementary extended-texts from a board approved list of novels and plays. The number of books varies from teacher to teacher, although most tend to teach similar supplementary texts. As we are considered a “novel-based curriculum”, novels encompass nearly the entirety of resources purchased. There are no purchased supplemental resources (aside from two texts books in Grade 9) to assist teachers in developing instruction in areas beyond reading.

Skills and objectives reflecting all strands of New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts are integrated with increasing complexity throughout the year. Additionally, a variety of text types (i.e., short fiction, nonfiction, poetry) are incorporated into each unit and reflect increasing text complexity, while grade level required writing assignments and research are incorporated throughout the year. At each grade level, students write with the end goal of becoming more independent, articulate writers. Students have opportunities to engage in multiple genres of writing throughout the year. Opportunities to write reflect both formal and informal writing experiences. The required writing pieces reflect instruction, scaffolding, and process experience.

There are three levels of courses (i.e., Standard, Academic, and Honors) which are differentiated by level of rigor. At the Honors level students are expected to read and write in a more independent fashion than in Academic or Standard level classes. As a result of an accelerated pace, core literature will be enriched with advanced-level assignments. Two AP courses are also offered in Junior (i.e., AP Language & Composition) and Senior year (i.e., AP Literature & Composition).

In addition to the four years of required English Language & Literature courses, students may select additional courses from a list of electives. These courses may not replace any of the four years of required English Language & Literature courses. Students who are required to take Literacy Support in addition to English Language & Literature courses are identified by district and state test scores.

English 9

In grade 9, two core works of literature are taught at the Standard and Academic levels in addition to a variety of approved novels which seek to address the grade 9 essential question: “How does one mature?” Two additional core works of literature are taught at the Honors level. Though a grammar text (*Grammar for Writing, Level Blue*) and a literature text (*Prentice Hall Common Core Edition, Grade 9*) are available resources for English 9, teachers tend to seek out other resources for ELA instruction. The grade 9 writing requirements include the following 4 formal process pieces: Literary Analysis (character sketch and/or setting analysis), Feature Article, Open-Ended Response, and Narrative. Students also write a variety of informal pieces such as: reflections, open-ended responses, prose-constructed responses, short answer questions including text support, short narratives, etc. Additionally, students apply the research process and compose a paper that expounds upon a specific thesis. Such research writing incorporates the generation of inquiry-based questions and implementation of a thesis for a 2-3 pages research paper in adherence to the current MLA guidelines for research writing.

English 10

In grade 10, Language and Literature II focuses on classic and contemporary American literature. Two core works of literature are taught at the Standard and Academic levels in addition to a variety of approved novels which seek to address the grade 10 essential question: “How do hopes and dreams contribute to one’s growth?” Two additional core works of literature are taught at the Honors level. The grade 10 writing requirements include the following 4 formal writing pieces: Literary Analysis with a focus on symbolism/theme, Editorial Article,

Expository, and Narrative. In addition to the four grade level required writing assignments, four reflections (one per marking period), and evidence of research are additional components. Every student completes a 2-3 page research paper in adherence to the current MLA guidelines for research writing.

English 11

In grade 11, Language and Literature III focuses on classic and contemporary British literature. Two core works of literature are taught at the Standard and Academic levels in addition to a variety of approved novels which seek to address the grade 11 essential question: “How does experiencing adversity affect maturation?” Two additional core works of literature are taught at the Honors level. The grade 11 writing requirements include the following 4 formal writing pieces: Literary Analysis with a focus on rhetorical analysis, Persuasive speech/debate, Synthesis paper, and Narrative (personal statement or teacher choice). In addition to the four grade level required writing assignments, four reflections (one per marking period), and evidence of research are additional components. Every student must complete one research based paper of at least 5 pages.

English 12

In grade 12, Language and Literature IV focuses on classic and contemporary World literature. Two core works of literature are taught at the Standard and Academic levels in addition to a variety of approved novels which seek to address the grade 12 essential question: “How does one resolve (come to terms with) his/her philosophy of life?” Two additional core works of literature are taught at the Honors level. In grade 12, students write in formal and informal contexts and apply a full range of strategies from ideation to final published product to demonstrate proficiency and compile a portfolio that includes the following modes of writing: reflective, personal narrative, synthesis, response/reaction and creative non-fiction. Students also write a formal research paper that follows the conventions of MLA and receive instruction in research methods, evaluation of sources, note taking, and citation.

Advanced Placement Language and Composition (grade 11)

This college-level course in effective writing and critical reading centers on fostering a student’s awareness of writing as a thinking process. Intense concentration on language use and stylistic development will lead to insight regarding interpretative reading and writing skills. The fiction

and nonfiction course readings will serve as tools for advancing the manipulation of language details and structure to create meaning primarily within the modes of exposition, analysis, and argumentation.

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition (grade 12)

This college-level course enables students to focus on intensive, in depth, advanced study in English. Critical analysis of literature forms the basis for insights into structure and meaning. Authors and literary works from the 16th century to the present are studied. In addition, major authors, periods, genres, and themes are explored via a concentration on imaginative literature—poetry, fiction, and drama.

English Language and Literature IV—CEP

Language and Literature IV—CEP (Concurrent Enrollment Program) continues to follow the philosophy of teaching literature and writing, emphasizing response to literature and writing as a process. The important difference between this course and other English courses is that this course merges senior academic English with freshman college English. Therefore, if all requirements are met by the student, including passing the college level Basic Skills test, credit is earned for both Language and Literature IV and college English I from Raritan Valley Community College. Students pay tuition, purchase some materials, and receive 5 high school credits as well as 3 college credits, which may be transferred to other college or university programs.

English Department Electives

A variety of half-year and full-year electives are offered in specific areas of English instruction. These courses are not substitutes for the required grade level classes, but offer additional support or insight into English related studies. Not all courses run each year, and some have not run in several years. The determining factor if a course will run is student interest. The following is a list of electives currently offered within the English department: *American Film Study, Comprehensive Creative Writing, Drama, Forensics, Introduction to Creative Writing, Introduction to Screenwriting, Journalism, Kid Lit Literacy, Literacy Support (11 or 12), LP:Lyrical Poetry, Publication Development and Production, Reading Animation, SAT Preparation, Speech, and Theater Production.*

English as a Second Language / Bilingual

Students who are non-native speakers of English and are enrolled in the ESL program are placed in one of the four levels of ESL based on the results of placement tests and/or teacher recommendations. *ESL I & ESL II - Grammar & Conversation* focuses on the development of reading, vocabulary, oral and written language, and they are offered as double periods. *ESL III - Reading & Writing* is offered to students who are at a low intermediate level of English proficiency and is taken concurrently with a standard or academic English Language and Literature course. *English Language and Literature SI* is a multi-grade/multi-level course where beginning and intermediate English Language Learners will meet both content and language objectives in a differentiated, sheltered-instruction learning environment. *English Language and Literature TI & TII* seek to prepare ESL students for placement in grade-level appropriate academic courses as they reach the final stage of the ESL program. Students explore the fundamentals of literature study, practice the process of formal essay writing, and develop the confidence to become active members of thoughtful classroom discussion.

Assessment

K-4:

K-1 Common Assessments

In Kindergarten, the Portrait Assessment is administered in quarters 1-4. This assessment is used to determine the student's developmental level of writing proficiency, inclusive of conventions and content. In first grade, students' developmental level of writing proficiency is assessed in quarters 1 and 3 through the administration of the Narrative Writing Task. This assessment identifies proficiency level in the Six Traits of writing: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions.

In Kindergarten and first grade, students' phonological awareness and phonics skills are assessed through administration of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) Word Analysis Tasks. Specific tasks and timelines for administration are dependent upon a student's initial performance. In quarter 1, all Kindergarten students are assessed on their ability to distinguish picture rhyming words (Task 1), to distinguish and isolate initial sounds (Tasks 2 and 3), to identify uppercase and lowercase letters (Tasks 5 and 6), and high frequency word recognition (Task 9). Tasks are readministered in quarters 2, 3, and 4 as needed until students are able to demonstrate control of the tasks. All first grade students who are new to the district or did not demonstrate control of Tasks 3, 5, and 6 in Kindergarten assessed on their ability to isolate initial

sounds (Task 3), identify lowercase letters (Task 6), and identify initial sounds (Task 11). All first graders, regardless of Kindergarten location or performance, are assessed on their ability to blend phonemes into words (Task 12), rhyme (Task 13), and segment words into onset and rhymes (Task 14). Tasks are readministered in quarters 2, 3, and 4 as needed until students are able to demonstrate control of the tasks.

The Words Their Way Primary Spelling Inventory is administered to Kindergarten and first grade students in quarters 1 and 3. The Spelling Inventory is used to identify additional skill gaps related to students' word study and phonics knowledge.

The Slosson Oral Reading Test is administered to first graders in quarters 1 and 3. This determines a student's oral word recognition fluency and helps teachers determine or confirm appropriate reading levels. A student's performance on the Slosson Oral Reading Test may lead to further assessment through the use of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) by the building Elementary Teaching Specialist or Intervention Specialists.

2-4 Common Assessments:

In grades 2-4, students' developmental level of writing proficiency is assessed in quarters 1 and 3 through the administration of the District Writing Task. This assessment identifies proficiency level in the Six Traits of writing: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. In second grade, the task is a narrative. In third and fourth grade, the task may be a narrative or an opinion piece.

In grades 2-4, The Words Their Way Spelling Inventory is used to identify additional skill gaps related to students' word study and phonics knowledge. Second grade students are assessed using the Primary Spelling Inventory. Third and fourth graders are assessed using the Elementary Spelling Inventory. In quarter 1, all students are assessed. In quarter 3, the assessment is only administered to students who fell below a specific target score in quarter 1. The target scores are 52 (second grade), 51 (third grade), and 60 (fourth grade).

The Slosson Oral Reading Test is used to determine a student's oral word recognition fluency and helps teachers determine or confirm appropriate reading levels. In quarter 1, the assessment is administered to all students. In quarter 3, the assessment is only administered to students who fell below a specific target score in quarter 1 or are reading below grade level expectations. The target scores are 2.6 or Level L (second grade), 3.6 or Level O (third grade), and 4.6 or Level R (fourth grade). A student's performance on the Slosson Oral Reading Test may lead to further

assessment through the use of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) by the building Elementary Teaching Specialist or Intervention Specialists.

Starting in grade 2 and continuing through grade 4, students' reading ability is also assessed through the Literacy Performance Task (LPT). Through the LPT, students demonstrate their ability to comprehend a given passage at grade level by answering text-dependent multiple choice questions and an open-ended written response.

All grade 3 and 4 students are administered the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) Reading and Language Usage assessments in quarters 1 and 3. This data is part of the student portfolio that informs classroom instruction.

5-8:

5th Grade Common Assessments:

The Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT): administered in September in order to assess a student's level of oral word recognition, word calling or reading level.

*NWEA MAP administered twice yearly, fall/spring (as of 2019-2020 school year).

Benchmark Assessment: administered in September in order to obtain base-line data and again in March to show academic growth. The writing task is an analytical essay based on a paired text (poem and excerpt from a novel). The district essay rubric is used to assess student performance. Throughout each thematic unit, students will complete a variety of common writing tasks including short constructed responses to fiction and nonfiction texts, narratives, and essays (compare/contrast, argumentative, and informational). The district essay and narrative rubrics are used to assess student performance.

6th, 7th 8th Grade Common Assessments:

*NWEA MAP administered twice yearly, fall/spring (as of 2019-2020 school year).

Benchmark Assessment: administered in September in order to obtain base-line data and again in March to show academic growth. The writing task is an analytical essay based on a paired text (poem and short story). The district essay rubric is used to assess student performance.

Throughout each thematic unit, students will complete a variety of common writing tasks including short constructed responses to fiction and nonfiction texts, narratives, and essays (compare/contrast, argumentative, and informational). The district essay and narrative rubrics are used to assess student performance.

**All students who have been identified as qualifying for support through the Response to Intervention model for ELA have traditionally been assessed with NWEA MAP Testing in each testing window. In the spring of 2019, all students in grades 6 and 7 took the NWEA MAP Test.*

As of September, 2019, the district provided licenses for all students, 5-8, to take both the NWEA MAP Reading and Language Usage tests in the fall and spring beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. Teachers received training in both department and team settings on how to access MAP reports and utilize data - in particular, Lexile levels for the students in their classes.

9th-12th Grade Common Assessments:

The high school students have two common ELA assessments for each grade level specific to reading skills: one in the fall and one midyear. All questions are connected to specific state standards and results can be viewed through our student data management platform in order to help teachers inform instruction.

Teachers in grades 9-12 develop midterm and final exams with common expectations across grade levels. Common expectations include the number and types of questions and tasks for the assessment. Questions for core novels may be selected from a department bank of questions, students are given a common grade level reading task for the midterm, and students construct multiple paragraph literary analysis essays for both midterm and final exams.

In each marking period, students complete a minimum of six writing assignments, which reflect both formal and informal writing. The grade-level, required writing pieces reflect instruction, scaffolding, and process experience. At least one process piece is produced each marking period and correlates with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for writing which includes argumentative, informative/explanatory, narrative, and research-based writing. Students write throughout the entire school year with the end goal of becoming more independent, articulate writers. Additionally, students have opportunities to engage in multiple genres of writing throughout the year. Research-based assignments incorporate the correct usage of MLA citations and formatting. While there is a common expectation for written assignments at each grade level, individual teachers have the freedom to develop the specific writing tasks.

Additionally all students who have been identified as qualifying for support through the Response to Intervention program for ELA are additionally assessed with NWEA MAP Testing in order to identify skill gaps for remediation.

Stakeholder Survey Results and Analysis

The following information was gathered through surveys. Questions for the survey were developed by a committee of K-12 teachers. Surveys were developed for three target audiences: parents, students, and staff. Responses to surveys included 192 teacher responses; 4809 grade 3-12 student responses, and 364 parent responses.

Survey audiences were asked questions in the following categories as appropriate:

- ELA Attitudes and Beliefs
- Rigor
- Preparation for Standardized Testing
- Instructional Practice/Small Group Instruction
- Using Assessments
- Instructional Resources
- Feedback on Writing
- Independent Reading
- Grammar
- Phonics/Spelling/Word Study
- Vocabulary
- Cursive Writing
- Summer Reading and Homework
- Additional Student Support in ELA
- Professional Development for Teachers

A listing of survey questions and responses for each of these audiences can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Below are summarized survey findings that have bearing upon the ELA Program Evaluation recommendations that follow in the document.

Instructional Practice/Small Group Instruction

When surveyed about instructional practice, teachers reported using a wide variety of strategies in their ELA classrooms. 85% of teachers grades 3-12 reported at least sometimes using a Readers'/Writers' Workshop model in their classroom. Small group instruction and whole class instruction were the most prevalent forms of instruction among all primary grade levels. Nearly

90% of primary teachers reported using small group instruction frequently. Small group instruction dropped at the intermediate level, with 40% of teachers saying they use it frequently and 60% reporting they sometimes use it. This trend continued at the middle school and high school levels, though a small portion of teachers (approximately 10%) reported using small group instruction only occasionally.

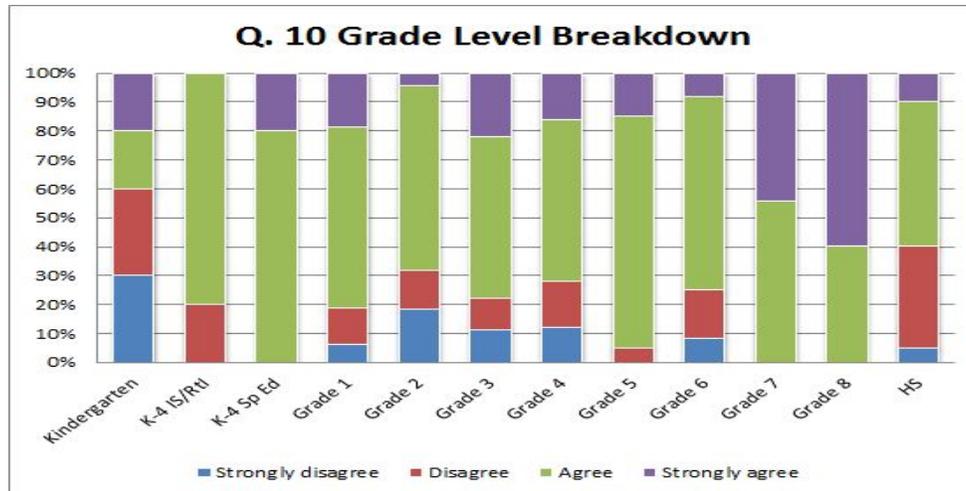
Teachers were asked specifically about the use of small groups in their reading instruction. 75% of primary teachers reported daily small group reading instruction. This percentage dropped sharply at the intermediate and middle school levels, with less than 20% of teachers reporting they used small group instruction daily, and just 5% of high school teachers cited using small group instruction for reading. Nearly 90% of teachers grades 3-12 reported at least sometimes using cooperative learning, with 86% of intermediate, middle and high school teachers reporting they used it occasionally and 50% reporting frequent use.

Teachers reported grouping students for small group instruction and cooperative learning by activity, by unit/book, and by marking period. Teacher-driven groups were generated 70% of the time (homogeneously, heterogeneously, by personality) and approximately 10% of groupings were random. Student-created groups were less prevalent, occurring 20-25% of the time.

All grade levels reported using teacher assigned independent work, with a higher frequency of this strategy beginning at the intermediate level and continuing in middle school and high school. Stations/rotations had a wide variety of responses; most primary teachers reported using this strategy frequently, but beyond grade 4, there were more teachers responding that they only occasionally used stations/rotations and some reported never using them. No high school teachers reported frequent use of this strategy. Teachers grades 3-12 reported at least sometimes giving their students choice of activity, although high school teachers reported using this less frequently than other strategies.

Teachers were asked if daily instructional time was adequate for ELA content delivery. 60% of kindergarten teachers disagreed they had adequate time for ELA instruction. It is important to note that this could be related to the half-day kindergarten program. Only 25% of teachers grades 1-4 felt their ELA instructional time was inadequate. 80% of intermediate teachers and 100% of middle school teachers agreed that they had adequate time for ELA instruction. At the high school level, only 60% of teachers agreed their instructional time was adequate. This could be due in part to the drop from two ELA blocks (80 minutes) daily at the intermediate and middle school levels, and only one 40-minute block at the high school level.

Teacher Question 10: Daily instructional time is adequate for me to deliver content in ELA.



Teachers were asked if the curriculum for their grade level or course allows opportunities to integrate with other courses or disciplines. At the primary level, nearly 80% of teachers report agreeing they have opportunities for integration. This drops by nearly half at the intermediate level, with about 40% of teachers disagreeing with opportunities for integration. This sharp decline could be due to the fact that content begins to be specialized in grades 5 and 6. Students no longer have the same teacher for ELA as the other content areas. 100% of 7th grade teachers and 75% of 8th grade teachers agree they have opportunities for integration. 55% of high school teachers agree they have opportunities for integration.

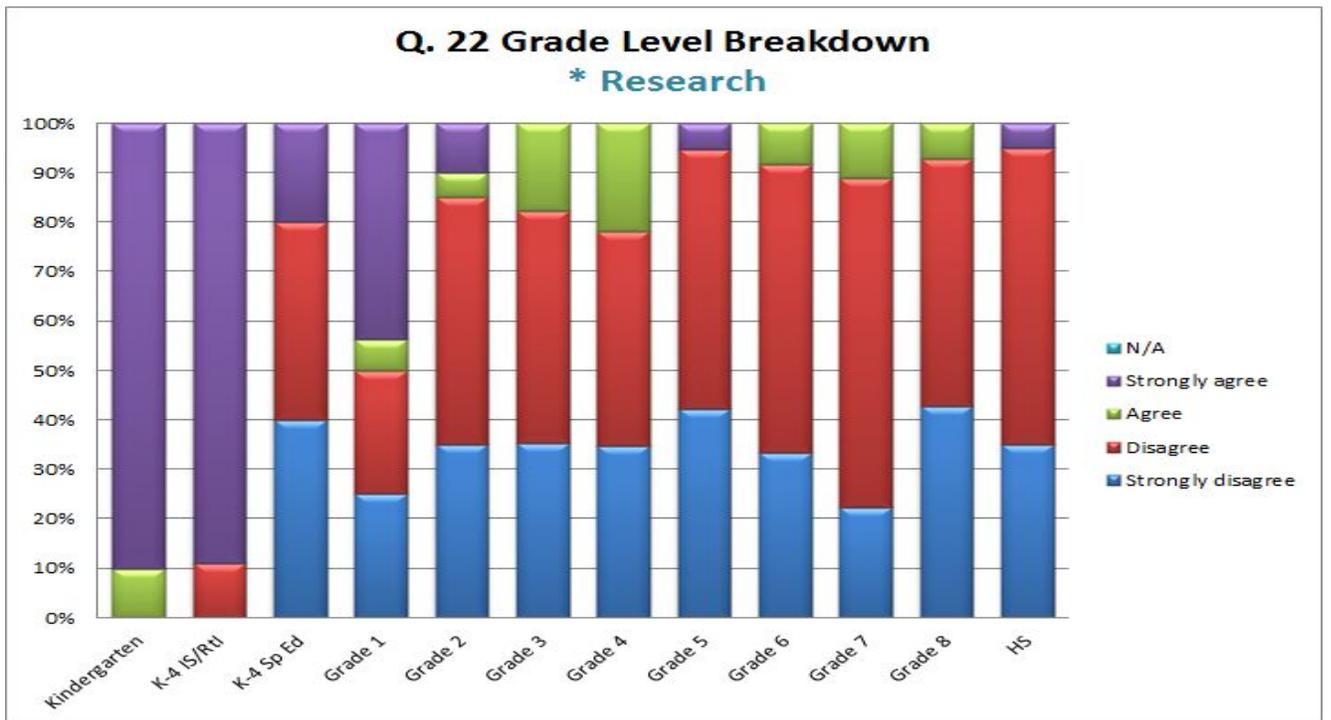
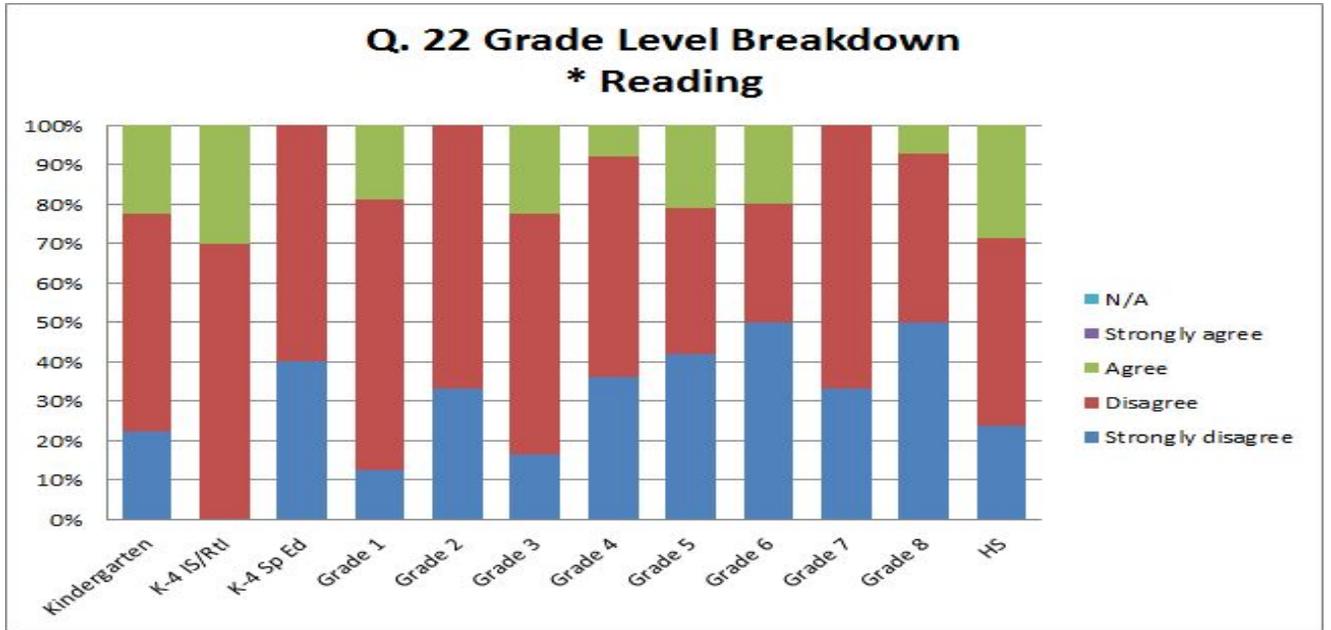
Students were asked about various instructional strategies employed by their teachers in ELA classes. Primary students reported working in small groups with a teacher more frequently than their older peers, with at least 50% of them meeting with a teacher in a group at least once a week. When asked how often they listen to their teacher talk and take notes, 50% of students in grades 9-12 reported this occurring at least a few times a week. Answering questions that the teacher asks out loud had the most consistent responses across the grade levels, with 70% of students grades 3-12 reporting this occurred at least a few times a week. When asked specifically about answering questions on what they had read, this percentage drops slightly to 60% across the grade levels. Nearly 40% of students reported working collaboratively with other students to problem-solve or create something. Across the grade levels, only 20% of students reported leading a conversation in class.

Instructional Resources

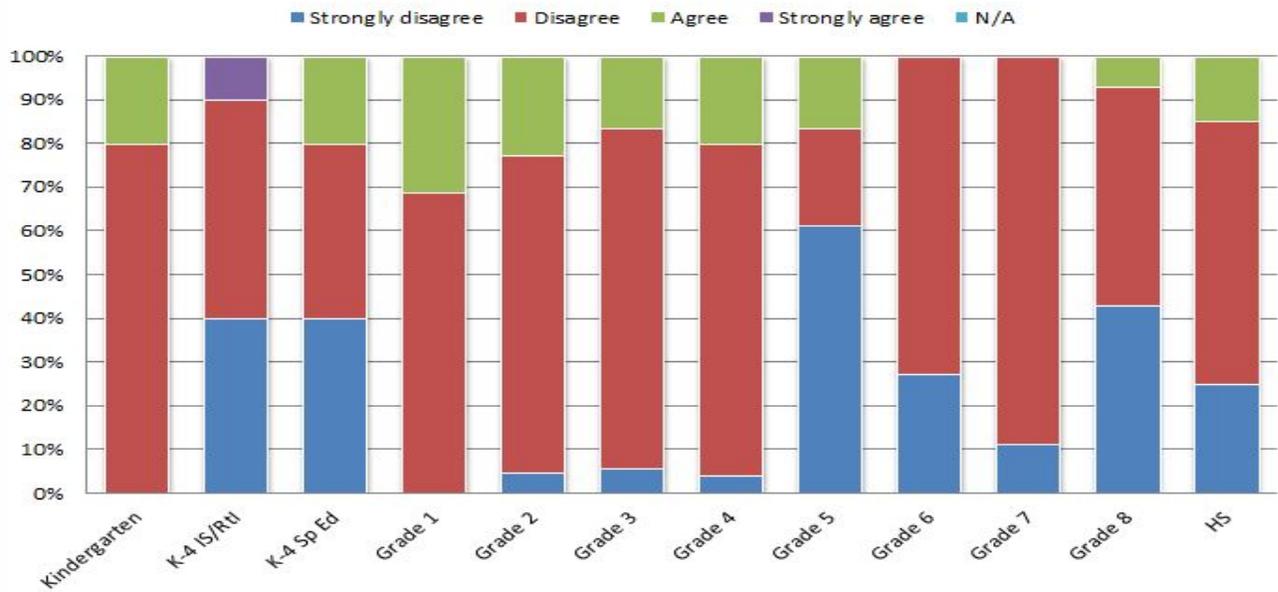
Teachers were asked a number of questions about the resources available to them. Most expressed an overall dissatisfaction (disagree or strongly disagree) with grammar resources, at 89%, followed closely by vocabulary. For grades 6 and beyond, 100% of teachers noted dissatisfaction with resources for grammar. For all types of surveyed resources (reading, writing, vocabulary, spelling/phonics, research, and grammar), the dissatisfaction with the available resource increased as the grade level increased. Overall dissatisfaction with different types of resources ranged from 75% to 89%. Primary and intermediate teachers noted a stronger dissatisfaction with spelling resources. Middle school teachers noted a need for an updated/more recent anthology and/or common resources. High school teachers noted limited access to technology. Teachers at all levels commented that they have to create many of their own resources. At all levels, teachers noted a need for updated resources and reading material, and this was a common trend among parents responding to ELA resources as well. Although most parents expressed that the books and resources used in their child's ELA class were appropriate for grade level and content (only 10% reporting dissatisfaction), when given the opportunity to elaborate, many parents submitted comments of the nature that there was "too much emphasis on the Holocaust," that "too many books are depressing," and that there is "a need for more challenging books." The lack of a textbook or anthology was also mentioned multiple times. There was no indication whether or not parents are aware of the state mandates requiring yearly Holocaust and Amistad instruction, which could explain attitudes towards literature surrounding these themes.

Teacher Question 22: Do you have appropriate resources to teach all students?

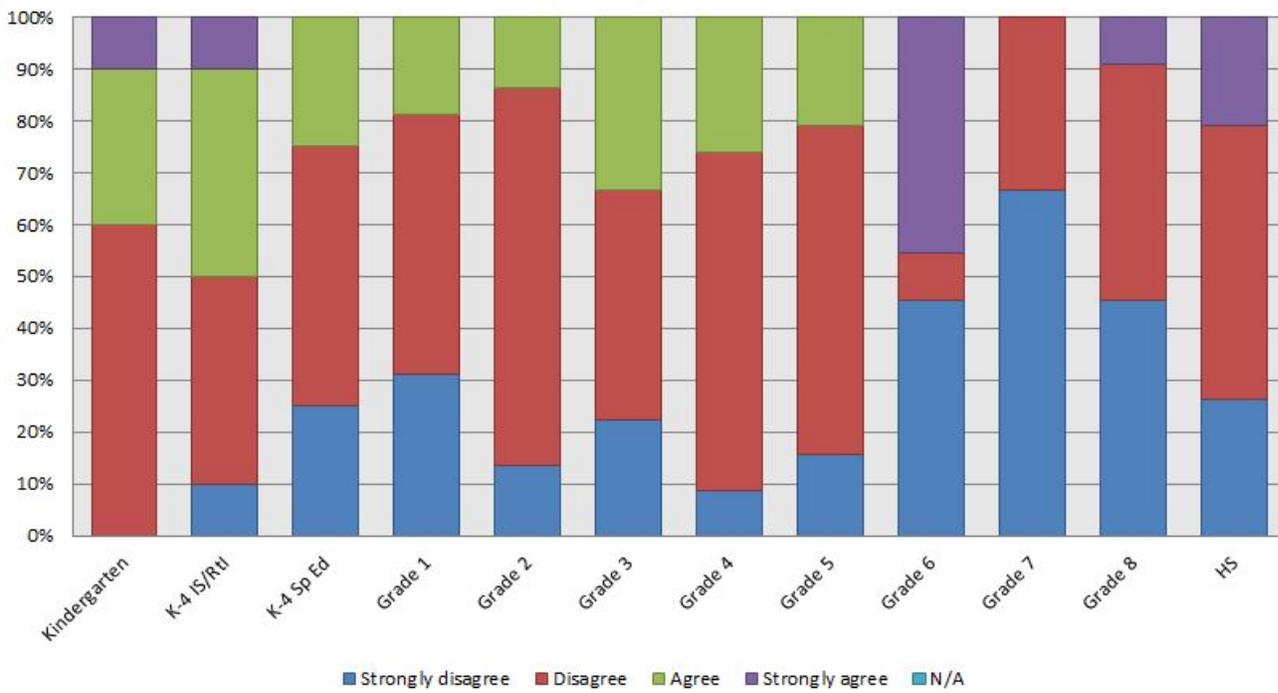
*Note: teachers were surveyed in consideration of five components of their ELA class

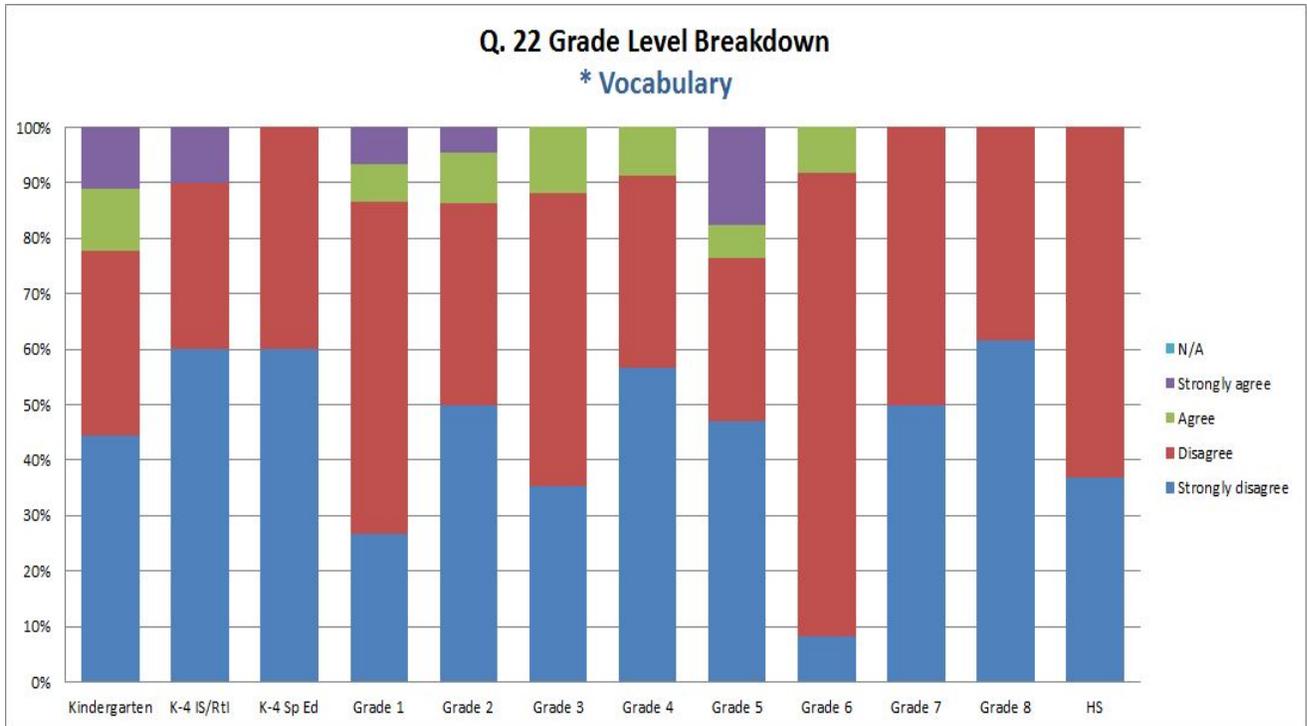


Q. 22 Grade Level Breakdown * Writing



Q. 22 Grade Level Breakdown * Spelling/Phonics





When surveyed about their use of resources, students across all levels reported rarely using ebooks, with "never" being the most prominent response from the intermediate level upward. The most prevalent response for using databases was "not very often." More than 50% of students overall report using recommended websites at least once a week, with the lowest usage being recorded by high school students. 50% of students grades 3-6 report using Chromebooks every day. This rate drops somewhat in the middle school, and drops off significantly in the high school, with less than 10% reporting daily usage and approximately 35 percent reporting "not very often." This finding aligns with teacher responses about limited availability of chromebooks at the high school level. Students did indicate that resources include a multicultural perspective, with approximately 80% of students reporting reading and/or learning about diverse races and cultures at least "most of the time." Results were consistent across grade levels.

Teachers were also surveyed about the library/media center as a resource. 32% of teachers were neutral regarding ease of access to the media center, 38% responded negatively to this question while 29% responded positively. Total dissatisfaction with the materials offered by the media center is limited, with the highest level of disagree or strongly disagree responses occurring at the 6th grade level (approximately 35%). It is important to note that sixth grade is the first year students do not visit the library as an instructional special. Highest level of satisfaction with library resources was reported at the middle school level.

Feedback on Writing

Teachers assign a wide variety of writing tasks in all ELA classes. Students indicated that the most challenging written assignments are research papers and timed writings. Teachers recognize the challenges inherent in these types of assignments, and teachers surveyed suggested potential electives at the high school level that would focus on research writing.

Students reported that they receive a variety of feedback on their writing. Students indicated that the most prevalent and valuable feedback came from direct and personal teacher-student interaction that encouraged students to reflect on their writing. This included feedback on students' writing on paper and in Google Documents and through one-on-one conferences. According to teachers, as students move into high school, there is a shift from one-on-one conferences to written comments and rubrics.

Independent Reading

When surveyed about their independent reading, 50% of the students in grades 3 and 4 reported that they have specific time during class to read a book of choice. While only 20% of 5th and 6th graders indicated a specific time for independent reading, nearly 60% of them indicated time to read when other ELA assignments were complete. In middle school, nearly 25% of 7th and 8th graders reported no time in ELA class for independent reading. By high school, nearly 60% of students reported no time for independent reading in any of their English classes.

Students were asked what they choose to read on their own time. At the lower grade levels, students overwhelmingly favored books: fiction, nonfiction, and graphic novels. There was the occasional response of comic book, magazine, or none. Students in the intermediate grades began to further differentiate among these choices. Genres such as fantasy, historical fiction, and realistic fiction were mentioned, as well as specific series and authors. A small part of this population gave some variation of the response "I do not read" or "none." Middle schoolers reported many of the same genres as their younger peers, but also included anime/manga, YA, and romance among their preferences. Nearly 10% of 7th and 8th graders said they did not read on their own, and this percentage nearly doubled as students moved into high school.

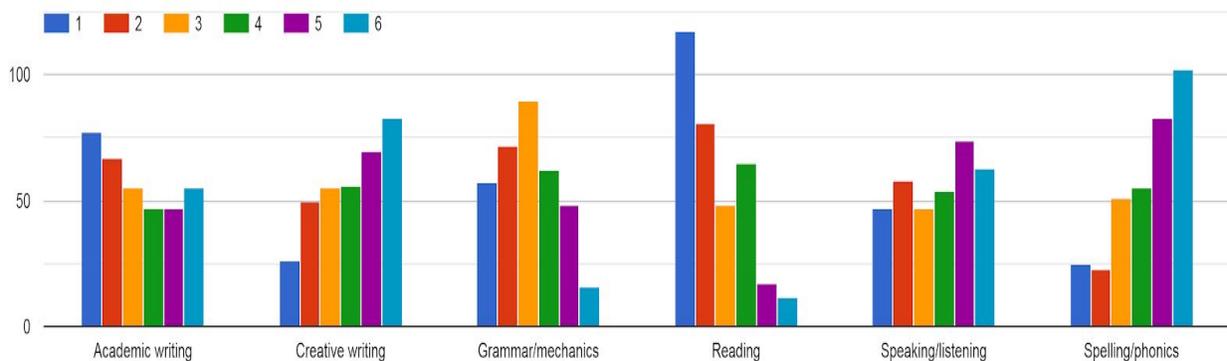
Grammar

Parents were asked to rank the components of an ideal English Language Arts program. An overwhelming majority of parents (nearly 75%) placed reading as the most important or the second most important. Academic writing and grammar/mechanics had the highest instances of being ranked 2nd and 3rd. Approximately 50% ranked spelling/phonics as the least important or

the 2nd least important component. Creative writing and speaking/listening responses trended towards the bottom third in importance amongst all respondents.

Parent Question 9: Please rank the following components of an ideal English Language Arts program in order of importance. (with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.)

9. Please rank the following components of an ideal English Language Arts program in order of importance: (with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.)



When specifically asked about the teaching of grammar in their child’s ELA program, 37% of parents agreed that grammar was being taught adequately, while 25% felt it was not being taught adequately. Approximately a third of parents were neutral on this topic. When prompted to elaborate on this question, many parents questioned the influence of social media and/or technology on children’s grammar and mechanics.

Teachers were asked to consider the time they incorporate grammar into their ELA instruction. At the primary level, nearly all teachers reported daily grammar instruction. At the intermediate level, more teachers reported multiple days of grammar instruction, while middle school teachers cited weekly grammar instruction. 95% of high school teachers reported only weekly grammar instruction. The practice of teaching grammar in isolated lessons versus being infused into daily writing lessons could have influenced how teachers reported the frequency of their instruction.

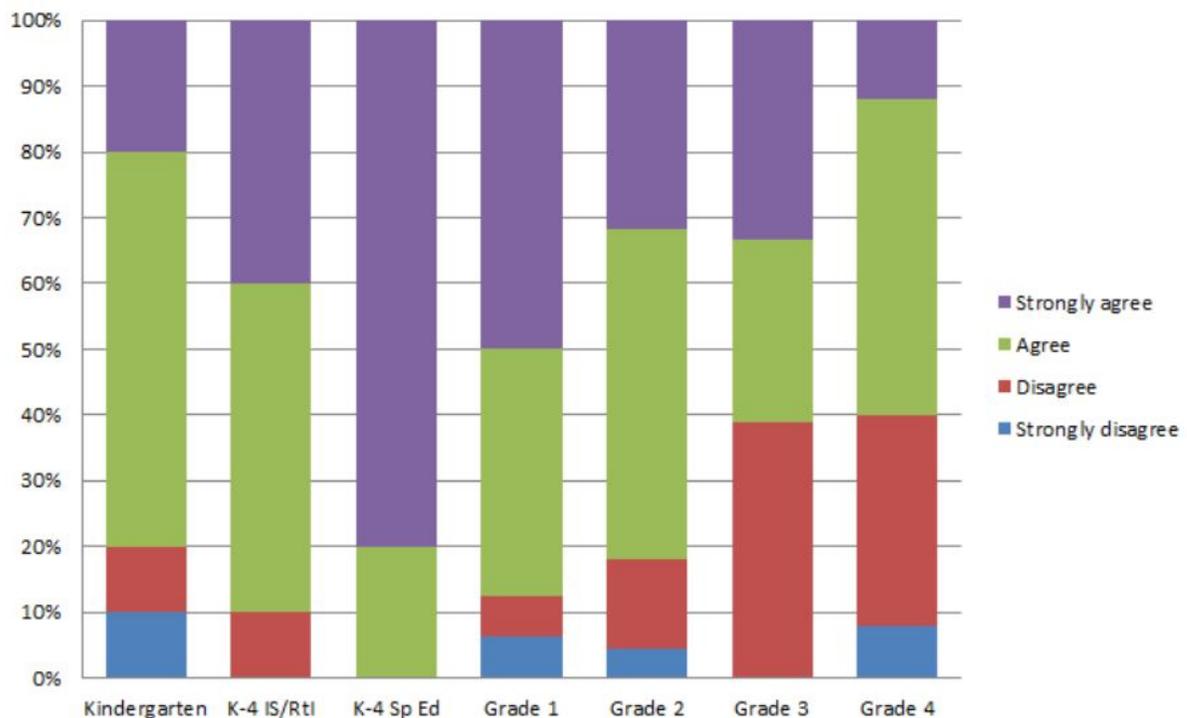
89% of teachers reported dissatisfaction with the resources available to them for grammar instruction. Beyond grade five, 100% of teachers were dissatisfied with their available resources.

Phonics / Spelling / Word Study

K-4 Teachers and all parents and students were asked to consider phonics, spelling, and word study.

Teachers were asked if they “believe that additional professional development in the areas of phonemic awareness/phonics would support me in delivering explicit Word Study instruction to students in my classroom.” Overall, 75% of K-4 teachers indicated that they would benefit from professional development in phonemic awareness and phonics. Nearly all teachers of special education and RTI/IS agreed or strongly agreed; 83% of K-2 teachers agreed or strongly agreed; and 61% of teachers in grades 3 and 4 agreed or strongly agreed.

K-4 Teachers were also asked how many of their students “would benefit from explicit, systematic phonics instruction.” Overall, 32% of K-4 teachers felt their entire class would benefit from explicit, systematic phonics instruction, and 61% of K-4 teachers felt that at least half of their class would benefit from explicit, systematic phonics instruction. 48% of K-2 teachers indicated that their entire class would benefit, and 14% of teachers of grades 3 and 4 indicated that their entire class would benefit. 80% of K-2 teachers responded that at least half their class would benefit, while 40% of teachers of grades 3 and 4 responded that at least half their class would benefit. 100% of teachers of special education and RTI/IS responded that at least half of their class would benefit. Teacher Question 24. (Grades K-4 teachers only) I believe that

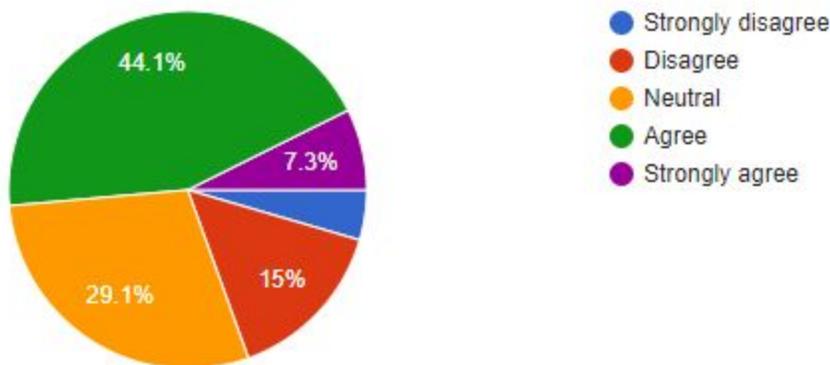


additional professional development in the areas of phonemic awareness/phonics would support me in delivering explicit word study instruction to students in my classroom.

Students were asked to identify writing activities they found challenging and which writing activities they found easy in ELA class. 968 students, or 20.7% of students who responded to this question indicated that spelling words correctly was a challenge. 3,038 students, or 64% of students who responded to this question indicated that spelling words correctly was something they found easy. Overall, the student survey indicated that spelling was much less of a challenge than other writing activities. For example, 2,861 students (61%) indicated that timed writing was a challenge, and 2,182 students (47%) indicated that research writing was a challenge.

Parents were asked if they felt spelling and phonics were adequately taught in the current ELA program. Only 19.5% of parents either disagreed or strongly disagreed, while more than half of parent respondents, 51.4% agreed or strongly agreed. 29.1% of parents responded that they were neutral regarding the adequacy of spelling/phonics instruction. Parents were also given the opportunity to elaborate in an open-ended response. Many parents commented that phonics and spelling were taught regularly in the elementary levels and much less often in intermediate and secondary schools, and the consensus among respondents to this open-ended question was that parents would like more spelling, phonics, and word study instruction in higher grades.

Parent Question 12: Spelling/phonics are being taught adequately in the current ELA program.



Vocabulary

All teachers were asked about vocabulary instruction. Teachers were asked how often they incorporate word study and vocabulary into instruction. Much more instructional time is spent at the primary level on daily word study and vocabulary. There is a drop-off at the intermediate level and another significant reduction at the high school. Teachers at the primary level commonly teach word study and vocabulary daily; as the grade levels increase, the frequency of this instruction reduces to multiple days per week and then weekly at the high school level.

Teachers at all levels were asked if their resources are appropriate to teach vocabulary to all students. Overwhelmingly, teachers responded that they do not have appropriate resources to teach all students vocabulary. 100% of middle school and high school teachers indicated that they lack the resources to teach vocabulary to all students. Teachers were invited to elaborate on their access to appropriate instructional resources. Teachers in all grade levels expressed a need for differentiated phonics, spelling, and vocabulary resources. Many teachers indicated that they create their own materials.

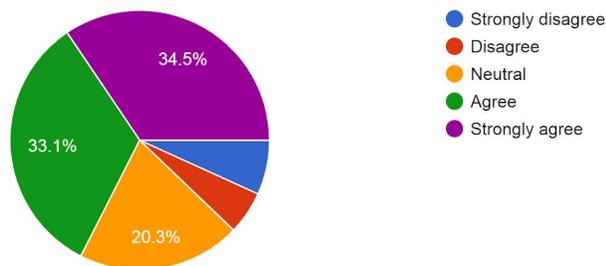
Cursive Writing

Parents were asked about the instruction of cursive writing. 67% of parents reported that they felt the reading and writing of cursive writing should be taught, and half of those respondents felt very strongly in favor of the instruction. This question did not delineate between the instruction of reading cursive versus the writing of cursive.

Parent Question 10: The reading and writing of cursive should be taught in English Language Arts.

10. The reading and writing of cursive should be taught in English Language Arts.

354 responses



Students were surveyed about their usage of cursive writing. 50% of 3rd graders reported writing in cursive all or some of the time. Only 20% of 4th and 5th graders reported writing in cursive all or some of the time, and this percentage declines each year beyond grade 6. The majority of students in grades 6 through 12 indicated a preference to print or to type on a device. Across the district, 11% of students responded that they found writing in cursive to be difficult.

Only teachers of grades 3 and 4 were asked about cursive writing instruction. 25% of teachers at both grade levels reported that it is up to the student whether he or she writes in cursive. Less than 5% of teachers at both grade levels responded that they assign cursive writing practice as homework and require it on specific assignments. More than 25% of third grade teachers and nearly 45% of 4th grade teachers reported that their students have time to practice cursive during their ELA block, but less than 25% at both grade levels indicated that there was adequate time to provide their students with feedback.

Professional Development for Teachers

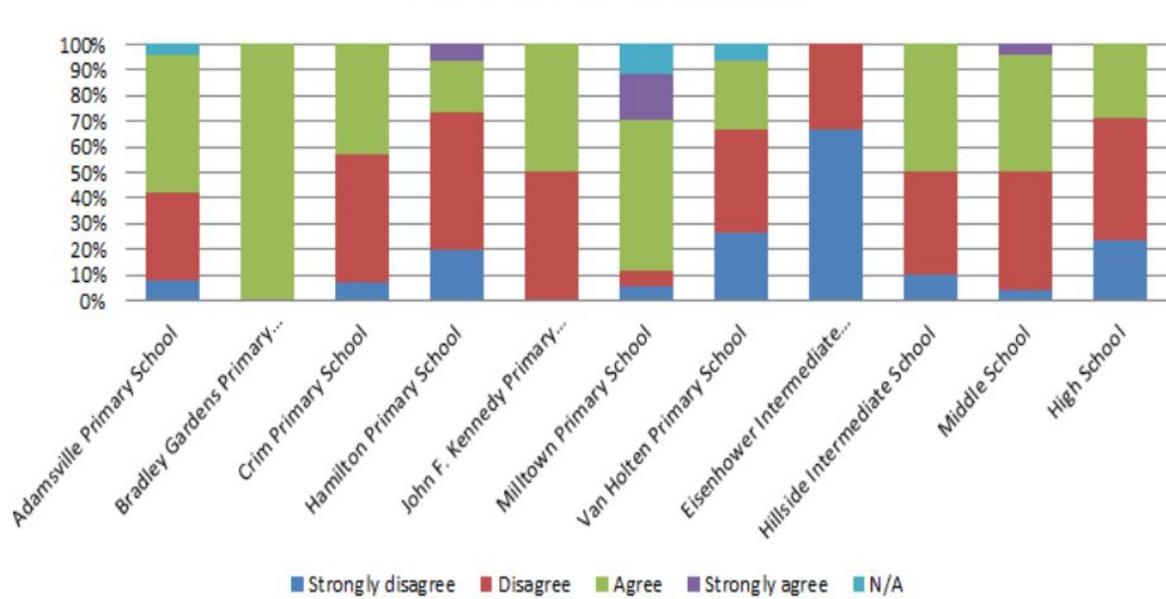
Teachers were asked to reflect on current professional development (PD) offerings provided by the district as well as what they hoped to see provided in the future.

Teacher responses showed ambivalence with regards to whether or not they were currently provided with professional development on current best practices. Approximately, one third of teachers who responded expressed they were not provided with appropriate professional development, while another third felt that they were. However, teachers expressed a need for and a willingness to participate in professional development.

Some requested topics in professional development for K-4 teachers were guided reading, phonics, spelling. At the intermediate, middle and high school levels, teachers requested professional development which focused on vertical articulation, technology integration, and Social Emotional Learning. Dyslexia, differentiation and reading strategies were noted across all grade levels.

Teachers expressed a great willingness to visit another colleague's classroom as well as to have fellow teachers visit their own classroom as a form of PD.

Roughly 70% of teachers felt that they did not have adequate time to meet with colleagues to discuss ELA curriculum. This sentiment varied greatly by school, but not by grade level.



Teacher Question 19: I have adequate time to meet with my colleagues to discuss the ELA curriculum.

Student Performance Analysis

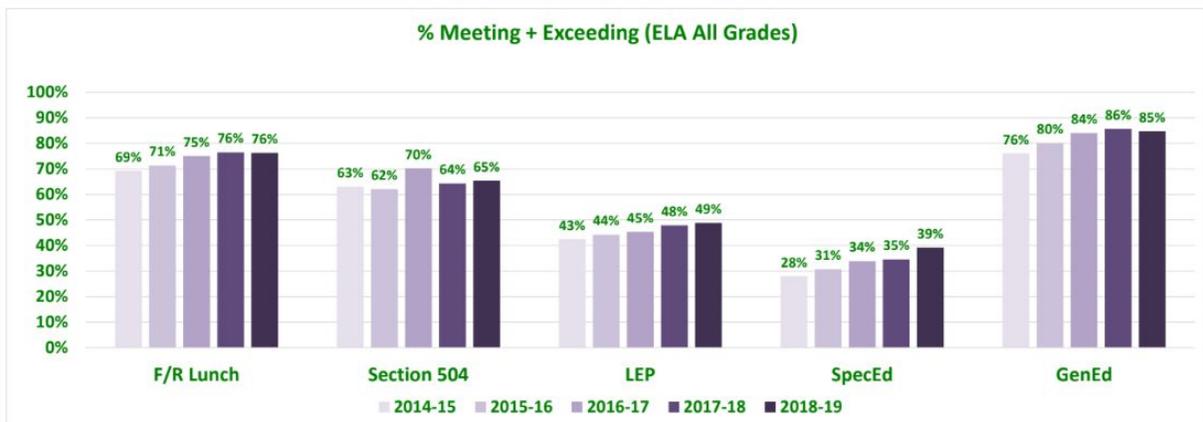
A review of both PARCC and NJSLA data since 2014 indicates that “most” students in BRRSD in grades 3-10 meet or exceed expectations overall. We see a somewhat lesser percentage of students meeting or exceeding in Grade 3, the first year of testing, and at the upper end, in Grades 9 and 10. At those upper levels, we attribute this decrease to a “test taker drop-off” that occurs as students look toward other assessments (such as the SAT) to meet graduation requirements and, therefore, do not sit for the State assessment.

Performance on the PARCC/NJSLA assessment varies, based on demographic. The charts (A1-3) included below depict a portrait of student proficiency by program, gender, and race.

A1

Proficiency by Program

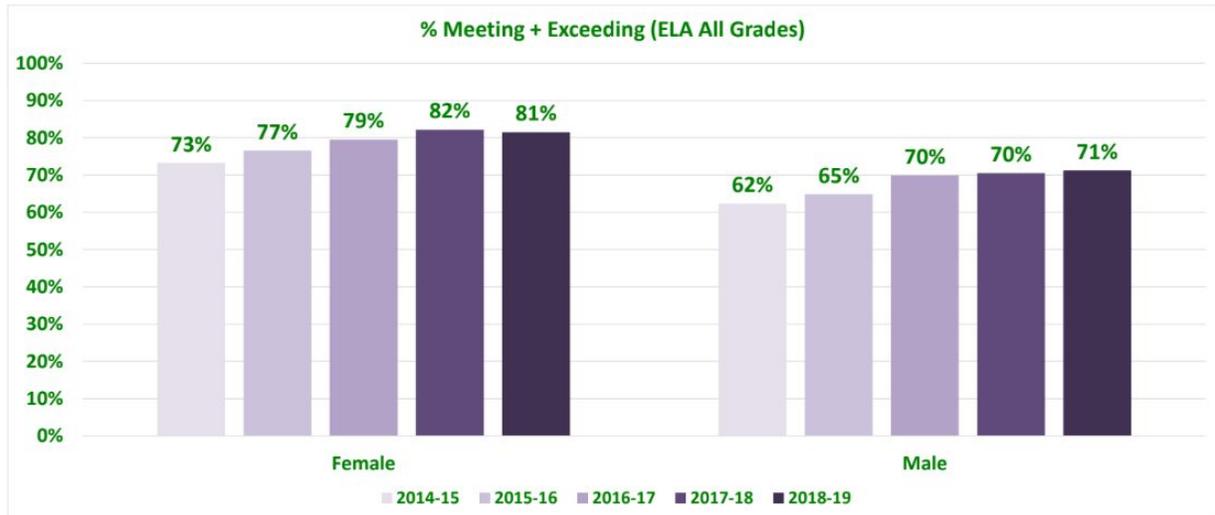
Same grade, different students



A2

Proficiency by Gender

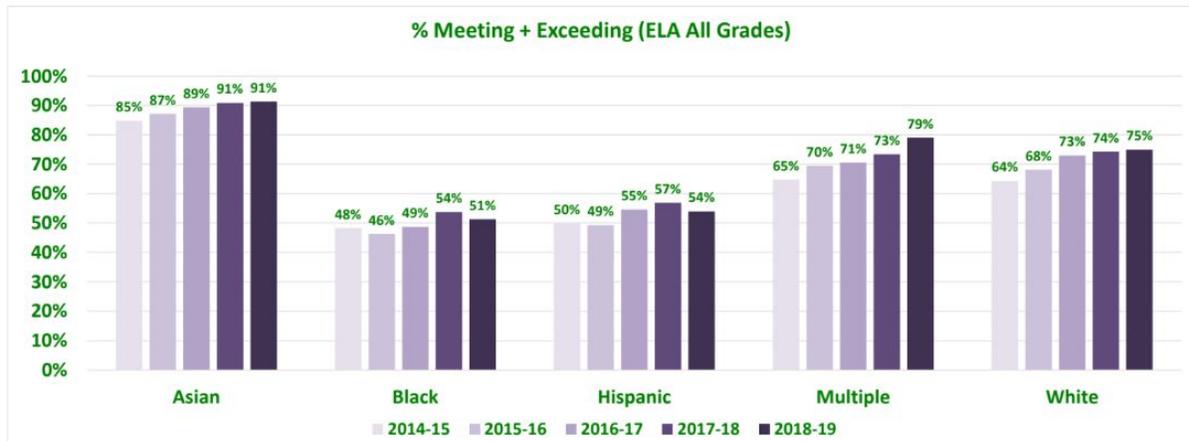
Same grade, different students



A3

Proficiency by Race

Same grade, different students

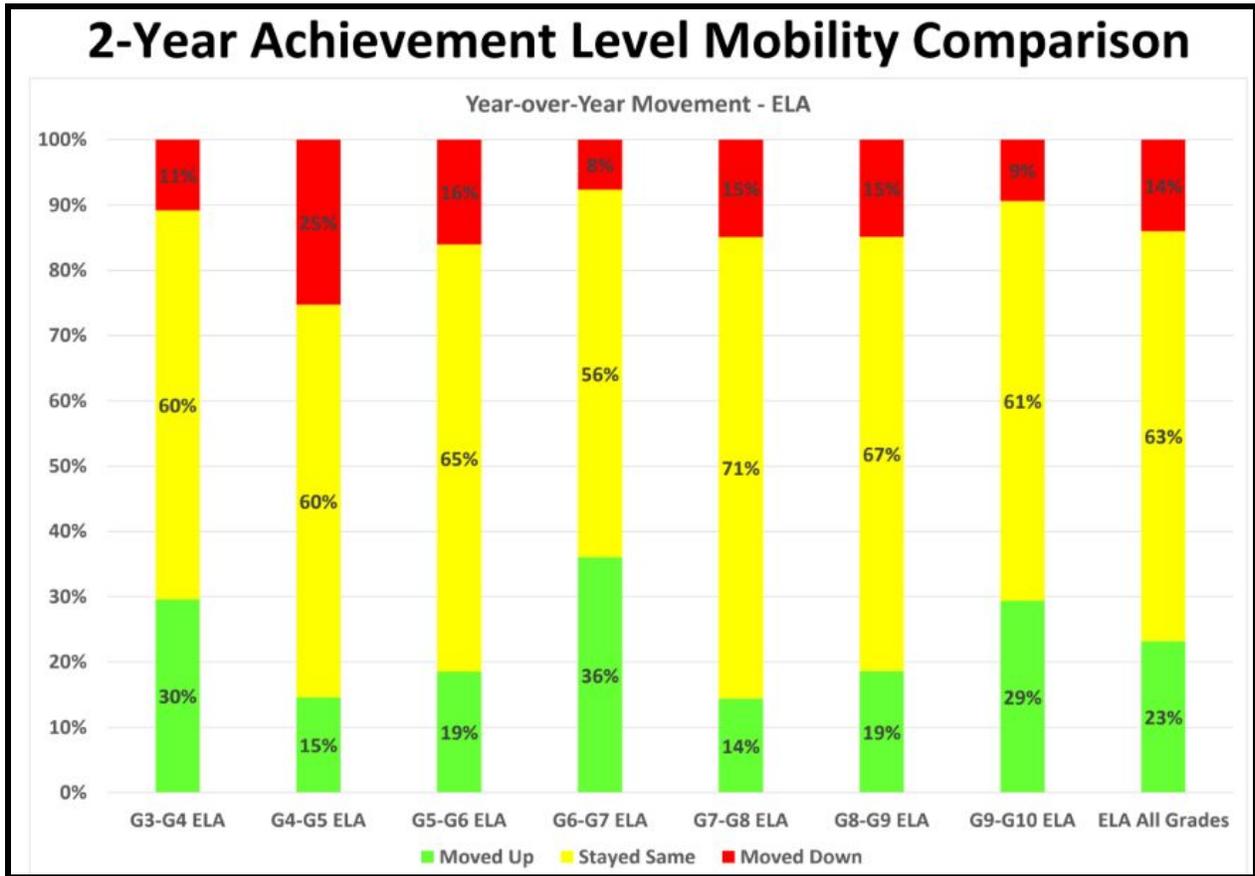


Since 2014, girls slightly outperform boys in the BRRSD. Hispanic and Black students struggle to meet expectations. Students receiving special education services and who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) experience a low passing percentage. These trends have persisted, and there is reason to believe that a variation in both approach and resources may be the changes needed to create achievement mobility where there has, traditionally, been little.

While a significant percentage of our students demonstrate proficiency, there remains a small but undeniable percentage of our students who fail to meet expectations each year. While these percentages are, once again, slightly higher for our newest test-takers and our older students (where the pool of test-takers decreases), and low, overall, for the majority of our students - these, too, remain consistent, year after year. Therefore, while it may seem reassuring that most students in Bridgewater-Raritan traditionally achieve success on our state's assessment, we are not comfortable continuing to approach curriculum and instruction in ELA as we have because of the students that we miss. We cannot, and should not, continue to ignore the evident portrait of stagnation that emerges when performance data is closely examined.

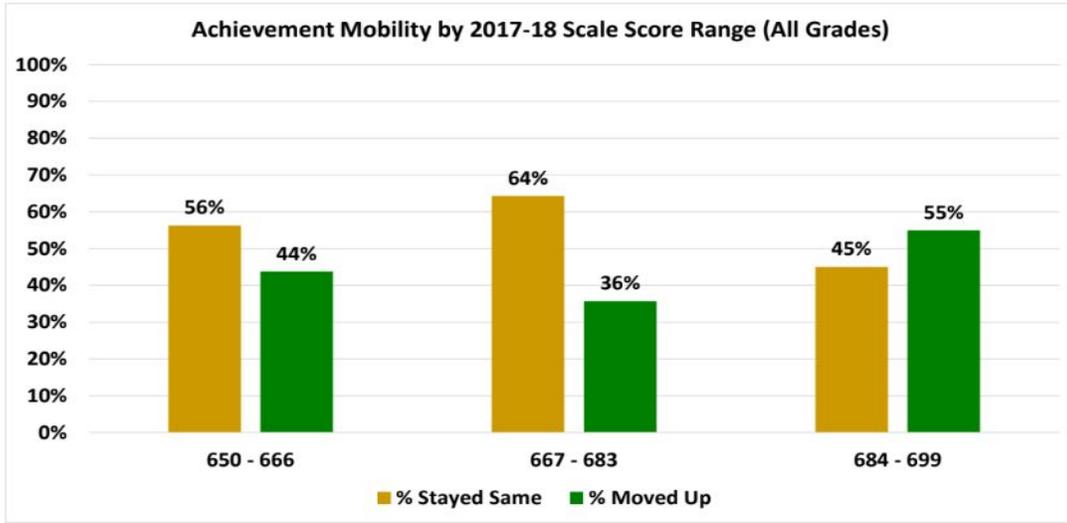
Consider this: In the most recent two year period in which NJSLA data was compiled and analyzed by our district Office of Special Programs, we noted that 77% of our students demonstrated no upward growth/mobility between the 2018 and 2019 assessments (Chart B). In many cases, this data reflects students who achieved proficiency in 2018 and continued to do so the following testing year; however, this data also encompasses those students who struggled to emerge out of "not meeting" or "partially meeting" expectations in 2018. As a district overall, 14% of our students demonstrated negative growth. Whether slipping from "exceeding" to "meeting" expectations or from "meeting" to "partially"/"not meeting," this is a cause for concern. A review of the past two years of standardized testing data indicates significant percentages of students who fail to experience upward achievement mobility from year to year (see charts C1-5 below). With the implementation of district-wide NWEA MAP testing in grades 2-8 that began this past fall, we believe we may have fresh data to confirm why some of our students continue to struggle and/or fail to grow in their ability to demonstrate secure ELA skills as texts featured on the NJSLA increase in complexity.

B.



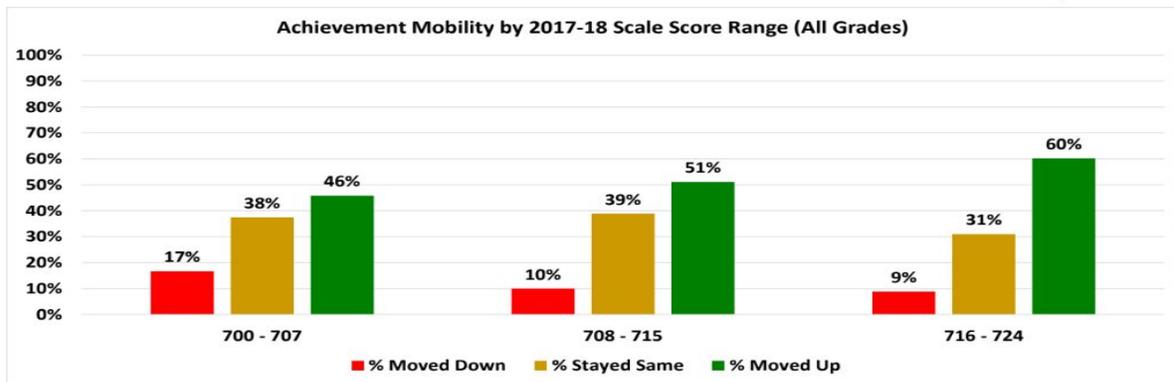
C1

Scale Score Achievement Level Mobility



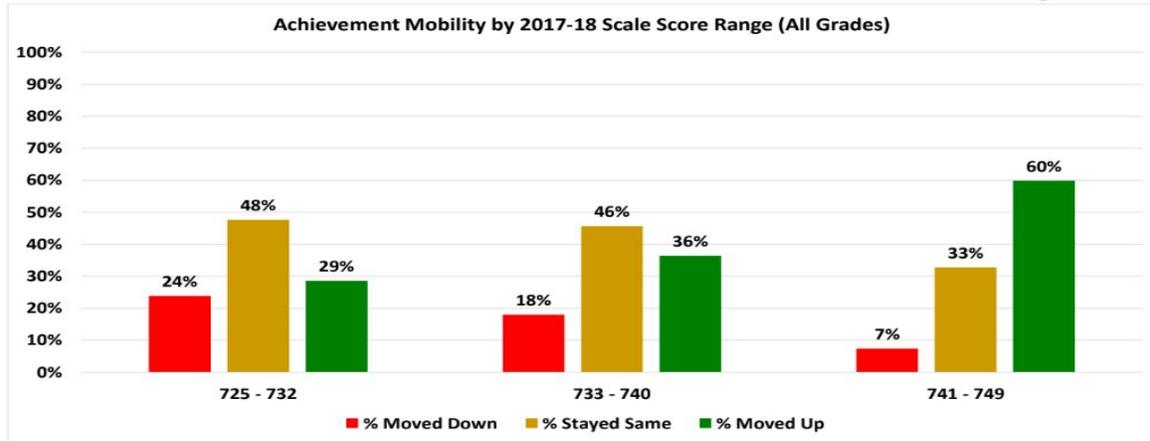
C2

Scale Score Achievement Level Mobility



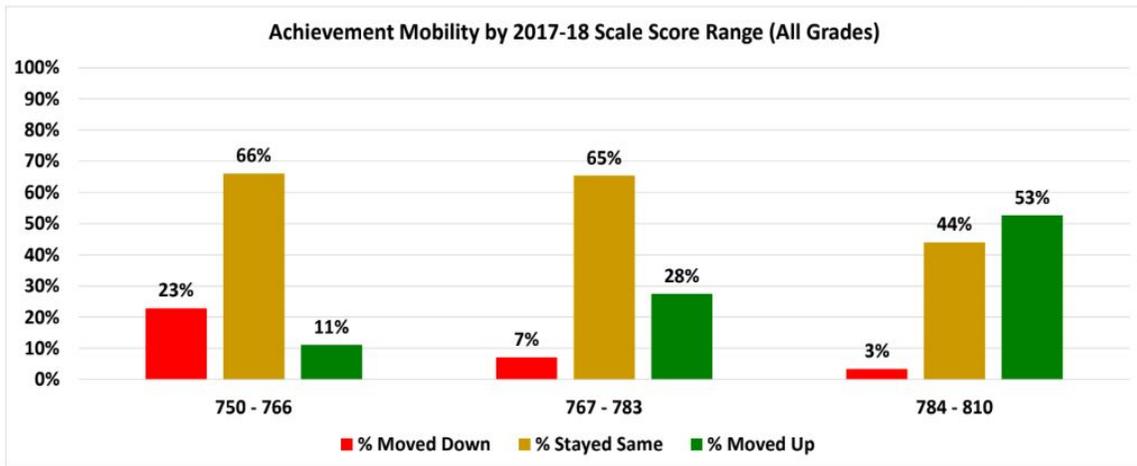
C3

Scale Score Achievement Level Mobility



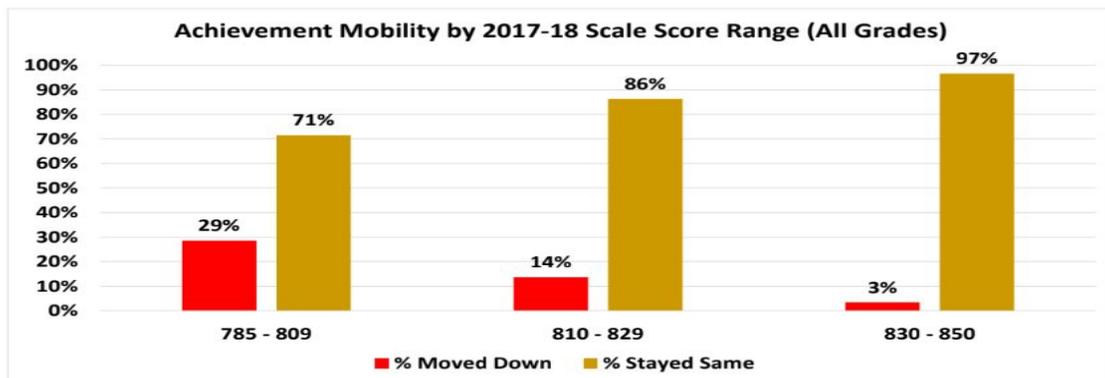
C4

Scale Score Achievement Level Mobility



C5

Scale Score Achievement Level Mobility



This past fall, all students in grades 2-8 took the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. As a norm-referenced measure of student growth over time, we look forward to the opportunity to analyze comparative data later this spring. The MAP results following the fall 2019 administration did provide us with interesting data related to students’ reading abilities in the form of Lexile levels. A summary chart appears below.

Grade	Lowest Lexile	Highest Lexile	Mean Lexile	Median Lexile
2	-400	1130	261	260
3	-365	1270	565	585
4	-220	1475	751	785
5	-40	1635	950	970
6	180	1755	1052	1070
7	-180	1795	1107	1150
8	-305	1825	1167	1210

For reference, Lexile.com provides the following percentiles derived from national normative data of over 3 million students across the U.S. who were administered assessments that reported Lexile measurements from 2010 through 2016. While it is important to keep in mind that Lexile measures do not translate or equate directly to grade levels, normative ranges certainly exist and can be referenced for purposes of resource selection and planning.


LEXILE
GRADE LEVEL CHARTS

This table reflects the 50th - 90th percentiles from national student norms for grade(s) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 at the Beginning of Year (BOY).

GRADE	BOY - Fall	
	50th	90th
K	BR345L	BR40L
1	10L	435L
2	290L	675L
3	530L	885L
4	735L	1060L
5	900L	1210L
6	990L	1300L
7	1060L	1375L
8	1125L	1435L
9	1180L	1495L
10	1230L	1545L
11	1270L	1590L
12	1270L	1590L



Generated: January 29, 2020

<https://hub.lexile.com/lexile-grade-level-charts>

While the mean and median lexile levels (in the first chart included above) indicate that, in many cases, our students are reading within Lexile ranges that indicate appropriate growth alongside grade-level expectations, the highlighted columns reveal that we have students who are far less - and far more - capable. For these students, we realize the need to approach reading instruction differently, providing for greater choice, ownership, and opportunities to transfer learning to texts that not only meet students where they are, but powerfully challenge them to grow beyond. As a district, we have made a commitment to every student; looking beyond means and medians, we find students toward the extremes that warrant something different in terms of resources and approach.

PSAT/SAT/ACT

The data reviewed supports that BRHS students consistently score above state and national averages on standardized assessments for English Language Arts. In terms of student participation, the *New Jersey Schools Performance Report* shows that about a third of our students take the ACT prior to graduation while 80% chose to take the SAT, which is close to the participation rates for the state. Our participation in the PSAT is lower than the state average, since there are many districts that administer the PSAT to students during the school day. As an example, for the 2017-2018 school year, the state participation rate was 85% of 10th and 11th graders who had taken the test, while Bridgewater had a participation rate of 52%.

PSAT	BRHS average score	State average score
2016-2017	563	481
2017-2018	579	478

SAT Reading and Writing	BRHS average	State average	National average
2015-2016	590	537	495
2016-2017	595	551	533
2017-2018	607	542	536

ACT Reading	BRHS average	State average	National average
2015-2016	25	23	20
2016-2017	25	24	20
2017-2018	26	24	20

ACT English	BRHS average	State average	National average
2015-2016	24	22	21
2016-2017	25	24	21
2017-2018	26	24	21

Advanced Placement Courses

Two AP English courses are offered at BRHS, English Language and Composition for 11th graders and English Literature and Composition for 12th graders. A review of the *AP Five Year Score Summary* published by the College Board (2018) shows that students who take the end-of-course exams perform well with the mean district score consistently above the global mean. The district's average score for AP Language and Composition from 2014-2018 was 4.3 while AP Literature and Composition test-takers averaged 4.2 over the same five-year period.

AP Language and Composition	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of Exams	146	100	64	72	99
District Mean	3.97	4.27	4.52	4.40	4.30
Global Mean	3.38	3.39	3.38	3.27	3.26

AP Literature and Composition	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of Exams	54	91	34	2	52
District Mean	4.00	3.97	4.76	4.50	3.88
Global Mean	3.17	3.12	3.07	2.97	2.81

Site Visit Findings

The BRRSD ELA supervisors met with the ELA supervisors of the following districts: West Windsor - Plainsboro Regional School District, Freehold Township Schools, Livingston School District, Somerville Public Schools, and Montgomery Township School District. Teachers who are a part of our Program Review Committee accompanied us to both the Montgomery Township School District and West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District. We learned a great number of things from these visits, and the findings are summarized below.

Visits with Program Review Committee Members:

West-Windsor-Plainsboro (K-12 visit):

- ELA Instructional Coaches are in place at each primary building
- Literacy Council (K-4 level) brings together teachers from each grade level four times throughout the year for vertical articulation purposes and on-the-spot curriculum revisions
- Classroom Spaces with tables and meeting spaces are the norm - as opposed to traditional desks in rows
- Anchor Charts related to instruction are consistent from classroom to classroom within a grade level
- Partnership with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project exists, and teachers have multiple opportunities for ongoing, in-the-classroom, professional development with a staff developer throughout the year
- Reading and Writing Workshop approach across all grade levels
- Learning targets are explicitly stated in student-friendly language so that students know what they are learning and how they can apply that skill/strategy to new reading and writing work
- Teachers College Units of Study in grades K-8 foster consistent language used by both teachers and students when talking about reading and writing

- Workbooks and worksheets are not used in instruction
- Actively-used classroom libraries exist in all classrooms, with a more recent emphasis on building High School English classroom libraries
- Heterogeneous grouping with differentiation is the norm, accommodating ongoing book clubs and independent choice reading
- Student learning targets are differentiated through the use of learning continuums in both reading and writing
- The High School English curriculum is structured around the three types of writing: Narrative, Argument, and Informational, allowing for a match with reading instruction and choice of texts
- Common writing assessments are administered at the High School level three times a year

Montgomery Township Schools (K-12 Visit):

- K-8 maintains a partnership with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project - teachers have multiple opportunities for ongoing, in-the-classroom, professional development with a TC staff developer throughout the year
- At the K-4, 5-6, and 7-8 levels, reading and writing units of study are aligned, allowing for students to make ongoing connections between reading and writing
- At the 9-12 level, teachers meet regularly to plan common lessons and assessments
- In grades 11 & 12, the traditional full-year English course is replaced by two half-year courses. Students have the ability to choose between two different offerings each semester.
- A district scope and sequence/pacing guide ensures that consistent, standards-based instruction is delivered to all students
- Focused mini-lessons in the context of a Reading Workshop allow optimal time for students to apply what they are learning to self-selected book club or independent reading texts
- ELA and social studies classes are 1:1 in terms of Chromebook devices
- “E” level/enrichment classes do not exist prior to high school honors offerings
- Assessment consists of summative, formative, and performance assessments. Each unit has a core assessment that consists of on-demand writing and student application of reading skills to a short story.
- Reading supports the substance and direction of the writing units. Mentor texts are utilized in the writer's workshop. Emphasis remains on process over product with few, if any, assignments being brought to final draft form.

Freehold Township Schools (K-2 Phonics Visit):

- A partnership exists with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. Recently, the new Phonics Units of Study in Grades K and 1 have been implemented
- Phonics Units of Study is being used in Grade 2
- Direct, explicit phonics instruction occurs for all students using a mini-workshop model
- Phonics knowledge is transferred and applied to small group instruction and independent practice
- Professional learning opportunities exist for all teachers in the most common rules of English spelling
- Interventionist supports most struggling students in the general education classrooms with more intense work using the same Phonics Units of Study materials, strategies, and common language
- School-level common assessment data shows that students who have been using the program in Grades K and 1 (during pilot implementation years) have retained knowledge of spelling patterns and continue to apply and transfer that knowledge to new learning

Supervisor-to-Supervisor Visits:

Somerville Public Schools (K-2 Conversation):

- WIN (What I Need) period is in place for Kindergarten students - every 6-8 weeks, the teachers review data to determine areas of focus. Kindergarten students move to different groups (in different classrooms) where instruction focuses on determined needs for each group. At the conclusion of one cycle, teachers review data, assess student progress and begin the cycle of identifying new areas of focus for the next cycle.
- The district has been working with a consultant by the name of [Carrie Thurston](#) who has been helping them design a system for collecting, analyzing, and using data to inform ongoing instructional decision-making in ELA.
- A strong focus has been applied to the area of Early Literacy Intervention with the hopes that skill gaps can be filled as early as possible for their readers.

Livingston School District (7-12 Conversation):

- Beginning in grade 7, the curriculum is designed around 4 themes. Each unit fits within a marking period, and while the themes remain the same across a grade span, the essential questions, texts, and resources increase in complexity.
- Students in grades 7-8 utilize vocabulary.com for word learning.
- In reading, students explore character, setting/context, point of view, and theme each year.
- In writing, students write personal narratives, argument/persuasion, exposition/research, and literary analysis essays each year. Models and rubrics increase in complexity.

- NoRedInk.com is utilized to assist with grammar skills practice. A scope and sequence for grammar exists within the curriculum
- Each marking period includes 3 core/mentor texts which are used to directly teach skills: a poem, a short story, and a nonfiction text.
- There are currently core novels in grades 1-6, but the supervisor indicated she is working to offer teachers between 4-5 approved core texts from which they may choose one for the year based on the socio-emotional needs of their students.
- Students read independently-selected texts for the first 10 minutes of class time (soft start).
- Students engage in reading conferences, worth between 10-15% of their grade.

Site Visit Conclusions:

Upon analysis of our site visit findings, four main themes surfaced that have helped to inform our recommendations:

Theme 1: Reading Workshop is a structure that allows for more student-centered instruction

One thing we noticed during all of our site visits was a consistent commitment to the use of a Reading Workshop model across grades K-12. While there were still common texts used to establish community and allow for instructional modeling, there was a greater emphasis on allowing students to apply the skills and strategies they learned to a diverse selection of text based upon reading level and interest. In addition to whole class instruction, we witnessed a greater emphasis on teachers guiding instruction through small group and one-on-one reading conferences which allowed teachers to assess students' learning and transfer of skills in an ongoing manner. Reading Workshop units were framed around reading skills and strategies (e.g. Character Analysis) as opposed to being focused on a particular text. Teachers' instruction was guided by clear learning progressions which provided a targeted emphasis on how each year's new instruction would build upon the previous year. Students were also aware of these learning progressions - which allowed for greater student accountability over reading expectations. Overall, one of the most significant findings was the emphasis on independent reading as an ongoing opportunity for students to apply learned skills and strategies to books they had chosen based upon their interest. Teachers were able to confer with students about their independent reading books by keeping the conversations focused on the skills being taught within the given reading unit.

Theme 2: More time should be spent building a reading foundation in grades K-2 with the focus on direct, explicit, and engaging phonics instruction that meets the needs of all students

In the high-performing districts we visited, we noticed a significant shift towards phonics instruction at the K-2 level. District administrators with whom we spoke reported that they have noticed a positive change in this new emphasis on phonics instruction, most notably: (1) fewer I&RS referrals at the earliest grade levels and (2) observed evidence of students transferring their learned phonics knowledge to both reading and writing. In three of the school districts we visited, phonics was taught through a workshop model which allowed for whole class instruction, partner work via “rug clubs,” and small group work based upon student assessment data. Observed phonics work consistently emphasized application and transfer to both reading and writing work as opposed to traditional worksheet practice. All students were actively engaged in the learning that was observed. Another common thought expressed by teachers in each district we visited was that this shift in focus on phonics instruction has provided teachers with the professional development they had been wanting that is helping them to better understand the complexity of the patterns in English spelling. In addition to enhancing their confidence in delivering the specific phonics instruction, they noted they have also seen a difference in their ability to support students during small group and one-one-one reading and writing instruction.

Theme 3: A logical and clearly delineated K-12 progression for writing opens doors to a greater emphasis on student-led transfer of skills and strategies as well as heightened levels of student accountability.

The students we observed at work during our site visits shared a common language that helped them seek specific feedback, self-assess using formative progressions and rubrics, and understand the expectations surrounding their growth as writers. They knew where they were with regard to any one specific skill - as well as what lay ahead along the learning pathway. Students wrote for extended periods of time and generated numerous drafts utilizing a given approach, skill, or style. There was a limited emphasis on finalizing writing and a greater emphasis on experimentation and revision. Teachers provided specific skill instruction via mini-lessons as well as through small groups and one-on-one writing conferences. Writing, quite often, emerged as a means of thinking about one’s reading and making deeper sense of both text and the world around us.

Theme 4: A commitment to ongoing, external professional development optimizes a district's ability to support the needs of its teachers

In each of the sites we visited, district administrators worked alongside external professional development providers to plan for ongoing support for the staff. For example, three of the districts we visited have been working in partnership with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, and one of those three has been working closely with an English professor from The College of New Jersey. This has allowed teachers multiple learning opportunities including intensive theory immersion, lesson demonstration modeling and observation, exploration of new resources, and ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of new curriculum implementation. Teachers with whom we spoke reported feeling valued and respected when they have the opportunity to work alongside experts in the field who are not the same professionals who evaluate them from one year to the next. It was also clear that professional development plans were coordinated with opportunities for work in teacher teams, allowing for teachers to collaboratively reflect on the consistency of program implementation with one another. In speaking with district administrators, we also learned that there was greater value gained from investing in teacher professional development than investing in consumable resources that do not yield the same engagement and positive learning outcomes for the students.

Best Practice Research Summary - English Language Arts

Reading

Summary of Findings

- There is a great benefit to school-based learning communities, as they create a practice where teachers learn from each other to best help students
- Teachers' depth and breadth of knowledge in the content of reading needs to be increased through professional development
- It is important to provide students with time to read, for both enjoyment as well as for transfer and application of learned strategies
 - The increase of reading volume is important for literacy proficiency
- Student choice is key, as is having a variety of current, high interest titles. This is essential for student engagement.
 - There needs to be a variety of texts for students that are reading both below and above grade level so they can access content at a level appropriate to their zone of proximal development
 - Students need to read more - reading volume predicts reading comprehension

- There might be little benefit for students reading the same texts and answering the questions asked by a teacher
 - It is suggested that all class novel studies be turned into focused skill-based or genre studies with anchor read aloud texts and book clubs
- Book choice and read aloud work (slightly above grade level) is needed along with the following: combo of instruction, partner discussion, strategic reading, mini-lessons with domain specific words and academic language
- For learners to grow: provide each with informative, targeted feedback (key for students to know where they are going, the progress they made, and activities needed to achieve their goals) via learning targets. Reading conferences are also key.
- There should be time for students to read a chosen book and engage in a conversation about reading, time to listen to a purposeful and fluent read aloud, to experience small group/differentiated learning, and time to write within the workshop model
- There must be a gradual release of responsibility in terms of reading strategy instruction/application

Implications for Program Evaluation

Currently we have thematic based units with whole-class novels for most units. Although book clubs are an expected “next step” in the unit, sometimes teachers spend so much time within the whole-class novels that they leave little time for any additional reading and student practice or application of the skills and strategies that were taught with the whole class text.

The overall structure of our ELA block of instruction needs to be considered so that all students experience more time for in-class reading and writing. This is where students will be applying the skills and strategies that they have learned; by teaching kids reading skills that they can use in all books and providing them time to practice those skills, teachers can see what students are capable of independently. Teachers need professional development in leading small group intervention as well as individual conferences - and structuring lessons in such a way that there is both time for a direct instructional piece (read aloud with modeling or mini-lesson), time for partner/small group discussion or application of a given skill or strategy, and time for independent application with formative measures in place to monitor student growth.

Book choice is key and so is having a variety of current, high interest texts. Resources must be available so that each student can have a choice of engaging texts at his or her level with which to apply skills and strategy work to. Teachers would also have to know the skills that should be taught within each whole class novel so as to specify the learning for that unit. Classroom book collections need to be established, or students need consistent access to our school libraries.

Students' writing about their reading, as a form of genuine reader-response, should be separate from writing convention/revision/structure work and used to monitor students' thinking about a given text. Writing that emerges from interactions with text should comprise a large percentage of the writing students undertake in ELA.

Vertical articulation must occur when it comes to strategy instruction. Students should be building these with each increasing grade. At present, too much time is spent reteaching the strategies to the whole class. Rather, this type of instruction can take place in reading conferences for individual students who evidence a gap in their learning. Further, there is no consistency in terms of what skills are taught in each unit of study, despite the guidelines that exist within our curriculum. We have become a district of teachers who use novels to teach our students great stories; we must become a district of teachers who use novels as vehicles to teach transferable reading strategies so that all students build the confidence to reach for, and think deeply about, great stories independently in the years to come.

Writing

Summary of Findings

- Teachers need to focus on process along with product (use formative assessment; students need to know what process works best for them)
- Students need to be provided with opportunities to talk about their writing (teachers and peers)
- Writing instruction needs to focus on more than just the final product.
- To teach writing effectively, there needs to be small classes and time.
- Writing should not only be used to demonstrate what they know, but also to support and strengthen what is being taught and learned in class.
- When rubrics are presented before a task, students are aware of how they will be assessed thus increasing their chances of success with the task
- Rubrics give students a common language which allows for specific feedback and comments
- Rubrics are helpful for teachers because they can design instruction based on criteria.
- Rubrics help contribute to consistency of grading.
- “Rubrics improve teaching, provide feedback to students, contribute to sound assessment, and are an important source of information for program improvement.” (Wolf and Stevens, 2007)
- Rubrics help to ensure that the curriculum is not “hidden”, making expectations for students clear. (Wolf and Stevens, 2007)

- Benko (2016) defines *cognitively demanding writing tasks* as “tasks which require students to evaluate, synthesize, analyze, or otherwise construct knowledge” and are also “the most important kinds of tasks in a secondary writing classroom”.
- Two types of cognitively demanding writing tasks: one asks students to “construct knowledge rather than restate or summarize;” the other asks students to “elaborate on their thinking by making claims and using evidence or reasoning” (Benko, 2016, p. 201).
- A 5-year study beginning with 44 ELA programs that was narrowed down to four exemplars identified six features of effective ELA instruction: “Students learn skills and knowledge in multiple lesson types;” “Teachers integrate test preparation into instruction. Teachers make connections across instruction, curriculum, and life.”; “Students learn strategies for doing the work.”; “Students are expected to be generative thinkers.”; “Classrooms foster cognitive collaboration.”(Langer et.al. 2000)

Implications for Program Evaluation

- The opportunity for composing with technology is still limited because all grade levels are not 1 to 1.
- Professional development is needed so teachers can be made aware and trained in the most updated practices.
- We need to provide students with instruction in the varied purposes for writing in authentic situations
- We need to use data to help students produce good writing. Writing for different purposes and in a variety of forms can only help them become better writers.
- There are already common rubrics at some grade levels. Teachers need to be given opportunities to score anchor writing pieces with another teacher and compare the way they view and score certain categories within a rubric.

Grammar

Summary of Findings

- In terms of the necessity for professional development, it is critical to note that most teachers have not received grammar instruction themselves: “teachers who feel anxious or insecure about their own grammar knowledge tend to overly focus on rules and enact prescriptive grammar exercises” (Myhill, Jones, & Watson, 2013).
- Grammar instruction must span not only writing and speaking, but reading and listening. It must be integrated fully into the overall ELA curriculum in order to successfully develop students’ understanding.
- Clear objectives for grammar instruction must be established within the curricula.
- Emphasis must be both on form and meaning. For example, it is not sufficient to know what passive construction is but how it changes the presentation of information.

- Derewianka (2011) provides these sample questions as guides for teachers as they consider their grammar instruction:
 - What range of meanings do verbs express?
 - How can my choice of nouns affect the meaning of the text?
 - How can I use certain types of adjectives to express my opinion about something?
 - Which grammatical features are involved in skills such as classifying, defining, describing, generalizing, and exemplifying?
 - Which linguistic features can help me produce a text that is coherent and cohesive?
 - How do grammatical patterns change from text to text? Why, and with what effect?
 - How does context affect the kinds of grammatical choices made? (p. 2)
- Students must come to understanding code-switching and patterns of informal versus formal language
- Sentence combining and mentor texts are critical components of effective grammar study
- Teaching grammar in context yields improvements in written grammar (Collins & Norris, 2017)

Implications for Program Evaluation

- We need to review our K-12 grammar scope and sequence to ensure alignment to standards as well as a logical progression from grade level to grade level. Teachers must know what students have already been taught (and therefore, held accountable for knowing after a quick review - as opposed to starting each year with the assumption that because students do not volunteer prior learning, nothing has been learned).
- Sentence combining approaches including Demonstration Notebooks (Roberts, 2018) are effective means of drawing from students' writing and tailoring instruction to a given class, small group, or individual student's needs.
- Mentor texts for modeled sentences should be available to teachers. The practice of asking students to "write in the style of..." a particular author should be commonplace.
- Using Derewianka's (2011) questions above, teachers should be provided with a framework for presenting grammar learning as not just correct form, but also, a mechanism for conveying meaning through the various structures.

Phonics

Summary of Findings

- If Reading itself was a building and it needs a strong foundation, this explains why the NJSLS contain Foundational Reading Standards. "If we want to build strong readers, we must help those readers build strong reading foundations" (Cunningham, 2017).

- Instruction related to concepts about print, letter recognition, and phonological awareness achieves its maximum benefit for almost all learners by the end of first grade (Cunningham, 2017).
- While phonics/decoding is to be considered a foundation for reading and writing, it is not the end goal. This is why we now have College and Career Readiness Standards which encompass: reading foundation standards, reading standards and writing standards.
- The problem we have is that we neglect to teach phonics and decoding at the same time as we are teaching reading and writing when we should be making decisions under the principle that “phonics instruction only matters because it enables reading and writing” (Calkins, 2018).
- There are best practices for teaching phonics/decoding which include:
 - Providing students with regular opportunities to apply the phonics knowledge they are learning by decoding phonetically regular words in meaningful texts
 - Providing students with regular opportunities to apply the phonics knowledge they are learning to their own spelling of unknown words (encoding)
 - Teaching students how to use patterns (i.e. blends, digraphs, phonograms, suffixes) to read and write words that are more complex than CVC words (such as *hat*)
- “While we use our eyes to read, the starting point for reading is sound. What a child must do to become a reader is to figure out how the words they hear and know how to say connect to letters on the page. Writing is a code humans invented to represent speech sounds” (Hanford, 2018).
- There is also evidence to support that phonemic awareness should be taught alongside phonics. Best practices for this instructions include:
 - Encouraging students encoding (guided by phonetic spelling) during writing
 - Using rhymes, chants, jingles, songs and riddles to help students play with pronunciations
 - Teaching phonemic segmentation explicitly to those students who need it
- Phonics instruction should be engaging and meaningful for all students.
- Given the back and forth debate over the years, teachers need strong professional development related to phonics instruction because many teachers never developed a strong understanding of phonetic patterns when they were students.

Implications for Program Evaluation

- Phonics does not have to be an “all or nothing” approach - we must make room in our K-2 curriculum for explicit phonics instruction, but only if we commit ourselves to ensuring that students are applying the phonics knowledge they learn to authentic reading and writing experiences.

- If we are to recommend explicit phonics instruction, we need to ensure that teachers will have the instructional time to teach it properly - this may involve a tightening of the existing ELA curriculum or conversations with other content area supervisors about the current instructional time guidelines for teachers in grades K-2. This recommendation is going to have particularly challenging implications within the realities of a half-day Kindergarten program.
- We will need to pilot resources/programs that support teachers while ensuring targeted and engaging learning opportunities for our students.
- Teachers will need extensive professional development related to phonics instruction. The support for teachers should strengthen their pedagogical and content knowledge related to phonics instruction, but it should also allow time to examine best practices connected to any resources or program that may be piloted or adopted to support this important work.
- Ongoing conversations must be had with the Supervisor of Special Programs and the Supervisors of Special Education to ensure a clear and supported path for all students who demonstrated continued struggle to deepen their knowledge of phonics and how it applies to their reading and writing.

Research and Inquiry

Summary of Findings

- Best practice envisions research as everyday, ongoing inquiry that builds students' capacities as researchers of their worlds and lives.
- Research in schools should have an increased focus on authentic projects for real audiences that produce tangible outcomes (consider issues of social justice or action-oriented research).
- Place-based research becomes an opportunity for students to find answers to real questions they have about their world

Implication for Program Evaluation

- We must envision research as everyday, ongoing inquiry in order to build students' capacities as researchers of their worlds and lives.
- Within our themes and overarching unit questions, students deserve opportunities to explore current events in the world in order to feed their curiosities, interests, and, in many cases, senses of injustice
- We should want to grow students who desire to become more involved with their own communities and other communities around the world.

Vocabulary

Summary of Findings

- Best practice, rich vocabulary instruction includes
 - Providing clear definitions
 - Having students “manipulate” words in “rich and varied ways,” describing how words relate to each other
 - Requiring students to discuss words and give “justifications for the relationships” among words they discover
 - Encountering the words frequently and in different contexts
 - Encouraging the use of words outside of the vocabulary lessons
- Krashen’s (2004) research concluded that SSR and extensive reading treatments were as good as or better than traditional language arts and reading instruction in promoting vocabulary and reading comprehension gains. We did not find anything recent to dispute that conclusion.
- Most recently, a comprehensive review of vocabulary instruction conducted by Wright and Cervetti (2017) found that greater investments of time into vocabulary instruction appear to have diminishing returns in terms of the number of words students learn.
- Critical considerations for vocabulary instruction include:
 - Word selection - moving away from a large list of disconnected, de-contextualized words presented on Monday with a test on Friday.
 - Must stress conceptual knowledge of words and how they are related to one another.
 - Students should learn fewer words - but come to know how the language works in order to make valid inferences about the meaning of new words
 - Words must be deliberately selected, and students require frequent opportunities for word interactions in meaningful contexts (durable word learning)
 - Teachers *and* students should be involved in word selection for study
- Instructional Practice
 - Instruction should include numerous opportunities for students to work with words in a variety of ways, including identifying synonyms/antonyms, looking for roots/using cognates, and connecting new words to existing, known words. Other best practices include
 - Idioms and figures of speech
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Listening
 - Discussing

- Acting out
- Visual imagery/symbols
- Investigations into parts of speech/classifications
- Semantic word mapping
- Semantic feature analysis
- Morphemic analysis
- Use/construction of a word wall
- Students who are at-risk require rich, varied language experiences, need to be taught high-utility words, need to be taught word-learning strategies, and need to learn in an environment where word consciousness is fostered.
- Small group instruction seems to work best for students with learning disabilities (as opposed to whole class and individualized vocabulary instruction)

Implications for Program Evaluation

- An increase in student reading via choice/self-selection and in the form of whole class, book club, and independent reading novels will increase student word encounters.
- Word selection is a critical consideration, especially in terms of student-choice over words studied.
- Special consideration for students who are at-risk (SE, RtI, ELL) must be a part of our planning for any vocabulary program.

Handwriting Instruction

Summary of Findings

- There are many benefits to a continued focus on Handwriting instruction in the primary grades, including:
 - Development of both cognitive and motor skills
 - Positive impact upon students' reading and writing due to the fact that without the exposure to handwriting, students are more likely to have difficulty retrieving letters from memory
 - Sequential hand movements used when writing by hand will activate regions of the brain that are associated with thinking, short-term memory, and language
 - Improved memory because the act of handwriting helps students to retain information more effectively than when keyboarding because of the fact that it involves more complex motor functions
 - Learning to write letters reinforces the letter-naming, phonemic and word-deciphering skills required in developing literacy
 - If handwriting is taught, students' writing quality, quantity and speed have been shown to improve - the ultimate goal of handwriting instruction is to teach

children to write letters legibly and efficiently, so that writing becomes fluid and automatic

- When handwriting becomes more automatic, students can better focus on the planning and organization of their writing
- It is important to not pull away Handwriting from the curriculum too soon because a child's corticospinal tract (which reaches the fingertips and impacts fine motor skills) does not fully develop until the age of 10.
- Cursive handwriting stimulates brain synapses and synchronicity between the left and right hemispheres, something absent from printing and typing. As a result, the physical act of writing in cursive leads to increased comprehension and participation.

Implications for Program Evaluation

- As we are not 1-to-1 with technology in the primary grades, it is important that we continue to place an emphasis on Handwriting instruction
- Currently, we utilize two different Handwriting programs:
 - K-2 (manuscript) - Handwriting Without Tears
 - 3-4 (cursive) - Zaner Bloser

There would be a more positive impact on both students and teachers if we used a single, consistent program in the primary grade levels.

- Instructional time is an important factor to consider when thinking about Handwriting at the primary grades. While there does not need to be an extensive amount of time dedicated to Handwriting instruction, it appears that when the academic demands begin to increase in our very first tested grade levels, 3 and 4, this is when we see a significant drop in focused, consistent Handwriting instruction. It is assigned more as independent practice at this point.

Recommendations

“What is needed is some evidence that the students can do something with their knowledge, that is, that they can apply the information to new situations and problems. It is also expected that students will acquire generalized techniques for dealing with new problems and new materials.”
~Bloom et al., 1956

In a district where our commitment is to teach them One and All, our K-12 ELA Program must ensure that each and every one of our students is able to take ownership of the skills and strategies they learn so that they can apply that learning independently as readers and writers in a world where they must be careful consumers of information and clear communicators. This

overall goal is the driving force for the majority of our recommendations. The K-12 English Language Arts Program Review Committee suggests the following recommendations be made to improve the current BRRSD K-12 English Language Arts Program:

Recommendation # 1: <i>Student Ownership</i>
Rationale: Results from internal surveys, best practice research, and programs in other school districts all show that students will engage more readily and pursue heightened levels of independent growth if what they are learning truly matters to them, if options for what to read and write about exist, if the use of rubrics and feedback opens doors to further learning, and if opportunities to affect the content and direction of conversations becomes a means by which the world - and themselves - can be more fully appreciated and understood.
Implementation Plan: Curriculum revision, summer 2020. Professional Development for teachers ongoing throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Exploration of half-year course options to replace English Language & Literature IV.
Curriculum Work: Refinement of reading units of study to support greater opportunity for student choice over reading material and student-led investigations into reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and research. Development of writing rubrics (vertically aligned) for student-use during the writing process is a priority. A vertically aligned curriculum where students come to know, early on, the meaning of domain specific terminology, how to write and talk about their reading, how to utilize peer and teacher feedback in their writing, how to arrive at the meaning of unfamiliar words, and how to use rubrics to improve written work will be developed. Explore the option of half-year English courses in grade 12 to provide students with a choice of core English classes, similar to what they will experience in college.
Resources: N/A
Staffing: Existing staffing will be sufficient.
Professional Development: In-house. To increase student ownership over the progress of learning, teachers require training to ensure that they understand instructional strategies that allow for that level of investment. They must communicate using consistent, vertically-aligned, domain specific language related to English Language Arts. It is easy to lead students' reading with questions informed by a teacher's whole picture understanding of a story he or she has already read. Increasing student ownership and responsibility for learning involves supporting students to access text appropriate to their reading and interest levels and enter the reading experience independently, once they have been clearly shown the skills and strategies necessary for doing so. Teachers can increase student-investment in learning by recognizing their individual needs and interests through opportunities for student self-assessment and the provision of feedback that moves students forward.

Recommendation # 2: *Application and Transfer of Learning*

Rationale: For over 100 years, educational theorists and researchers have identified the application and transfer of learning as a problem in schools. Students need to develop skills in order to transfer learning to new situations (Dewey, 1910; Piaget, 1927; Bloom, 1956; Bruner, 1977, and Marzano, 2007). While teachers are teaching skills through the NJSL standards, with a novel-based curriculum, a focus on content appears to dominate instruction as is evidenced particularly in end of unit and end of semester assessments. Best practice research makes it clear that focusing on skills and strategies is critical to the transfer of learning to new tasks. Site visits revealed that high performing districts, from elementary through high school, have designed curriculum around skills-based best practices which students then apply to independent reading which has led to deeper understanding of texts when students approach a book on their own. Independent choice texts, as vehicles for application and transfer, engage readers and hold the potential of making readers out of nonreaders.

Implementation Plan: Our plan is to support student growth by refocusing instruction on developing student skills in reading and writing. We intend to support teachers, through professional growth experiences and appropriate resources, to understand and implement a workshop model wherein transfer and application is made possible. Through a commitment to the creation, and maintenance, of classroom libraries and the purchasing of more diverse texts to enrich existing book club experiences, students will experience choice over the texts they apply their newly-honed skills and strategies to.

Curriculum Work: Curriculum will be revised with a focus on a clear progression of skills and strategies that will be taught across grades K-12. Assessments will be revised to emphasize students' skill transfer as opposed to their specific content knowledge of a particular text. Learning progressions for both reading and writing will be developed to ensure a clear path of instruction from one grade level to the next. Required and suggested titles, as well as opportunities for student-choice through book club offerings and independent reading, will be layered into each unit of study.

Staffing: Existing staffing will be sufficient.

Professional Development: Teachers will require training and more professional time throughout the year to familiarize themselves with the workshop model of instruction, to come to understand changes to the curriculum, to familiarize themselves with new resources, and to anchor and critically analyze assessments in order to ensure a common vision and set of expectations.

Recommendation #3: *Common Language, K-12*

Rationale: Results from internal surveys and best practice research indicate that use of a common language in ELA, K-12, would enhance student achievement and understanding through consistency and repetition. This recommendation is both altruistic and practical. If ELA teachers adhere to a consistent and skill-driven approach to instruction that is rooted in common domain language, we can improve the rigor of our program, create opportunities for professional dialogue, and, most importantly, improve the coherence and clarity of instruction for students as they ascend the grade levels.

Implementation Plan: We intend to provide continuing K-12 vertical and horizontal curriculum articulation opportunities and professional learning. This will ensure an appropriately rigorous language arts program at each grade level and throughout our district. Curriculum writing, with all grade levels represented, will allow for greater consistency in terms of both focus and design.

Curriculum Work: Curricular revisions will include vertically aligned NJSLA-based domain language and a common naming of strategies related to reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, spelling/word study/phonics, and research instruction. We will also carefully review recent curricular revisions to social studies, K-12, in order to establish a common language surrounding how students approach content-area reading and writing.

Staffing: Existing staffing will be sufficient.

Professional Development: Introduction to any recommended common language will be a part of all professional development related to program review recommendations.

Recommendation #4: Grammar: Correctness and Meaning

Rationale: Results from internal surveys, best practice research and programs in other school districts all show us that grammar is only transferable if it is taught within the context of student reading and writing. Teaching students to focus on the practical application and function of grammar within these contexts will yield significant effects on not only students' writing, but it will also shape their experiences as readers who move beyond *what* authors write (basic comprehension), instead moving towards readers who notice and question *how* authors write, as well.

Implementation Plan: Curriculum will be written and professional development will roll-out throughout the year in department and team meetings using the provided resources.

Curriculum Work: Our plan is to design a comprehensive K-12 grammar curriculum that provides teachers with a clear scope and sequence across the grade levels and clarifies both rationale and process for teaching grammar through inquiry using a range of approaches including demonstration notebooks, sentence-improving/combining, and mentor sentences.

Resources: The existing grammar resources used to support the current curriculum (*Being a Writer Skills Practice Book* in Grades 1-4; *Sadlier Grammar Workshop* in Grade 5) would no longer continue to be purchased. Instead, we would be supporting the professional growth of our staff through professional resources and/or professional development related to integrated grammar instruction and authentic word work experiences.

Staffing: Existing staffing will be sufficient.

Professional Development: We intend to provide training for teachers in using a K-12 scope and sequence so that they understand students' prior exposures, what grammatical skills should be taught at each grade level, and to what extent the teaching should lead beyond exposure to mastery. Teachers will receive training in teaching grammar through a focus on form, meaning and function.

Recommendation #5: *Equity and Access*

Rationale: Results from internal surveys, assessment data, demographic inequities, research and programs in other school districts suggest that we should remove standard level classes. The practice of “tracking” contributes to the constraint of student growth and exacerbates the inequities in learning opportunities (Smith et. al., 2017). According to the National Association of Secondary School Principals, educators have a moral obligation “to pursue practices that promote equity and excellence”, and while originally tracking was intended for “practical pedagogical purposes” it is now “an obsolete practice” as it does not promote high expectations for all students. Additionally, to support the removal of tracking in schools, the NASSP urges early intervention strategies and PD for teachers to support the skills they need to reach all students (NASSP). Decades of research indicates that tracking has resulted in classrooms that are segregated while widening the opportunity gap for students. Eliminating tracking has resulted in more diverse classes, less concentration of behavioral issues, and a greater sense of potential in students (Higgins, 2019). Tracking is “harmful and inequitable and remains an unsupportive practice” (Mathis, 2013).

An overview of our student performance data and existing resources indicates the need for greater diversity in terms of the novels we provide for instruction. Students at all grade levels, whether enrolled in an enriched course or not, deserve the challenge of more-complex texts when they are ready for them, just as students who may struggle with on-level texts deserve a book in their hands to which they can independently apply strategy to - and thereby grow in their own right.

Implementation Plan: Students in all sections, enriched, honors, general education or other, who can read and analyze text with greater complexity will have such texts available to them. Teachers, by virtue of their professional training in a workshop model, will understand the structure necessary for differentiated instruction, thereby better meeting the needs of all learners through small group and one-on-one conferences. Finally, based on recommendations through the mathematics department, specific to their Essentials courses, and RTI program recommendations which will be forthcoming, we will look to explore opportunities to ensure greater equity and access for all learners by considering the eventual removal of our Standard-level course at BRHS and instatement of a second support class for students in need.

Curriculum: We will focus our revisions to the curriculum on supporting the workshop model, and design opportunities within the curriculum for student-choice over texts to accommodate both interest and challenge.

Resources: Grade-appropriate professional resources and related professional development opportunities will be necessary in order to ensure equity and access via consistency in approach.

Staffing: Existing staffing will be sufficient.

Professional Development: Training will be provided specific to differentiated instruction based on individual student learning needs.

Recommendation #6: Build a Strong Foundation for our K-2 Students, including:

- (1) Development of a curriculum that emphasizes explicit and systematic phonics instruction**
- (2) Adoption of a vertically aligned phonics program in grades K-2**
- (3) Create a clear progression for Handwriting instruction which will allow for the introduction to Cursive Handwriting in grade 2**

Rationale:

(Phonics) Results from internal surveys, assessment data, demographic inequities, research and programs in other school districts all show that direct and systematic phonics instruction is missing from our curriculum, particularly in grades K-2. While phonics instruction shall never be enough on its own, it is the foundation that helps students succeed early on as readers and writers. We must provide our students with engaging and explicit phonics instruction that allows them to apply specific skills and strategies that will meet their needs as individual readers and writers.

(Handwriting) Research shows that there are many benefits to a continued focus on Handwriting instruction in the primary grades. These benefits were outlined earlier in the report. Due to increased instructional demands that exist beginning in our tested grade levels, if we introduced cursive handwriting in grade 2, we believe there would be more time for thoughtful instruction that would benefit the students.

Implementation Plan:

(Phonics) As new curriculum is written, we will need to invite representatives/consultants present potential programs/resources to a smaller committee of K-2 teachers, Intervention Specialists, Special Education Teachers, ETs, Building Principals and Supervisors. With input from these stakeholders, a pilot plan will be developed, allowing representative teachers from grades K-2 in each building to work with all pilot materials we believe will support our phonics initiative. The pilot will run during the 2020-2021 school year, with the goal of recommendation one resource for full adoption during the 2021-2022 school year. The focus for ELA Professional Development for ALL K-2 teachers will be related to phonics. In addition, pilot teachers will also be provided with professional development related to the different resources with which they will be working.

(Handwriting) As we currently use two different Handwriting programs (*Handwriting Without Tears* and *Zaner Bloser*), there is not a seamless transfer from print to cursive writing. We would look to find one Handwriting program to use continuously in grades K-3. With the shift of introducing cursive one year earlier, we would no longer need to purchase consumable Handwriting materials in grade 4.

Curriculum:

(Phonics) A new Phonics curriculum will be written to replace the current Word Study curriculum for grades K-2 in two phases:

- **Phase 1** - K-1 curriculum will be revised in Spring/Summer of 2020

- **Phase 2** - Grade 2 curriculum will be revised in the Spring/Summer of 2021 (the Spelling Connections program will be used for one more year in this transition)

We will also create appropriate assessments that can be administered throughout the year to determine the formation of small groups based upon student need.

(Handwriting) We do not currently have a Handwriting curriculum, so one would have to be developed, including a letter formation scope and sequence.

Resources:

(Phonics) While at this point, we have started to look at some possible resources, this spring we will identify any Phonics resources/programs we will pilot in the 2020-2021 school year. With an increase in the variety of phonics resources available, it will be important to ensure that the resources we pilot will fit the following criteria:

- Follow a research-based instructional sequence
- Support whole class instruction that is: direct/explicit, concise, and engaging for ALL students
- Offer options for differentiation through small group Phonics work
- Allow for application and transfer to both reading and writing

(Handwriting) We would likely look to make the switch in grades K-2 to the Zaner Bloser Handwriting program as it does allow the option for a hybrid grade 2 year which reviews print letter formation and then begins to introduce cursive around January.

Staffing: Existing staffing will be sufficient, although there will be the expectation that each building ETS will work with the Supervisor of ELA to design a coaching calendar to support this work with K-2 teachers.

Professional Development:

(Phonics) Once a Phonics program has been selected for formal adoption, a comprehensive professional development plan will be created. However, there will also need to be many opportunities for initial professional development related to phonics instruction and spelling patterns during the 2020-2021 school year.

(Handwriting) If we do shift cursive writing down to grade 2, our 2nd grade teachers will need professional development and training related to cursive handwriting instruction. Additionally, our K-1 teachers may also need some refresher training should they change to working with a different resource.

Recommendation #7: Professional Development

Rationale: Professional development is an ongoing, collaborative learning process that supports the growth of individuals, teams, and schools. Results from internal surveys, assessment data, demographic inequities, research and programs in other school districts all show that professional development is essential in order to build consistently excellent practice in literacy instruction across grade levels and among schools. Teachers both desire, and need, opportunities to work with colleagues in order to expand and deepen their knowledge of literacy and best practice. Changes in our approach to reading instruction that shift the focus beyond the content of the novels that we teach, enable student-transfer of skills and strategies, and target the specific needs of individual students will require professional guidance and on-going mentorship - as will shifts in our approach toward explicit phonics instruction, a clear progression for writing development, and grammar that is taught through a process of thoughtful, integrated, inquiry.

Implementation Plan: To begin the 2020-2021 school year, a literary expert would be brought in to kick-start a year of learning for our grades 4-12 ELA teachers. Teachers will receive a copy of core professional texts as a part of their training. We intend to develop and provide, in consultation with literacy experts, on-going professional development that will support the shift to a Reading Workshop model, the emphasis on Phonics instruction at the K-2 level, and an inquiry-based approach to teaching Grammar.

Curriculum Work: On-going revision to the existing curriculum as we continue to align to NJSLs and structure our units more specifically around essential reading skills and strategies. Develop common, grade level assessments consisting of a pre-assessment and post-assessment per unit; assessments will thoughtfully measure growth in transfer and application of reading skills and utilize written response and expression as the performance task. Units that provide authentic experiences with reading, writing, grammar, word study, and research and are readily supported through workshop instruction remain our goal.

Resources: We hope to provide each ELA teacher with copies of the professional resources they need to support the new curriculum. Titles may include, but are not limited to,:

- Letter Lessons and First Words (K-2)
- The Reading Strategies Book (2-8)
- A Novel Approach (5-12)
- Grammar for Middle School (6-8)
- Grammar for High School (9-12)
- Book Love (9-12)

Staffing: Existing staffing will be sufficient.

Professional Development: Please see the Implementation Plan above.

Proposed Program Plan Timeline

Once program recommendations have been approved, our goal will be to begin curriculum writing and revision during the Spring/Summer of 2020. It is important that we are writing and revising curriculum with a strong emphasis on vertical articulation across grades K-12.

Curriculum work will target the following areas:

Grades K-2	Phonics, Reading Workshop, Grammar, Writing Progressions & Handwriting
Grade 3	Reading Workshop, Grammar, Writing Progressions & Handwriting
Grade 4-8	Reading Workshop, Grammar & Writing Progressions
Grades 9-12	Reading Workshop, Grammar & Writing Progressions

As we begin to provide professional development related to new and revised curricula in the fall of 2020, it is possible that different grade level bands may have a greater initial emphasis in different areas. A staggered and thoughtful approach to new professional development will allow teachers, particularly at the primary grade levels, to focus their attention on one specific ELA improvement at a time. Likewise, the piloting of new materials will be staggered as well, allowing for a logical progression of the curriculum implementation cycle to continue.

In [Appendix E](#), you will find a chart that outlines a more specific timeline for implementing program recommendations.

Appendix A

Student Survey Data

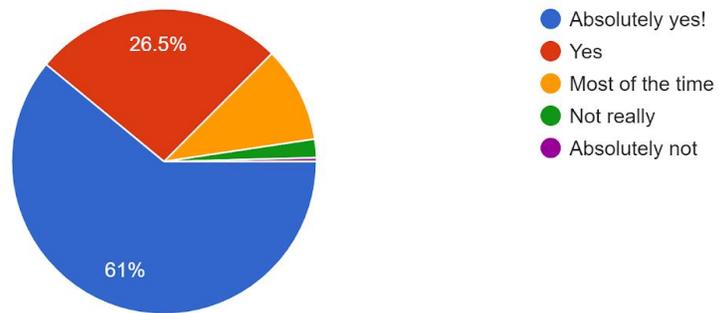
Student Survey Questions

1. I think the ability to read and write will be important to me throughout my life.
2. I am aware of the daily objectives/goals for this ELA class.
3. Which of the following reading activities do you find challenging in ELA class? Check all that apply.
4. Which of the following writing activities do you find challenging in ELA class? Check all that apply.
5. Which of the following reading activities do you find easy in ELA class? Check all that apply.
6. Which of the following writing activities do you find easy in ELA class? Check all that apply.
7. When I write in my grade level ELA class, I prefer to:
8. I am receiving appropriate support to be successful in my ELA classes
9. Which supports are helpful to you? Select all that apply.
10. In your grade level ELA class, how often do you...?
11. How often do you use the following technologies in your ELA classes ?
12. I have access to the following resources at home. Check all that apply.
13. In my grade level ELA class, I read and learn about different groups of people, cultures, and races.
14. My classes have prepared me well for standardized ELA assessments (NJSLA, AP, SAT, etc.)
15. In ELA classes, I get this much homework:
16. I feel that completing ELA homework helps me better understand what I am learning in my ELA classes.
17. I have the opportunity to read an independent book of choice when...
18. On my own time, I choose to read...(i.e. fiction, nonfiction, graphic novels...)
19. What is something you would change to improve your grade level ELA class?
20. What is the one thing that helped you be most successful in your grade level ELA course?
21. Please share any additional feedback relevant to this class.

Student Survey Results

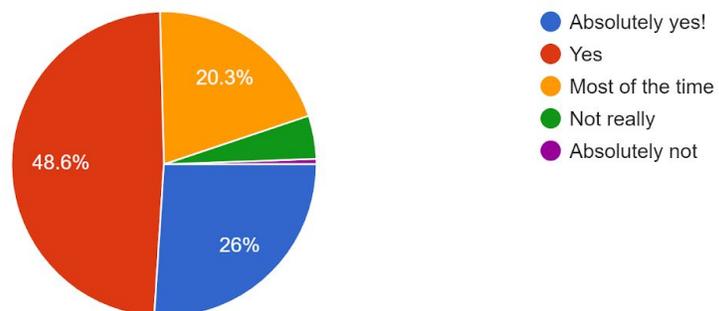
1. I think the ability to read and write will be important to me throughout my life.

4,806 responses

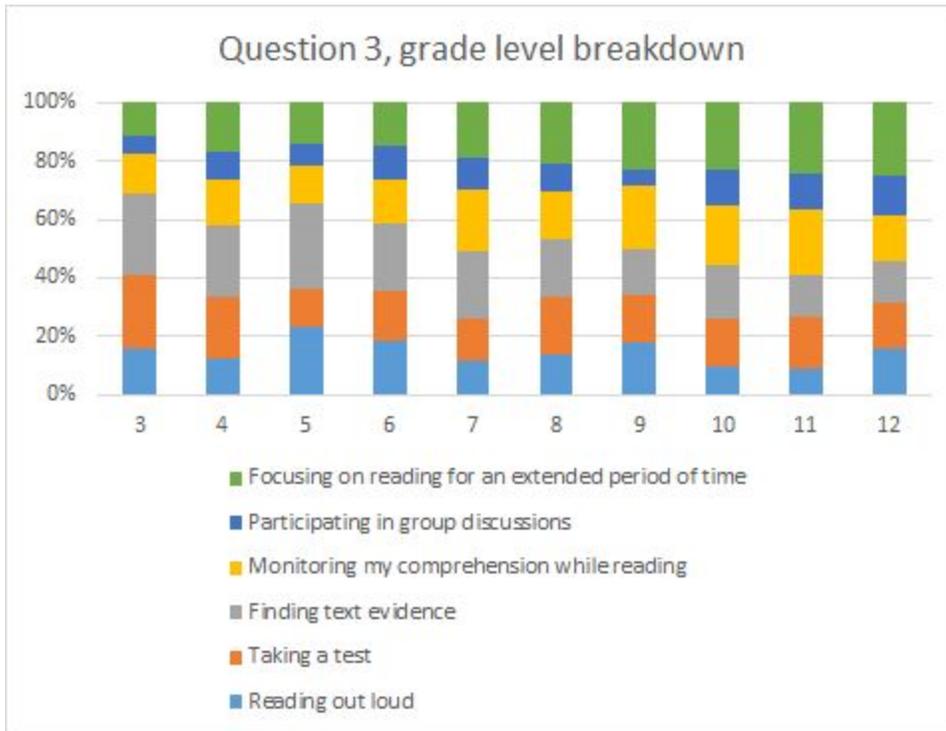


2. I am aware of the daily objectives/goals for my ELA class.

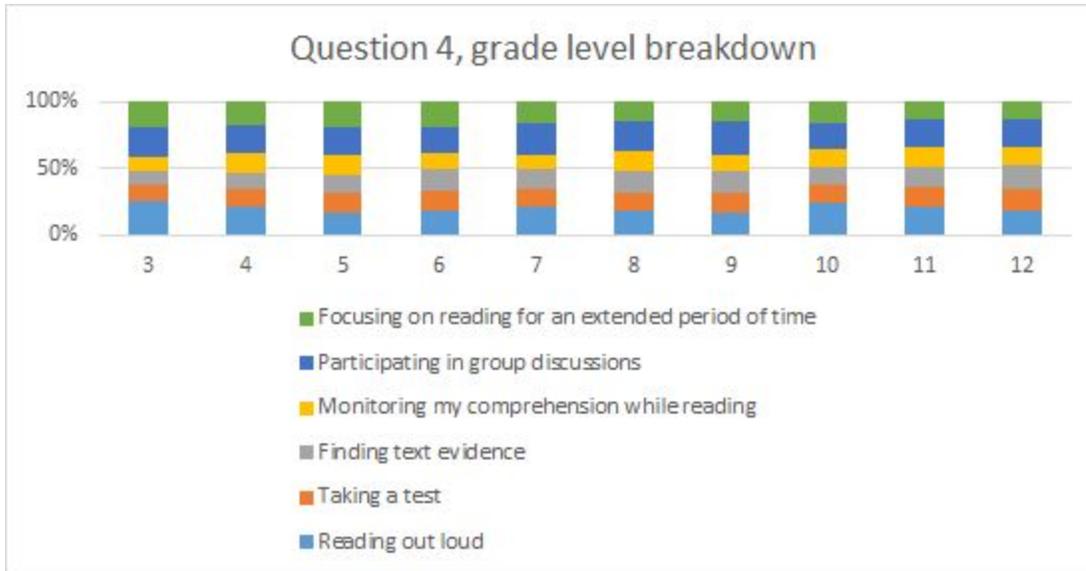
4,789 responses



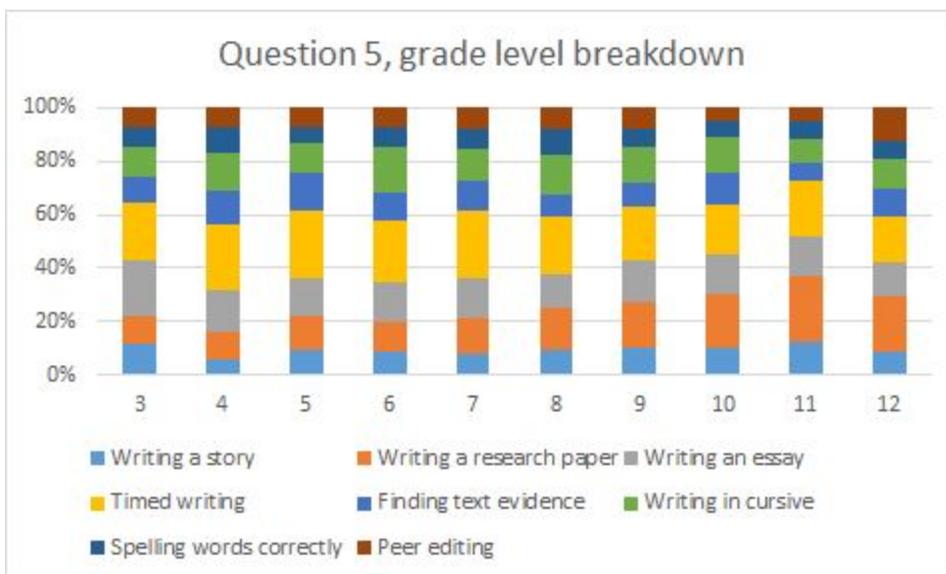
3. Which of the following reading activities do you find challenging in ELA class? Check all that apply.



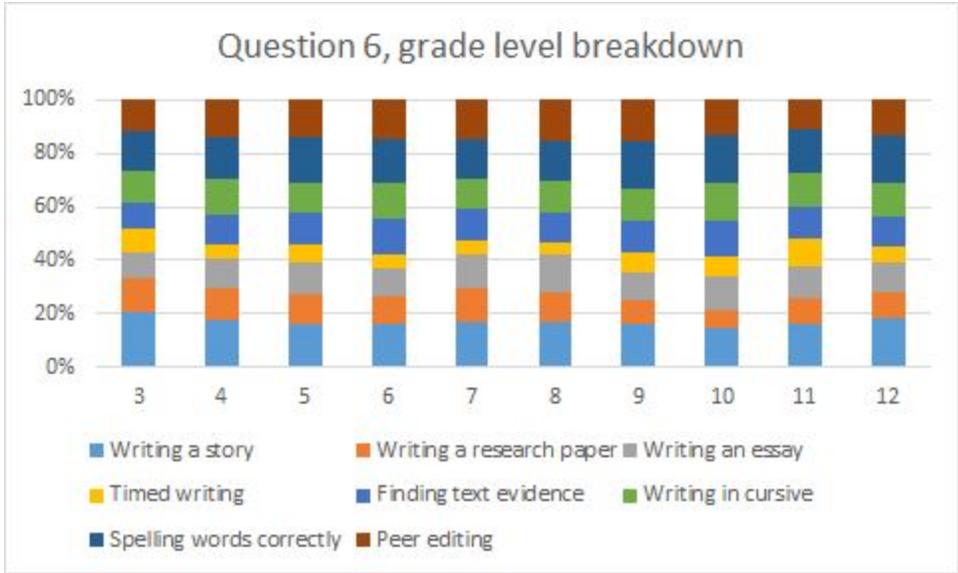
4. Which of the following writing activities do you find challenging in ELA class? Check all that apply.



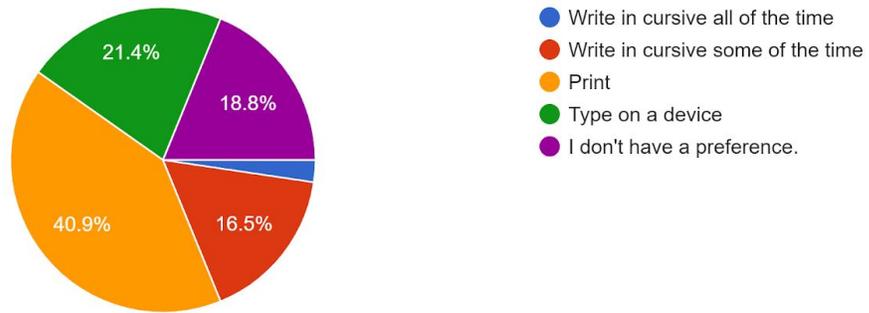
5. Which of the following reading activities do you find easy in ELA class? Check all that apply.



6. Which of the following writing activities do you find easy in ELA class? Check all that apply.

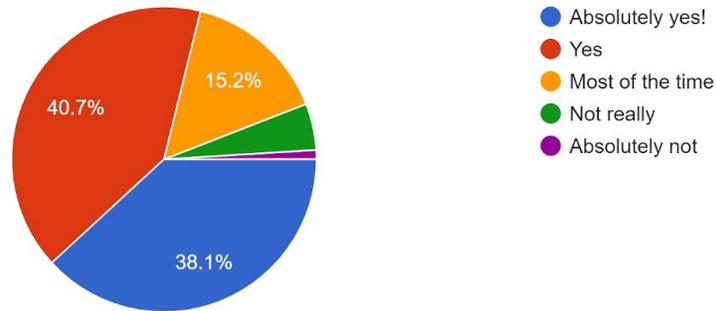


7. After learning and practicing cursive handwriting in grades 3 and 4, when writing, I choose to:
4,779 responses

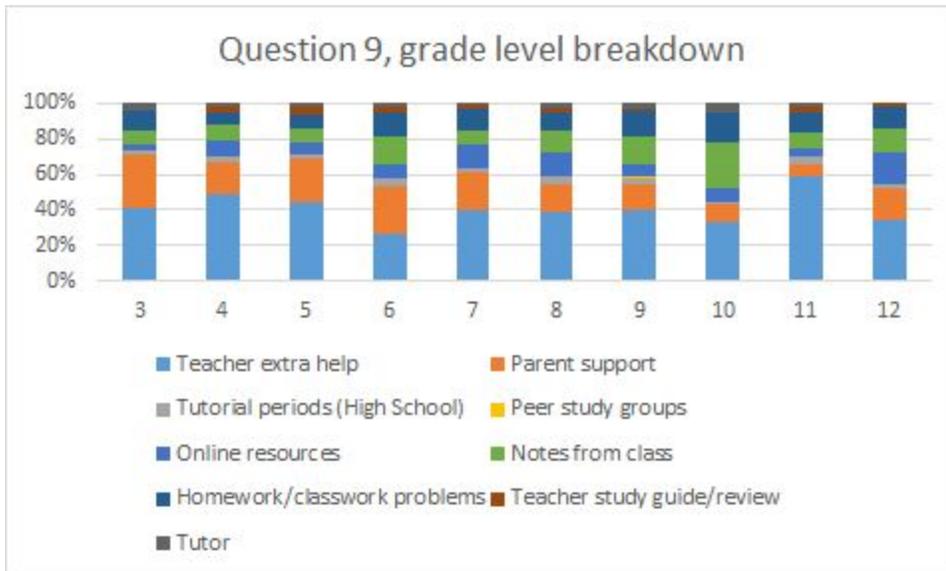


8. I am receiving appropriate support to be successful in my ELA classes.

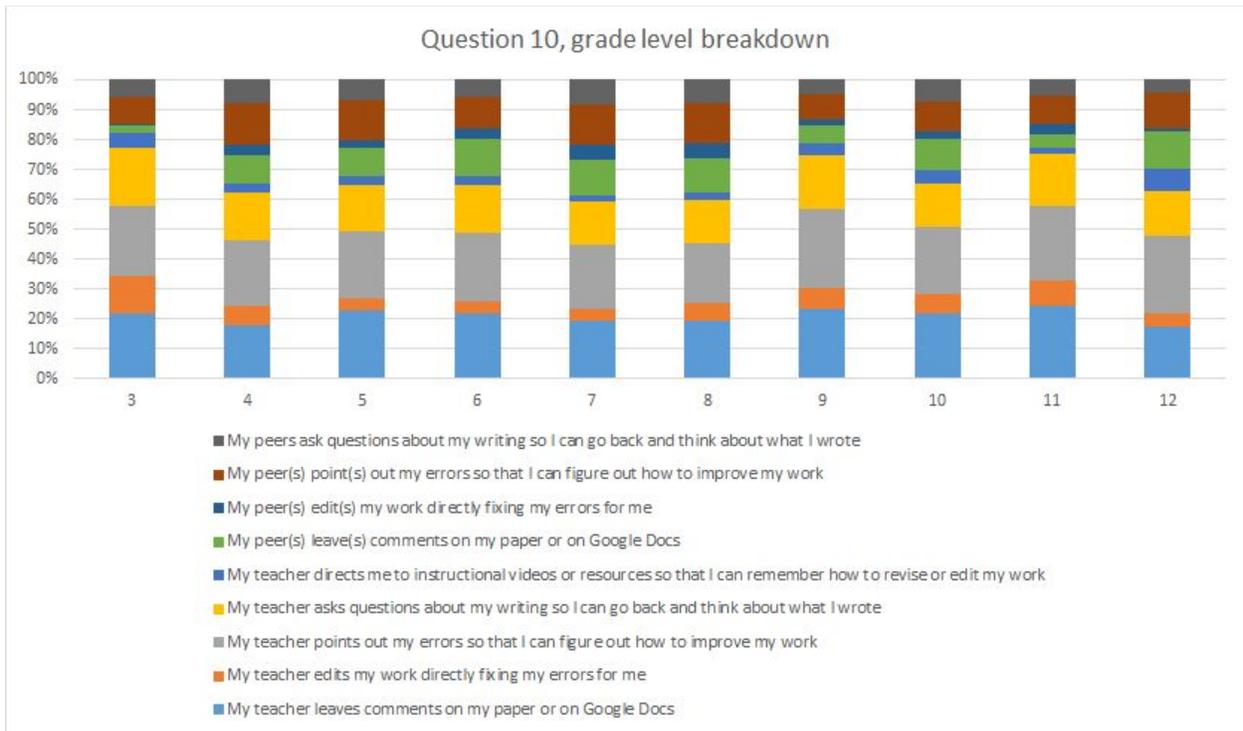
4,777 responses



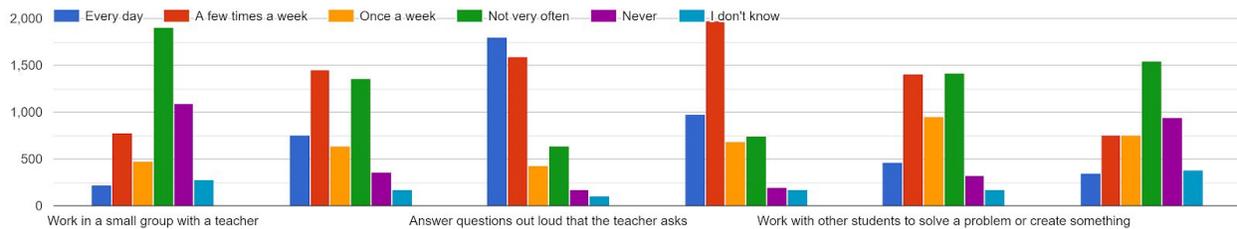
9. Which supports are helpful to you? Select all that apply.



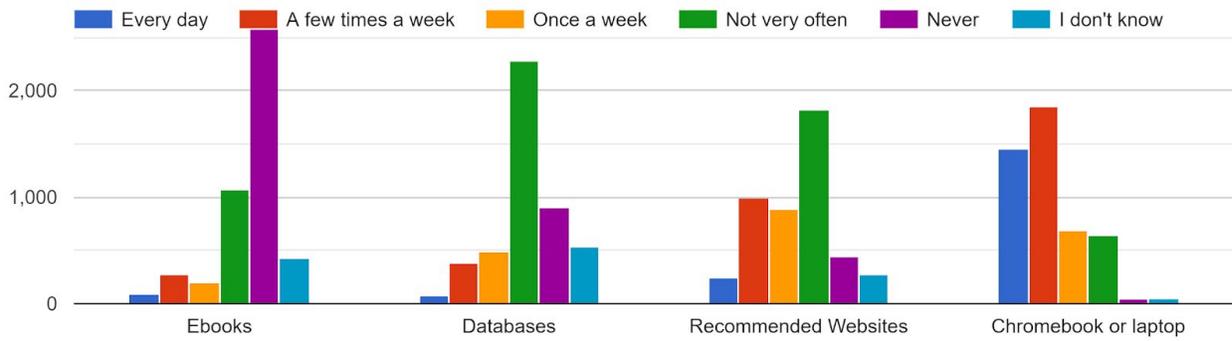
10. How do you receive feedback on your writing in ELA class? Check all that apply.



11. In your grade level ELA class, how often do you...?

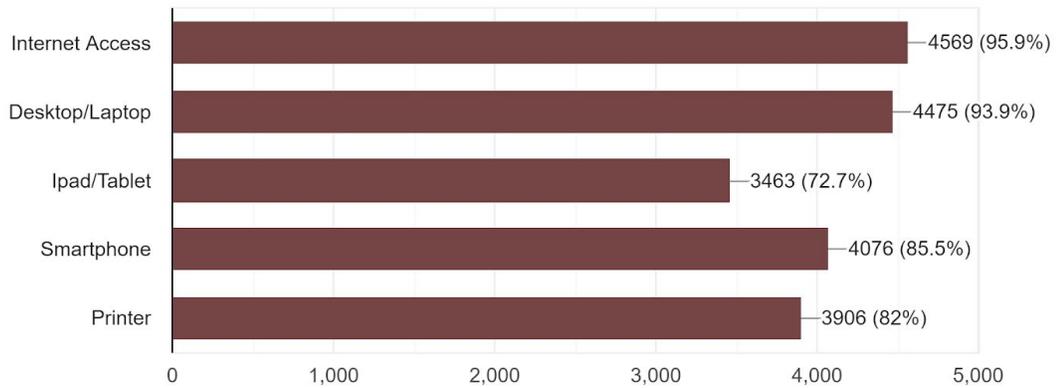


12. How often do you use the following technologies in your ELA classes ?



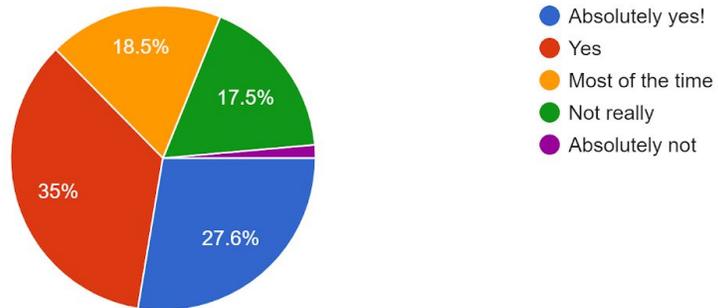
13. I have access to the following resources at home. Check all that apply.

4,766 responses



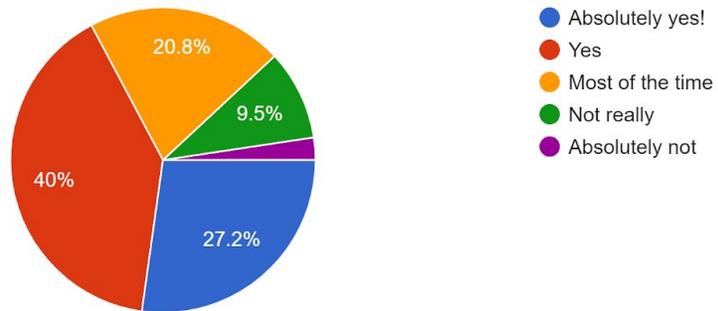
14. In my grade level ELA class, I read and learn about different groups of people, cultures, and races.

4,775 responses



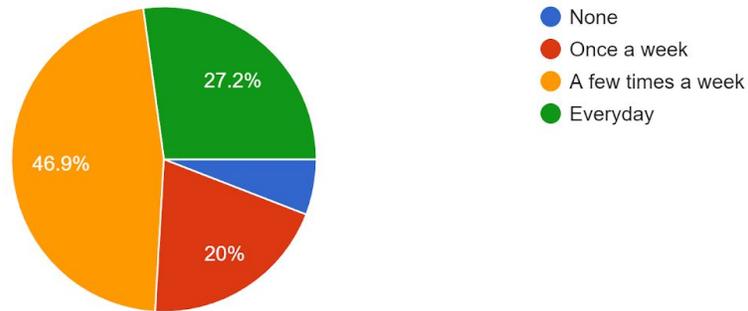
15. My classes have prepared me well for standardized ELA assessments (NJSLA, AP, SAT, etc.)

4,778 responses



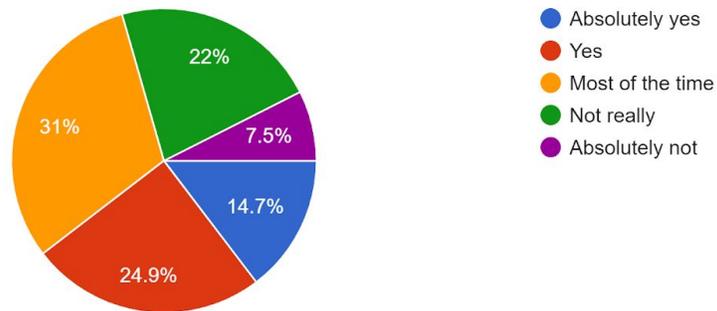
16. In ELA classes, I get this much homework:

4,762 responses



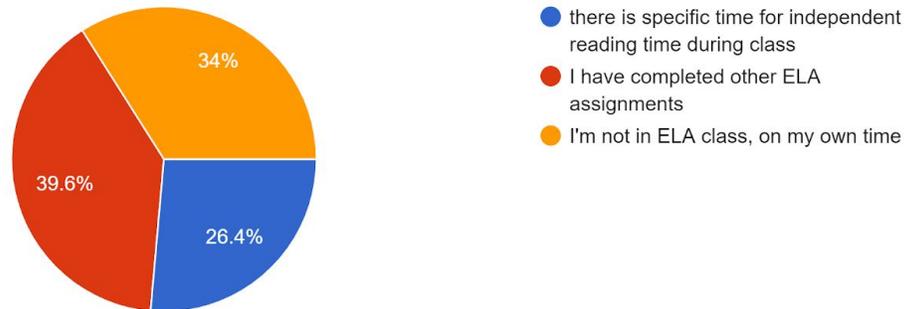
17. I feel that completing ELA homework helps me better understand what I am learning in my ELA classes.

4,763 responses



18. I have the opportunity to read an independent book of choice when...

4,735 responses



Appendix B

Staff Survey Data

Staff Survey Questions

1. How often are the following instructional strategies or formats used in your classroom when teaching ELA?

- (a) Whole Group Instruction
- (b) Small Group Instruction
- (c) Stations/Rotations
- (d) Teacher-Assigned Independent Work
- (e) Student Choice of Activity
- (f) Cooperative Learning
- (g) Readers' and/or Writers' Workshop

2. I have access to the following technologies for ELA instruction when needed.

3. How often do you incorporate each of the following technologies in ELA?

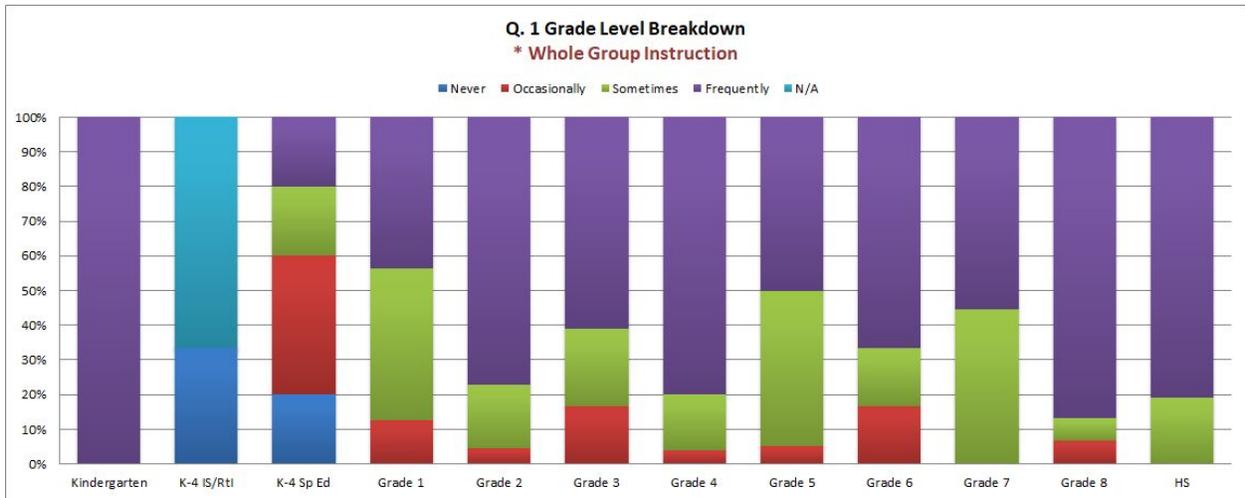
4. How readily can you and/or your students use the school media center to support the work you are doing in ELA?

5. The media center / library in my school has a wide range of materials that are relevant and appropriate to students with regard to the themes we explore in ELA.
6. What types of assessment data are you using to inform your instructional planning for ELA? (Please check all that apply)
- 6a. Consider the types of assessment data you use (see your selections in question 6, above). Which do you utilize most frequently to inform your instructional planning?
7. How do you establish student groups in this ELA course? Check all that apply.
- 7a. Consider the ways you group your students for ELA instruction (see your selections from question 7, above). Which grouping approach do you use most often? Which approach do you find to be most effective to meet your instructional goals?
8. How often do you vary student groups in this ELA course?
9. How often do you incorporate the following into instruction for this ELA course?
- (a) Word Study/Vocabulary
 - (b) Small Group Reading Instruction
 - (c) Grammar
 - (d) Writing
 - (e) Research
 - (f) Independent Reading
10. Daily ELA instructional time is adequate for me to deliver content in ELA.
11. How many times per week do you typically assign homework to students in ELA?
12. Time students spend participating in special school activities (i.e. field trips, assemblies) poses a challenge to the continuity of student learning in ELA.
13. Time students spend participating in band/orchestra/chorus poses a challenge to the continuity of student learning in ELA.
14. Time students spend gaining additional support beyond the classroom (i.e. speech, Intervention, OT, PT, etc) poses a challenge to the continuity of student learning in ELA.
15. I feel that I understand the expectations of the grade level or program below my course as well as where the next grade level or program expects students to be at the start of the next school year.
16. Our curriculum for this grade/course allows opportunities to integrate with other courses/disciplines.
17. I feel that the rigor of the ELA curriculum adequately prepares students for standardized assessments.
- 17a. Please use this space to elaborate on your response to question #17, above.
18. Grades earned by students in ELA are an accurate indicator of skill mastery and understanding.
19. I have adequate time to meet with my colleagues to discuss the ELA curriculum.
20. Approximately how many of each of the following assessments do you give each marking period in this ELA course?

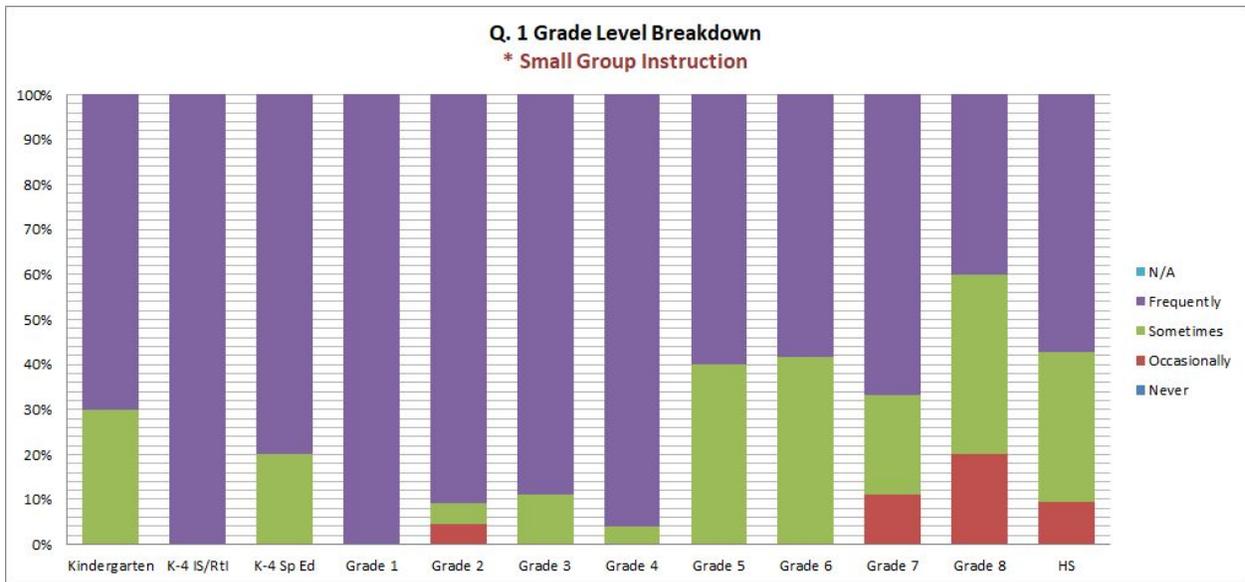
21. Consider how you provide feedback during the writing process. What form does it usually take - and at what point is it provided?
22. Do you have appropriate resources to teach all students?
- (a) Reading
 - (b) Writing
 - (c) Grammar
 - (d) Research
 - (e) Spelling/Phonics
 - (f) Vocabulary
- 22a. Please consider the varying needs of your current students as you elaborate on question #22, above.
23. Opportunities for students to apply the reading skills and strategies they are learning to independent reading text(s) of their own choosing are an important part of my instructional planning.
24. (Grades K-4 teachers only) I believe that additional professional development in the areas of phonemic awareness/phonics would support me in delivering explicit Word Study instruction to students in my classroom.
25. (Grades K-4 teachers only) How many of your students would benefit from explicit, systematic phonics instruction?
26. (Grade 3 and 4 teachers only) With regards to teaching cursive handwriting during ELA, please check all that apply:
27. What additional furniture or physical resources would you like to have available to facilitate ELA instruction?
28. At the high school level, if BRRSD were to offer additional ELA courses, what courses would you like to see offered?
29. I am provided the professional development I need to remain abreast of current best practices and teach the ELA curriculum effectively.
30. How important are each of the following types of professional development?

Staff Survey Results

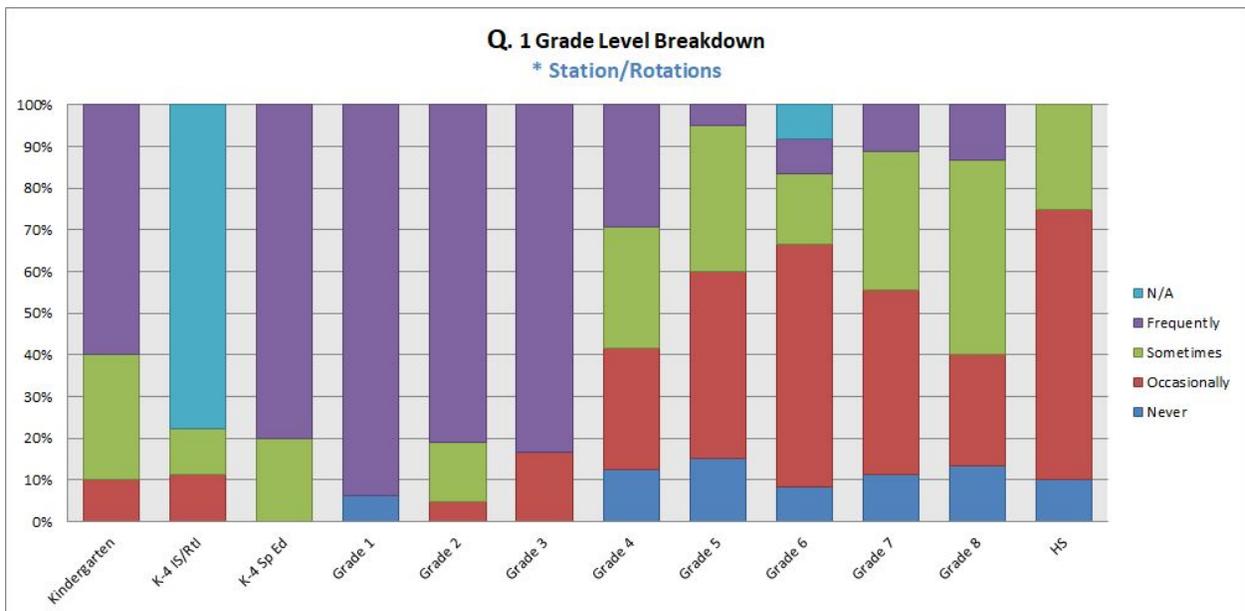
1a - How often do you use Whole Group Instruction in your classroom when teaching ELA?



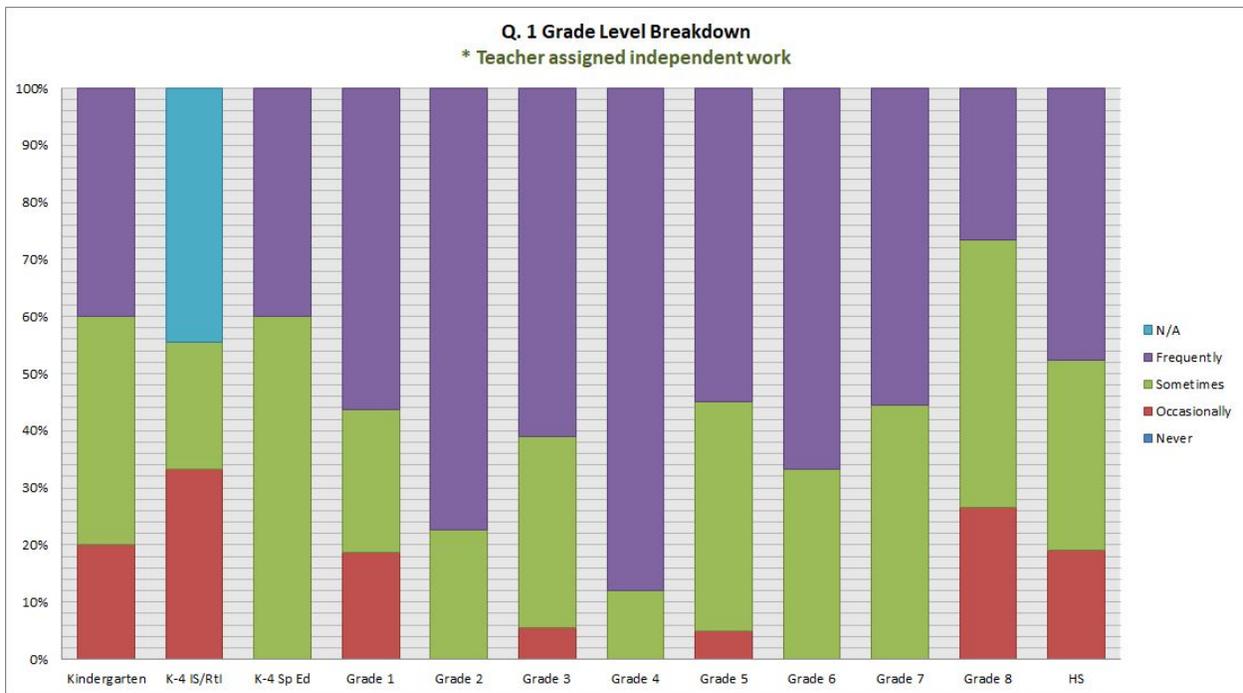
1b - How often do you use Small Group Instruction in your classroom when teaching ELA?



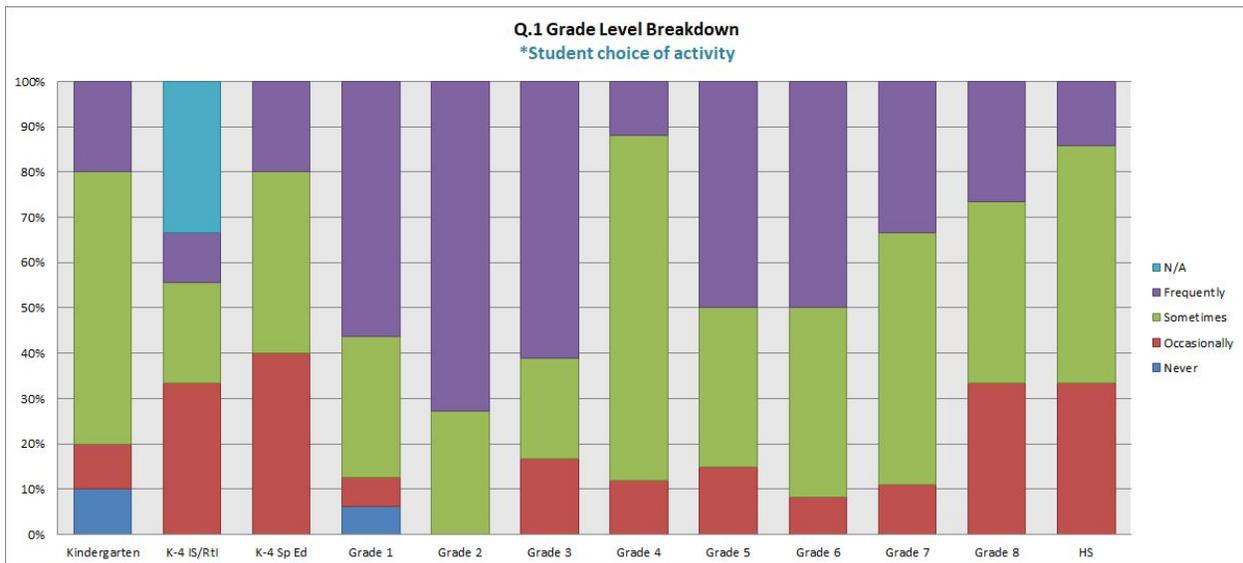
1c - How often do you use Stations/Rotations in your classroom when teaching ELA?



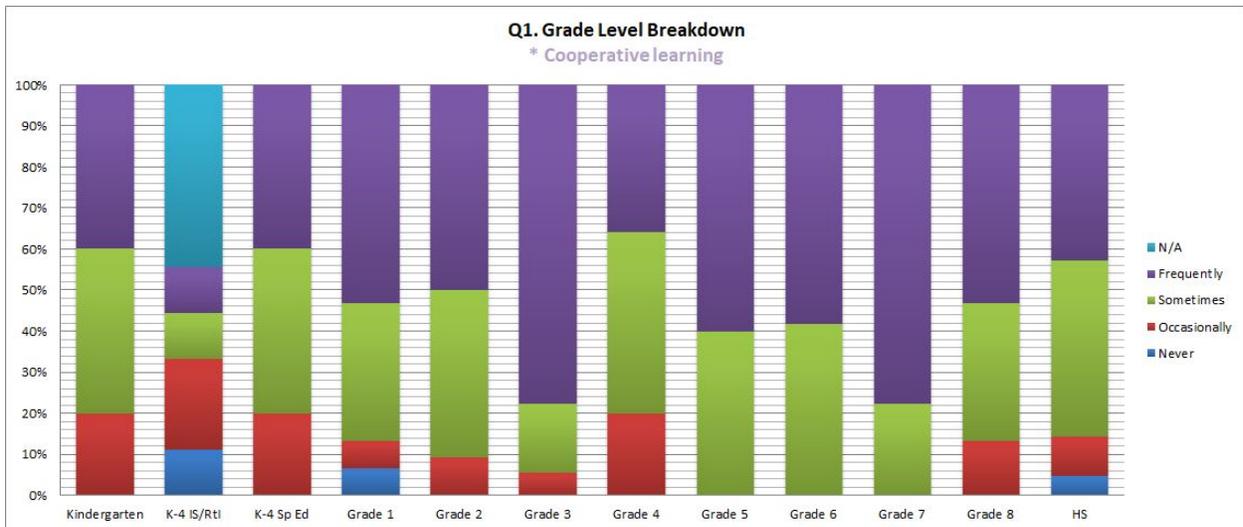
1d - How often do you use Teacher-Assigned Independent Work in your classroom when teaching ELA?



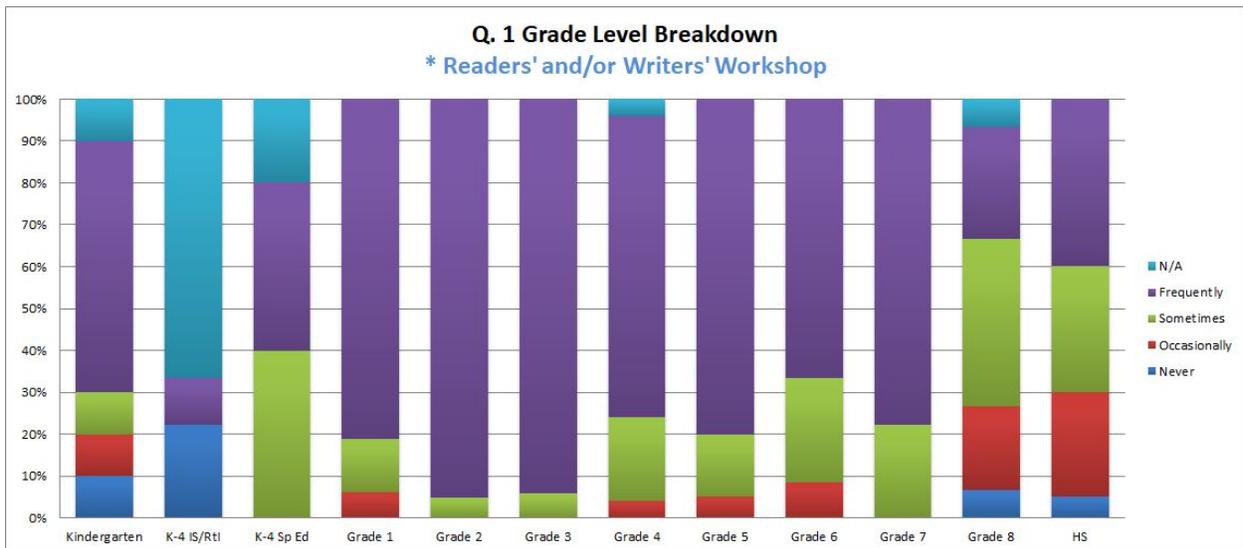
1e - How often do you use Student Choice of Activity in your classroom when teaching ELA?



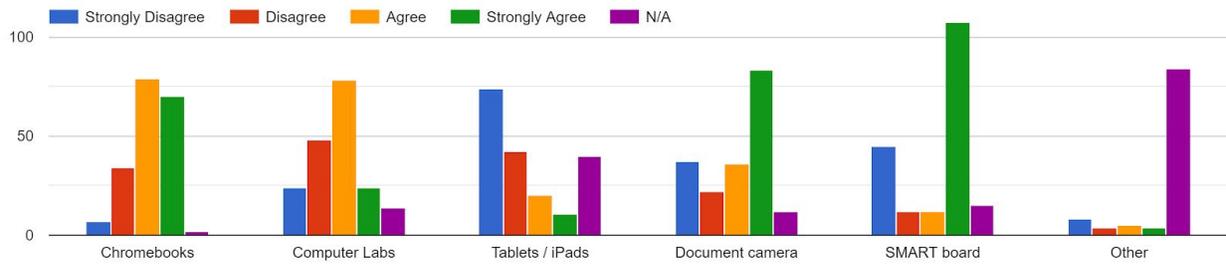
1f - How often do you use Cooperative Learning in your classroom when teaching ELA?



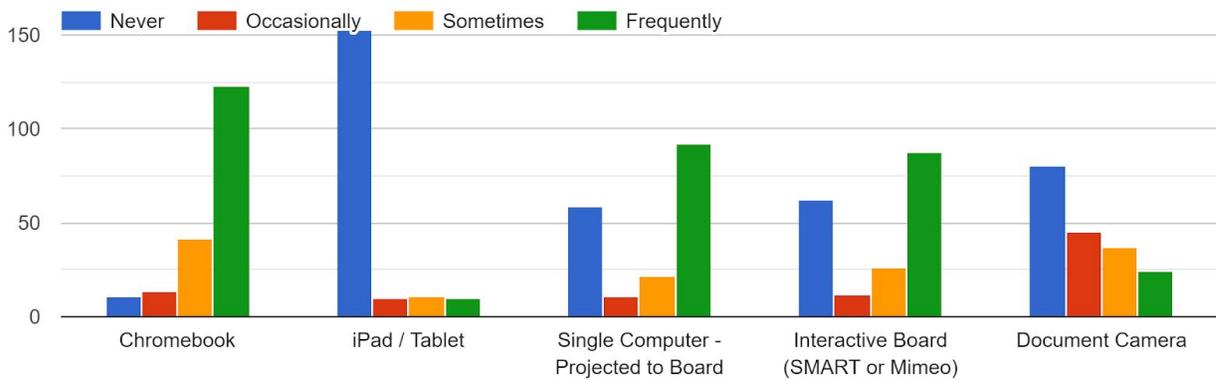
1g - How often do you use Readers/ and/or Writers' Workshop in your classroom when teaching ELA?



2. I have access to the following technologies for ELA instruction when needed.

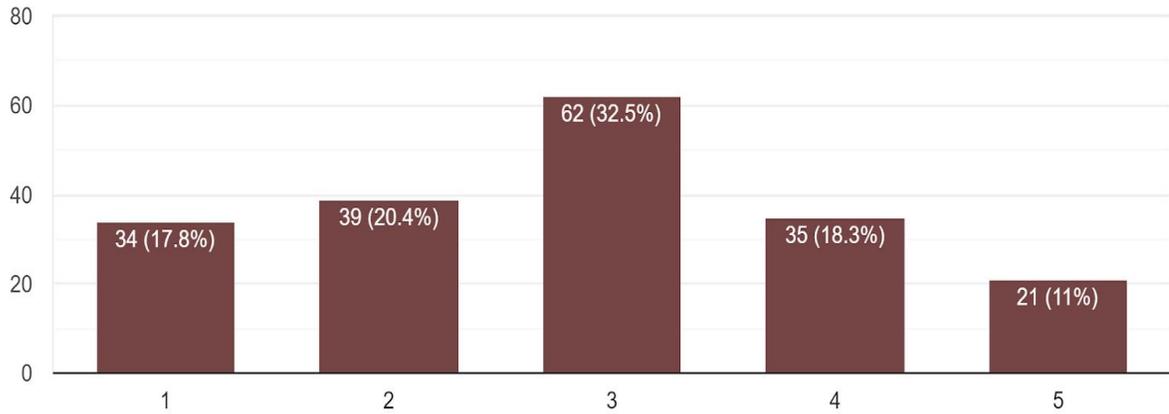


3. How often do you incorporate each of the following technologies in ELA?



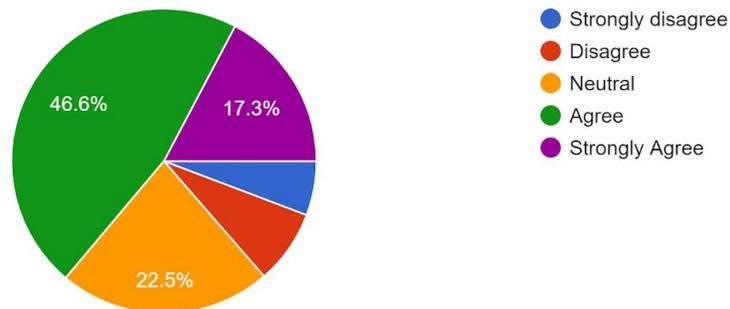
4. How readily can you and/or your students use the school media center to support the work you are doing in ELA?

191 responses

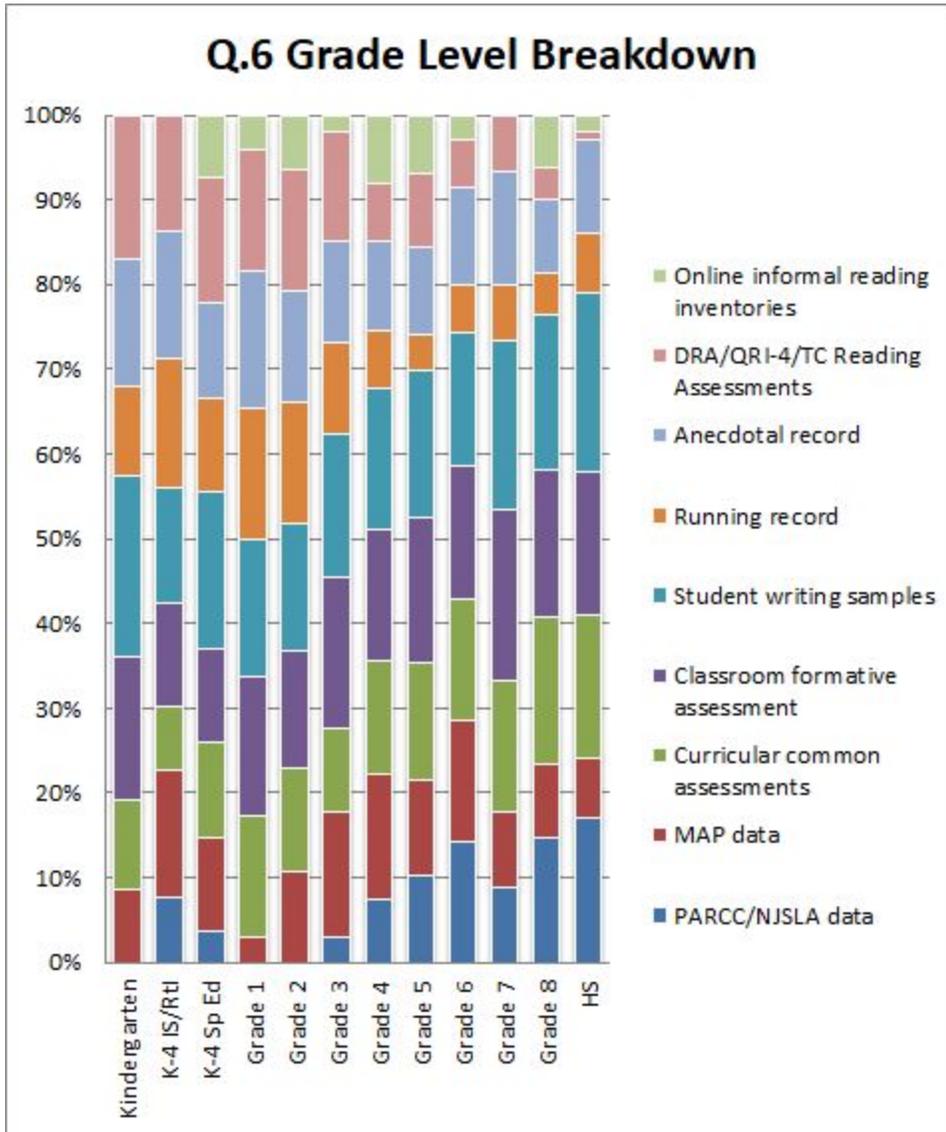


5. The media center / library in my school has a wide range of materials that are relevant and appropriate to students with regard to the themes we explore in ELA.

191 responses

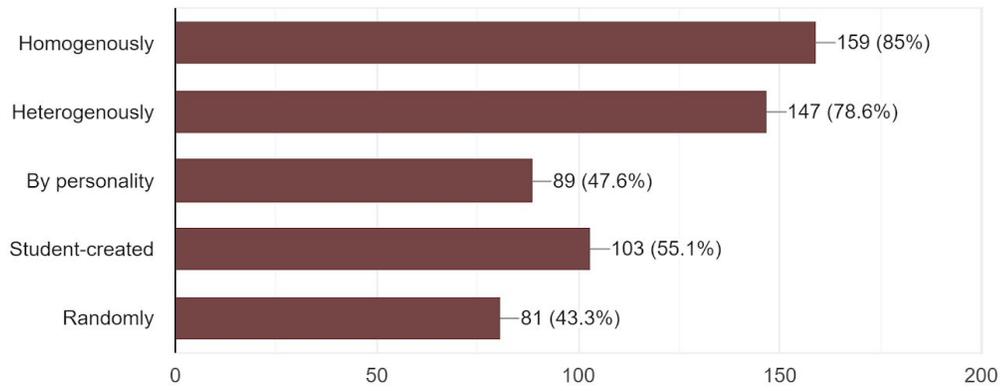


6 - What types of assessment data are you using to inform your instructional planning for ELA?



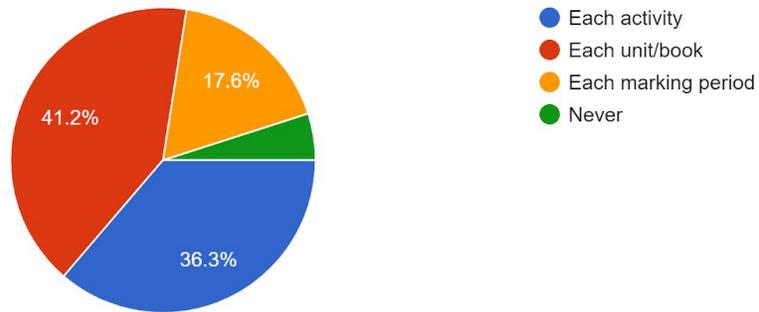
7. How do you establish student groups in this ELA course? Check all that apply.

187 responses

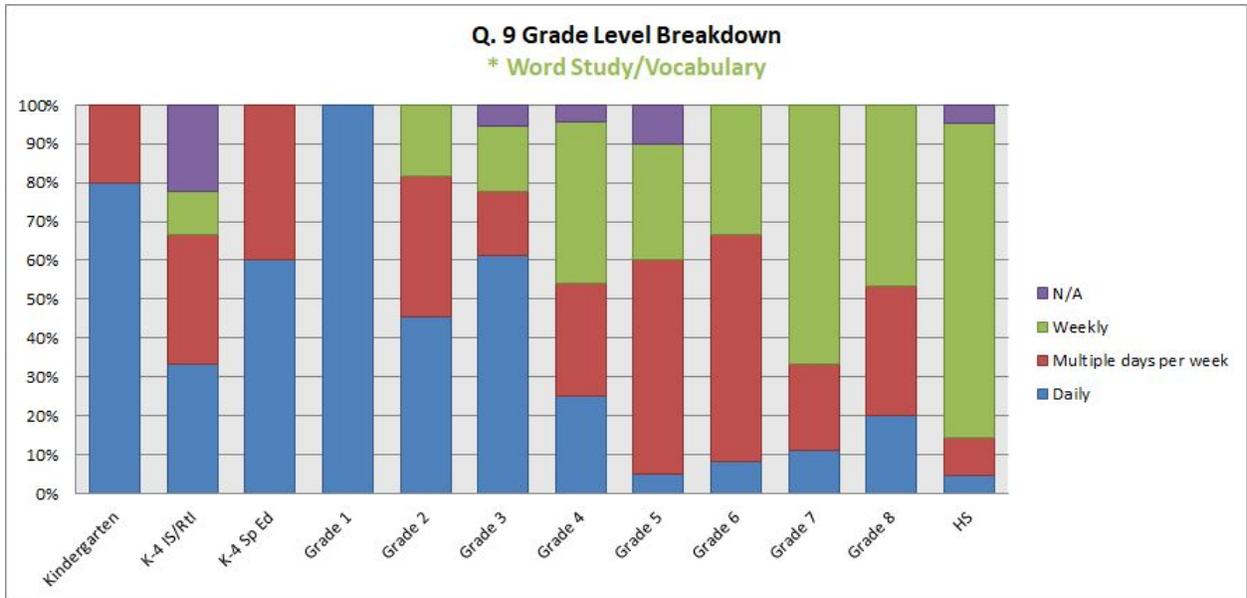


8. How often do you vary student groups in this ELA course?

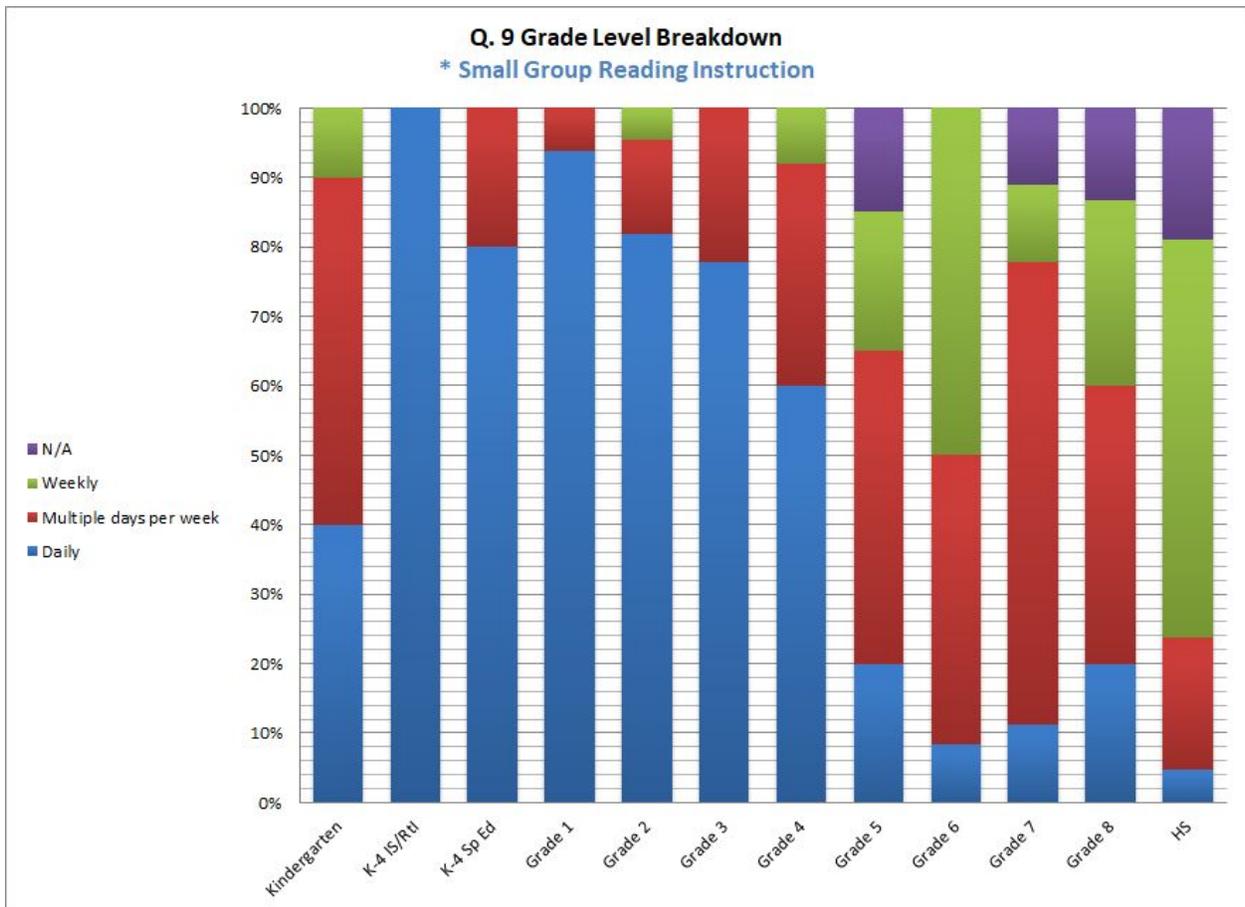
182 responses



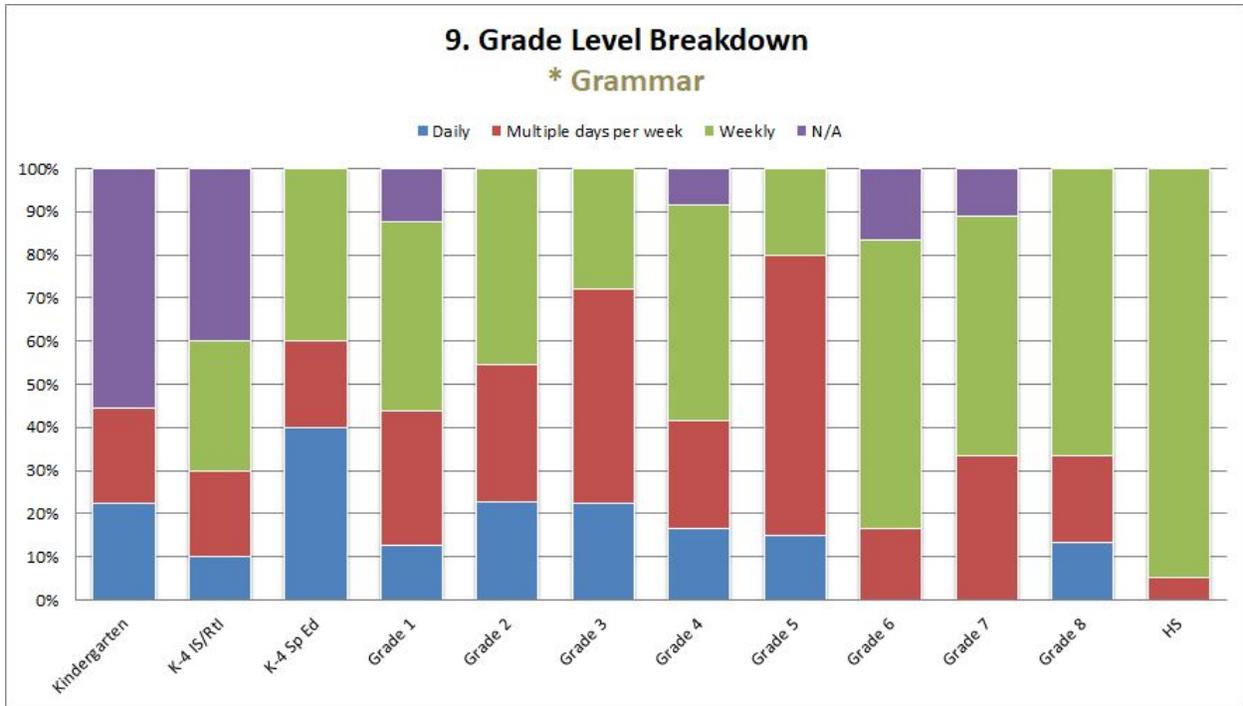
9a. How often do you incorporate Word Study/Vocabulary into instruction for this ELA course?



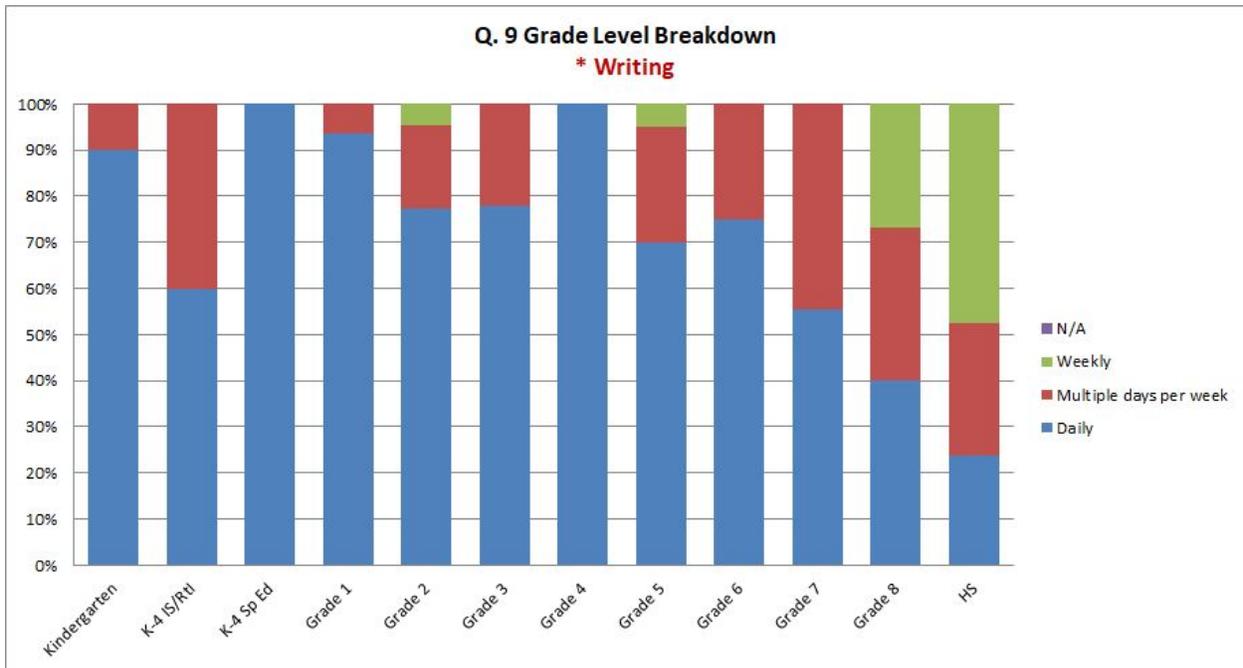
9b. How often do you incorporate Small Group Reading Instruction into this ELA course?



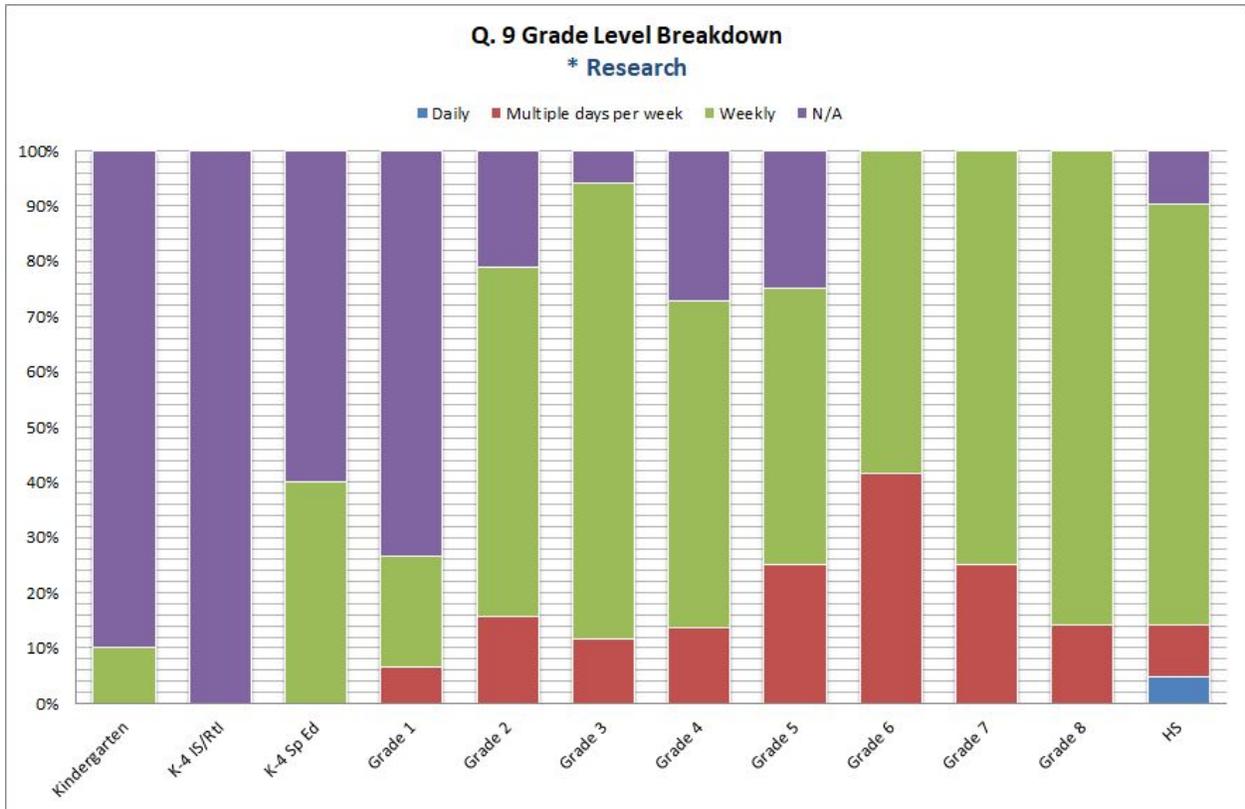
9c. How often do you incorporate Grammar into instruction for this ELA course?



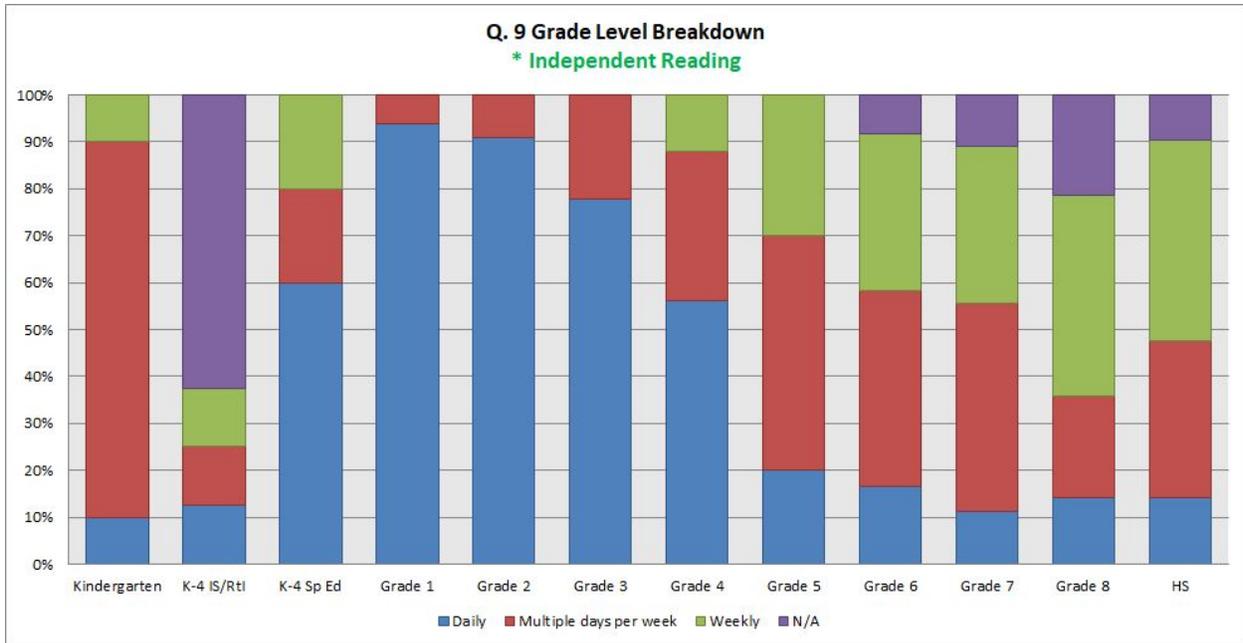
9d. How often do you incorporate Writing into instruction for this ELA course?



9e. How often do you incorporate Research into instruction for this ELA course?

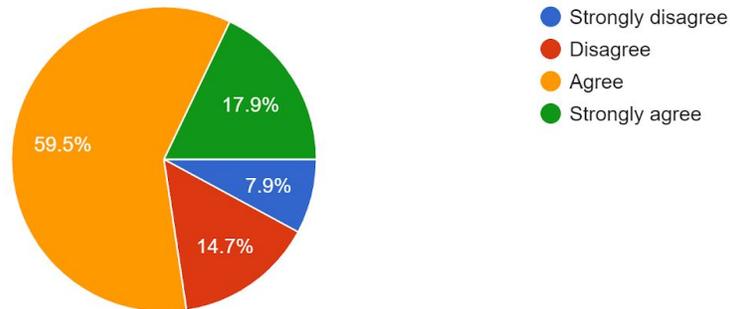


9f. How often do you incorporate Independent Reading into instruction for this ELA course?

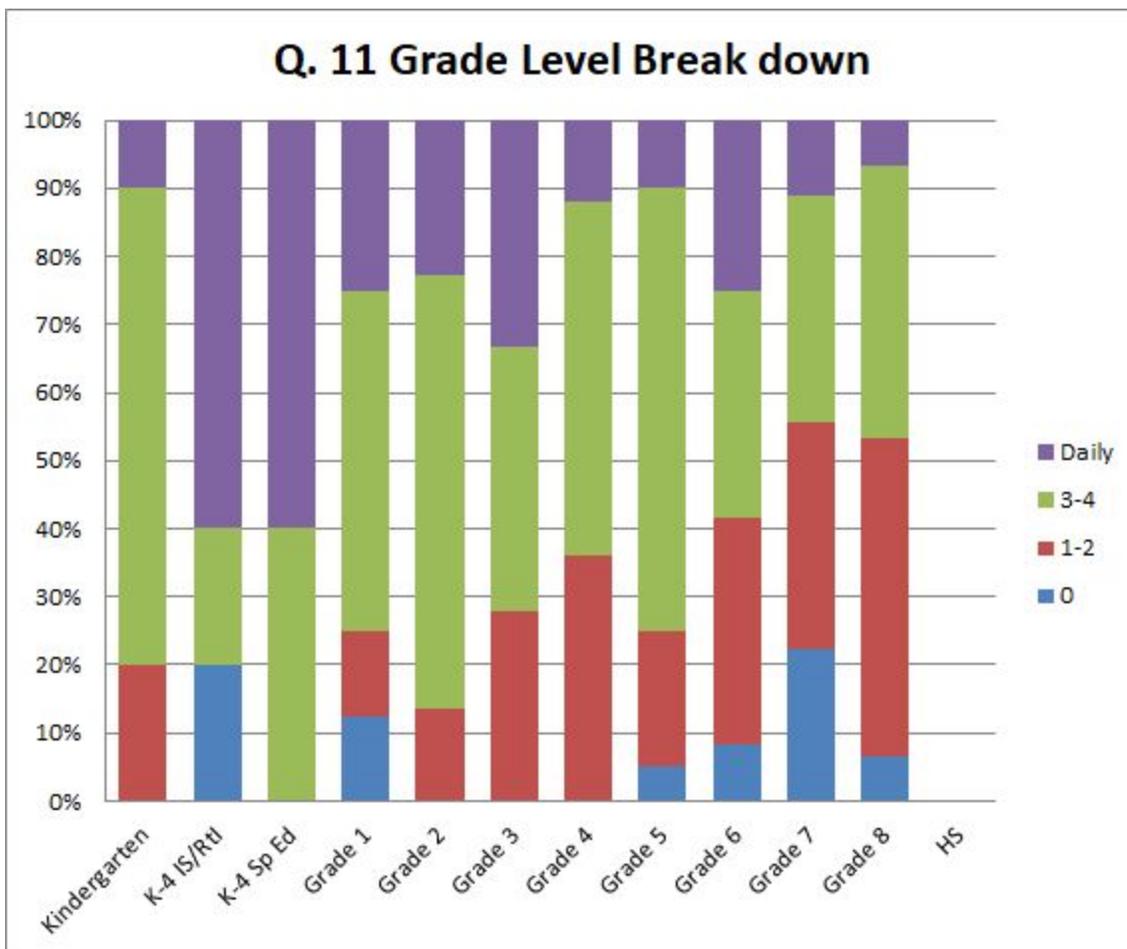


10. Daily ELA instructional time is adequate for me to deliver content in ELA.

190 responses

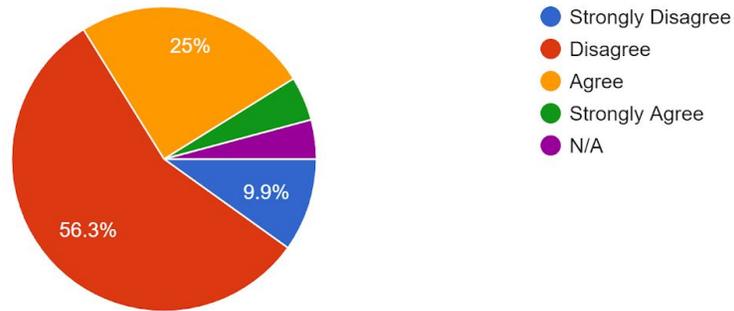


11. How many times per week do you typically assign homework to students in ELA?



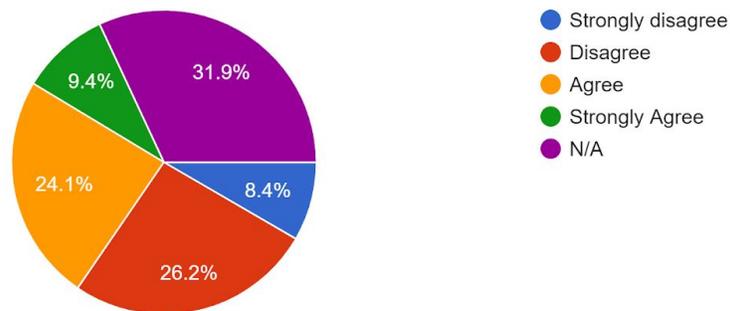
12. Time students spend participating in special school activities (i.e. field trips, assemblies) poses a challenge to the continuity of student learning in ELA.

192 responses



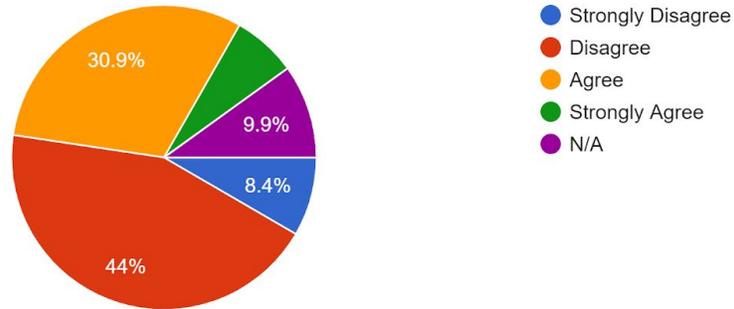
13. Time students spend participating in band/orchestra/chorus poses a challenge to the continuity of student learning in ELA.

191 responses



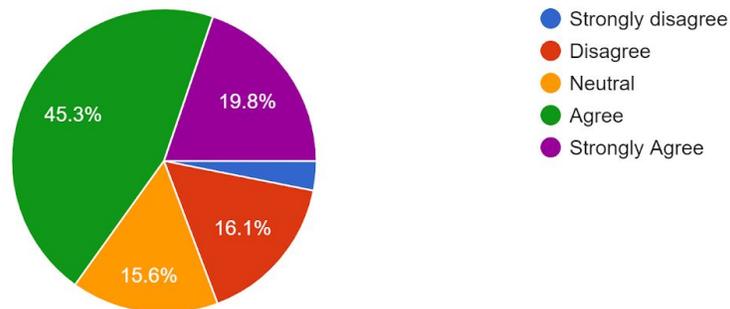
14. Time students spend gaining additional support beyond the classroom (i.e. speech, Intervention, OT, PT, etc) poses a challenge to the continuity of student learning in ELA.

191 responses



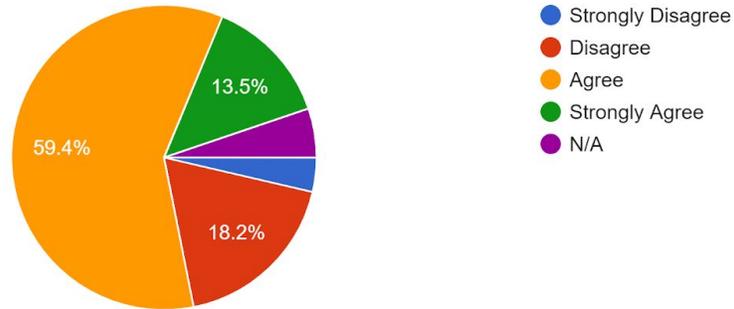
15. I feel that I understand the expectations of the grade level or program below my course as well as where the next grade level or program expects students to be at the start of the next school year.

192 responses



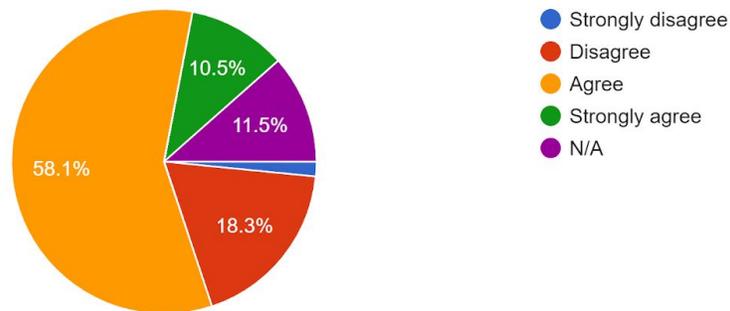
16. Our curriculum for this grade/course allows opportunities to integrate with other courses/disciplines.

192 responses

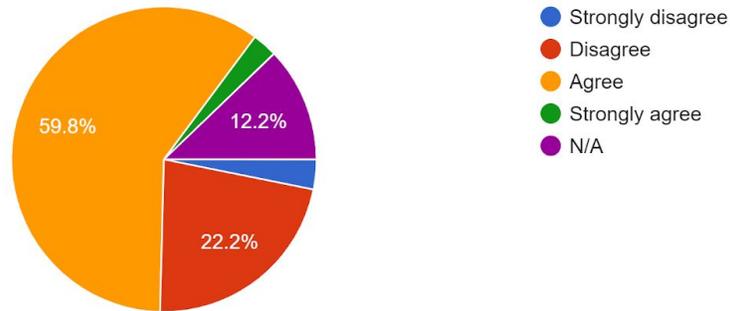


17. I feel that the rigor of the ELA curriculum adequately prepares students for standardized assessments.

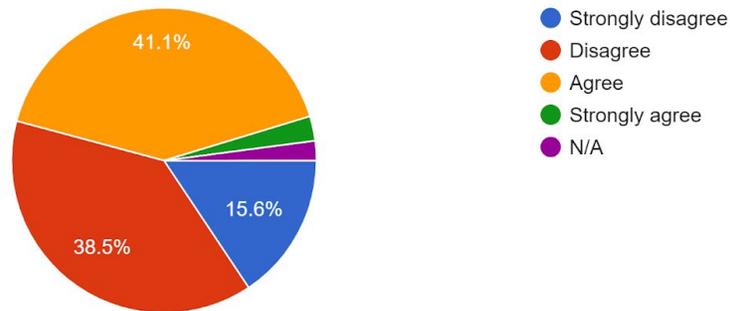
191 responses



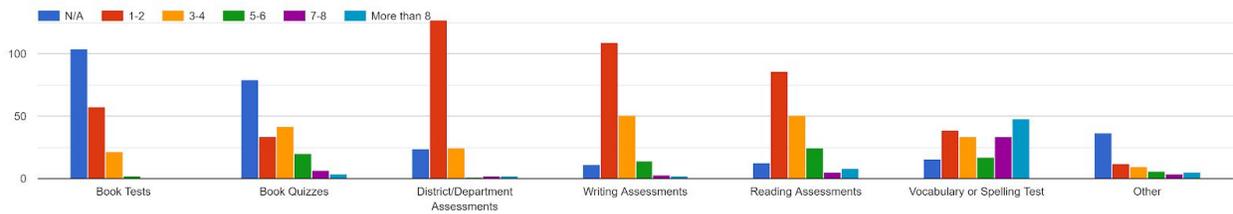
18. Grades earned by students in ELA are an accurate indicator of skill mastery and understanding.
189 responses



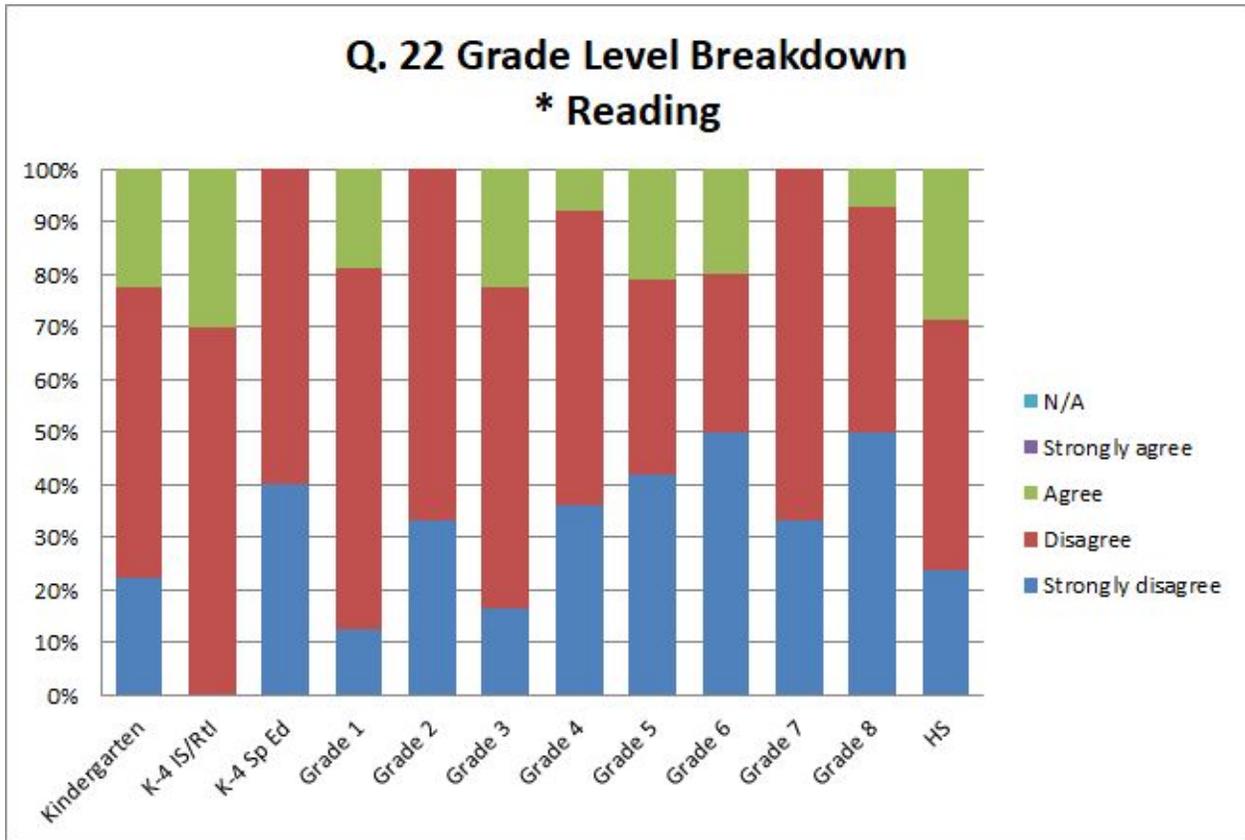
19. I have adequate time to meet with my colleagues to discuss the ELA curriculum.
192 responses



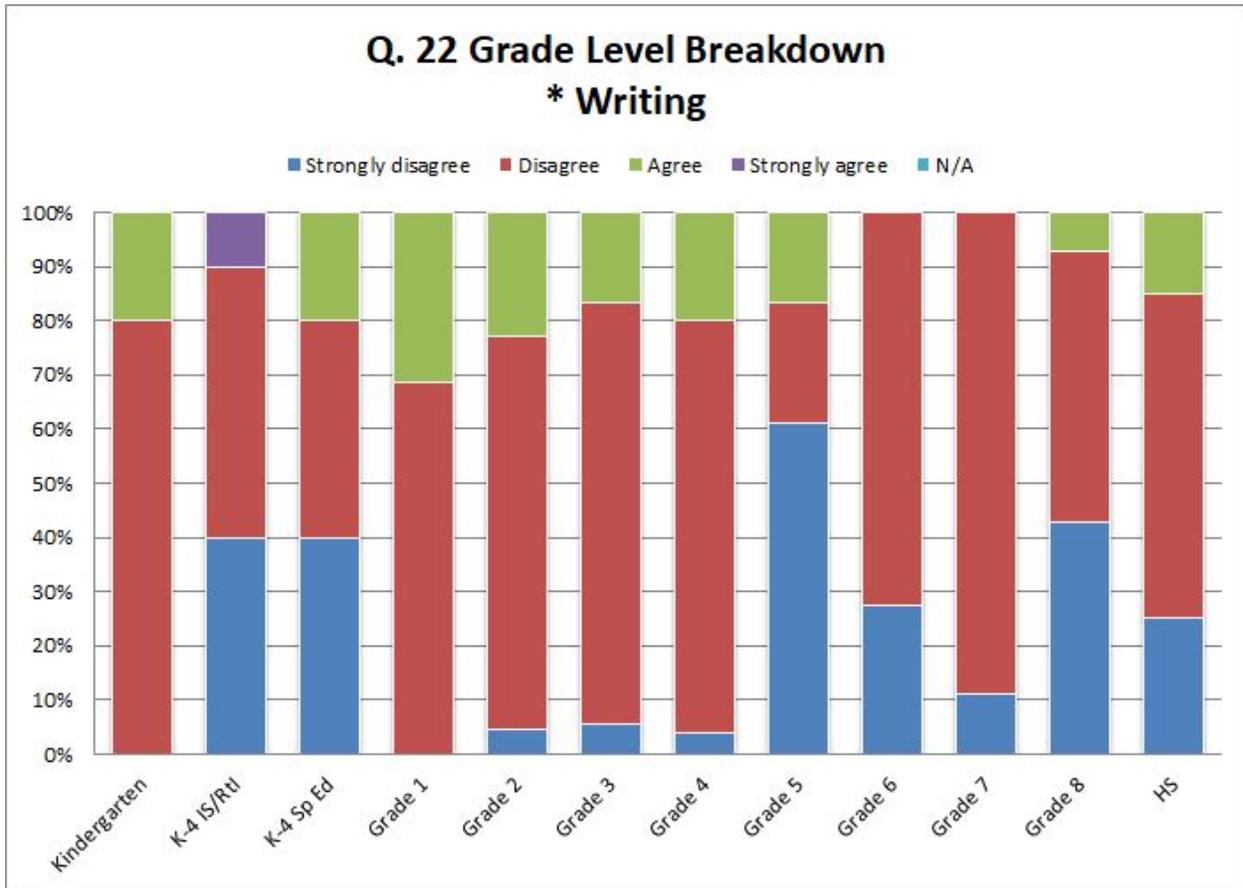
20. Approximately how many of each of the following assessments do you give each marking period in this ELA course?



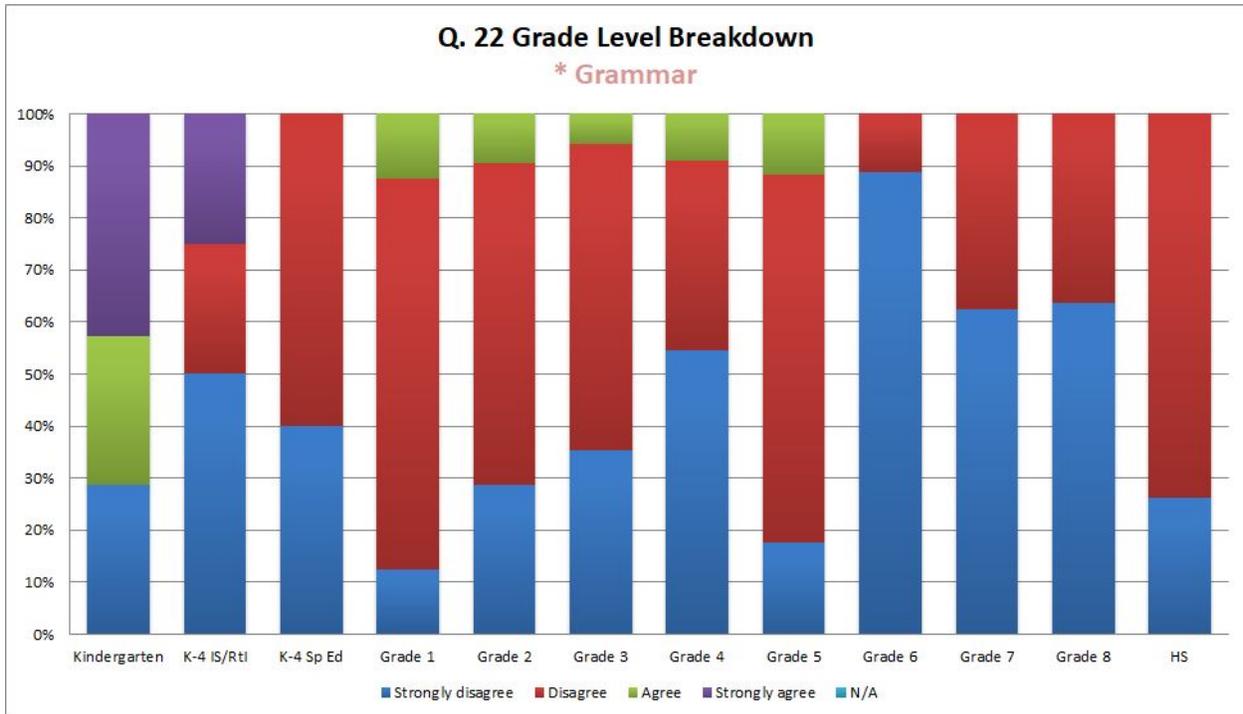
22a. Do you have the appropriate Reading resources to teach all students?



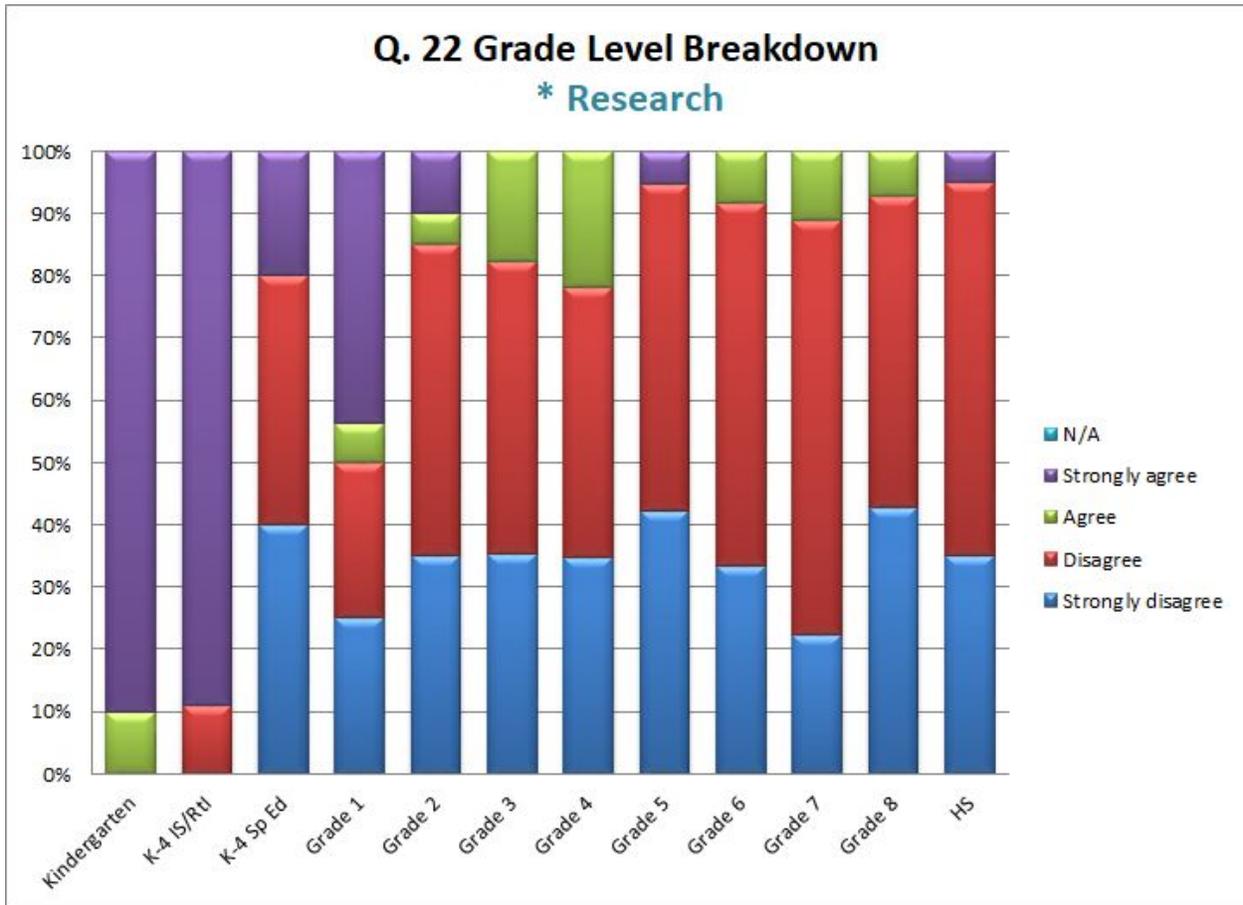
22b. Do you have the appropriate Writing resources to teach all students?



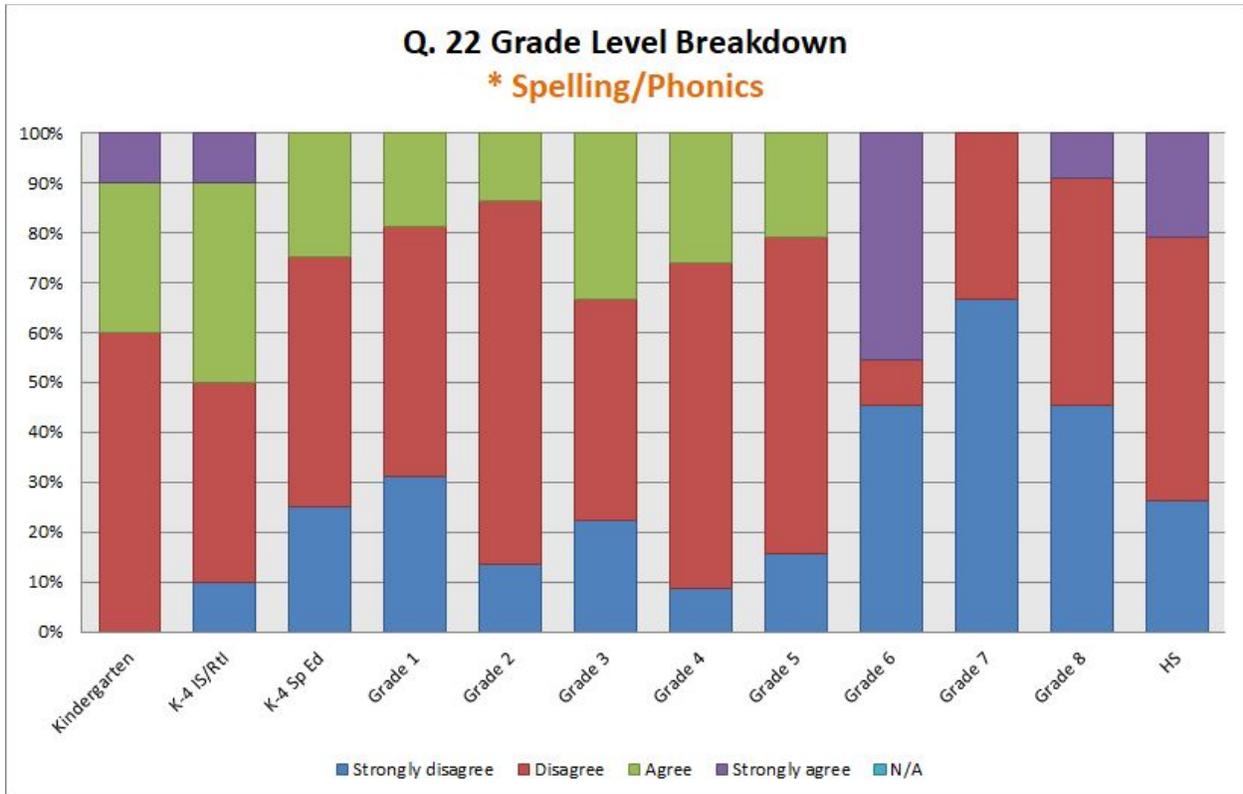
22c. Do you have the appropriate Grammar resources to teach all students?



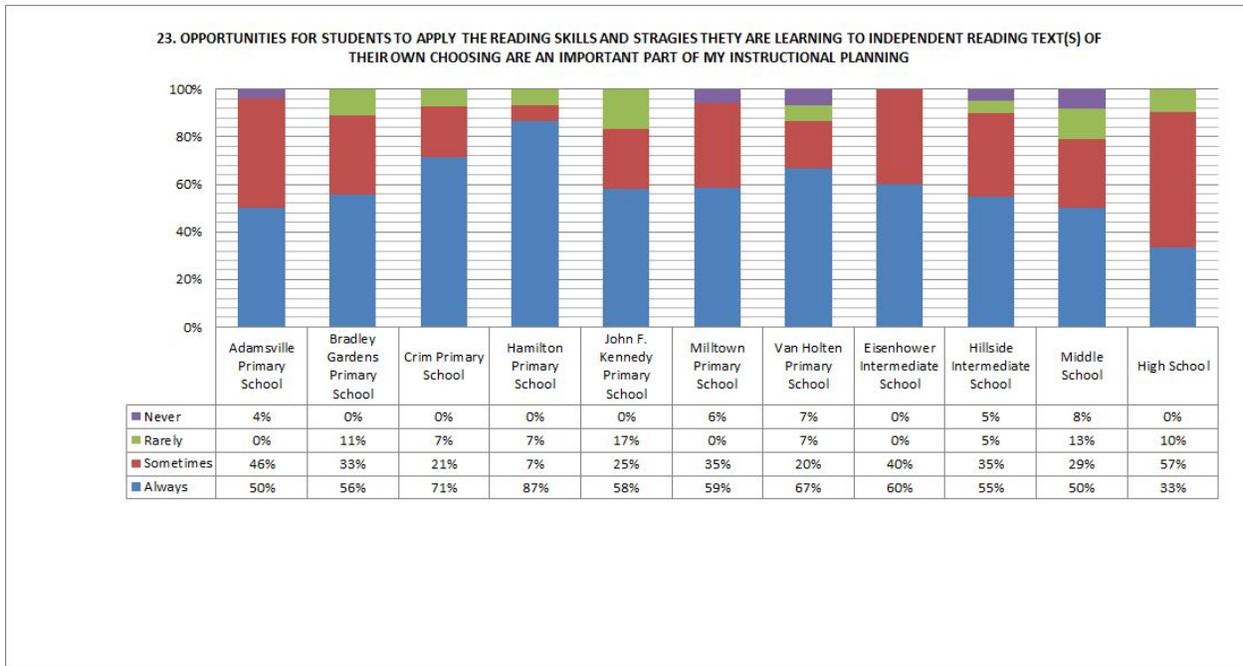
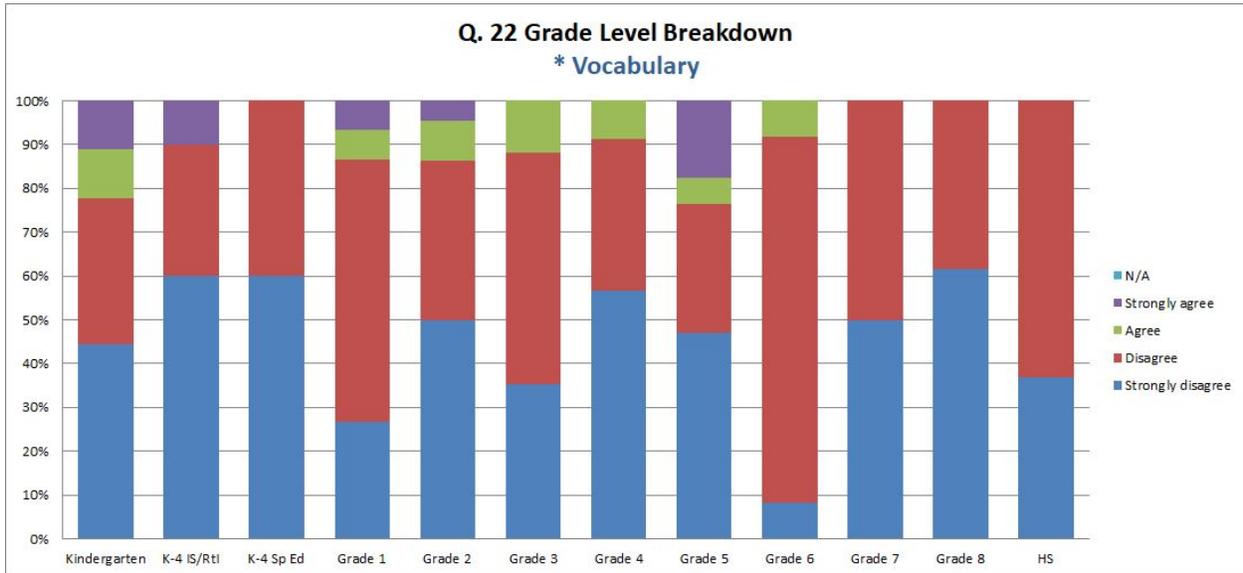
22d. Do you have the appropriate Research resources to teach all students?



22e. Do you have the appropriate Spelling/Phonics resources to teach all students?

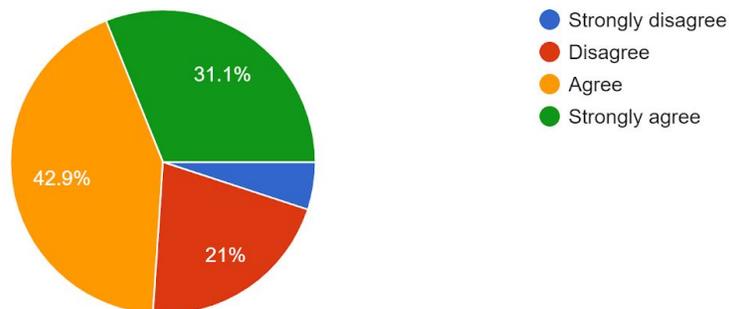


22f. Do you have the appropriate Vocabulary resources to teach all students?



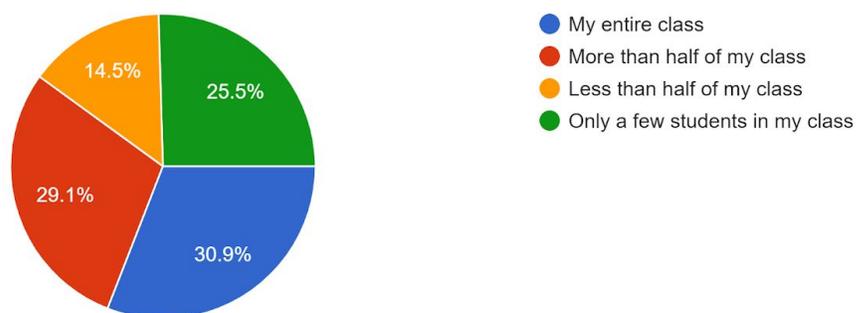
24. (Grades K-4 teachers only) I believe that additional professional development in the areas of phonemic awareness/phonics would support me in d... Study instruction to students in my classroom.

119 responses

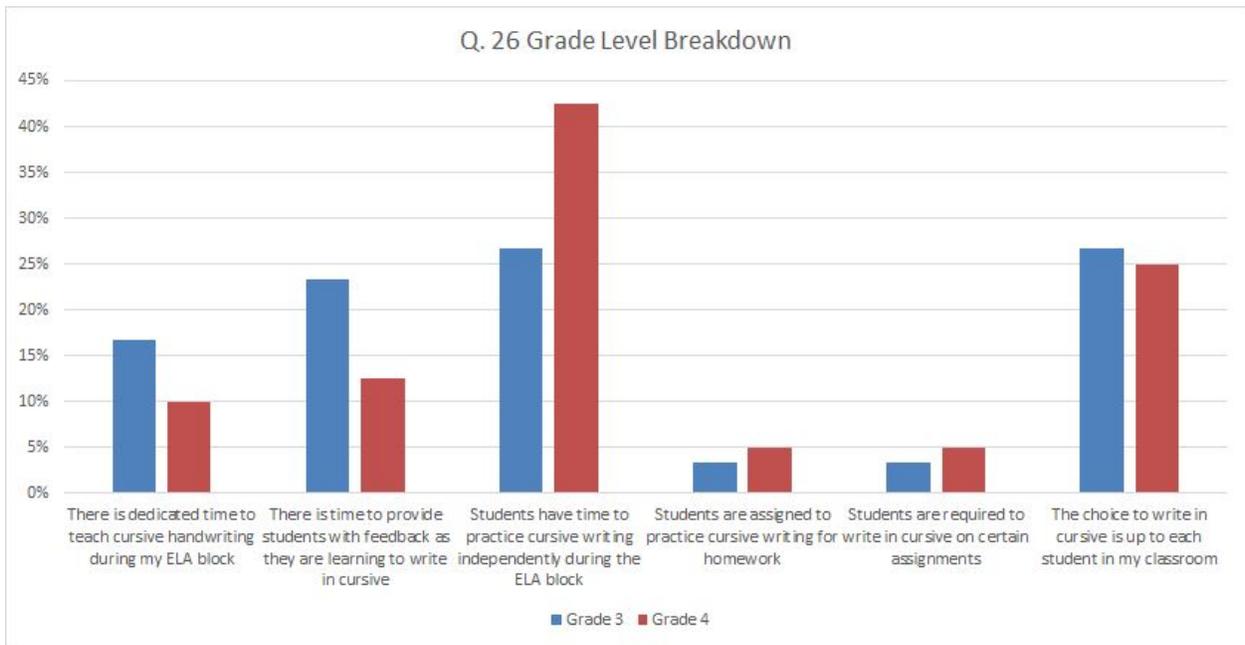


25. (Grades K-4 teachers only) How many of your students would benefit from explicit, systematic phonics instruction?

110 responses

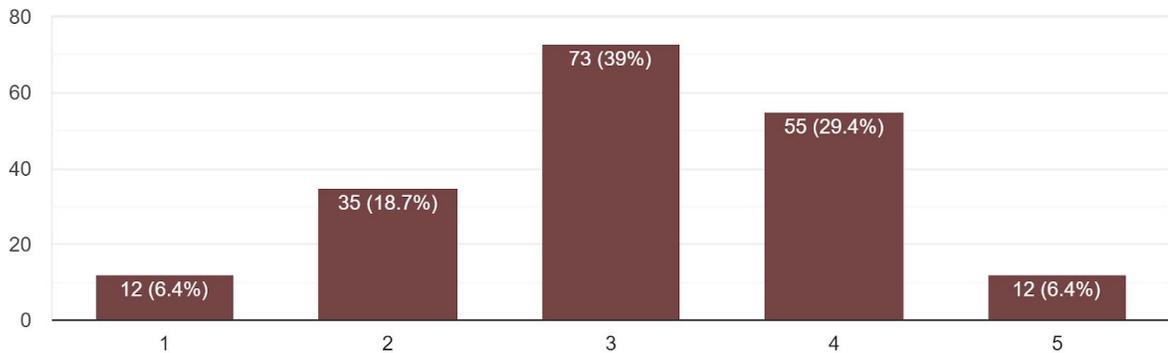


26. (Grades 3 and 4 ONLY) With regards to teaching cursive handwriting during ELA, please check all that apply.



29. I am provided the professional development I need to remain abreast of current best practices and teach the ELA curriculum effectively.

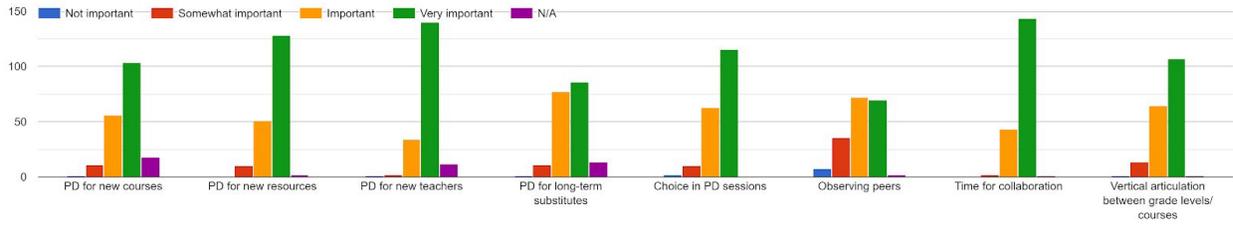
187 responses



1 - Completely Disagree

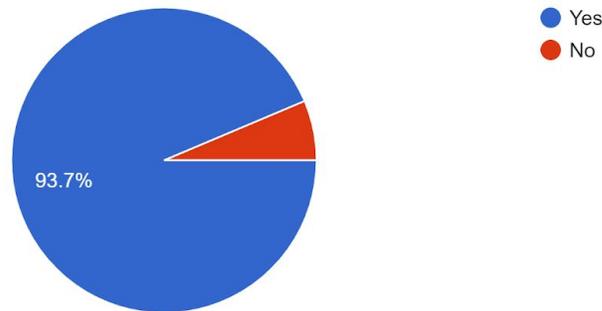
Completely Agree - 5

30. How important are each of the following types of professional development?



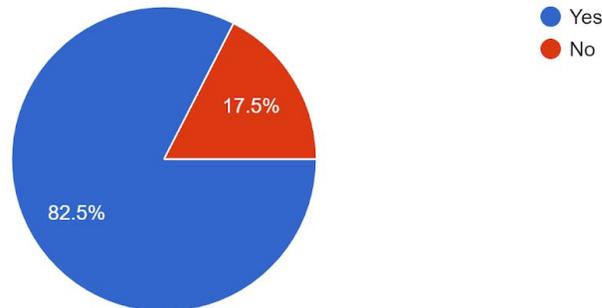
32. Would you be willing to visit another colleague's classroom as a form of PD?

189 responses



33. Would you be willing to have other teachers visit your classroom as a form of PD?

189 responses



Appendix C

Parent Survey Data

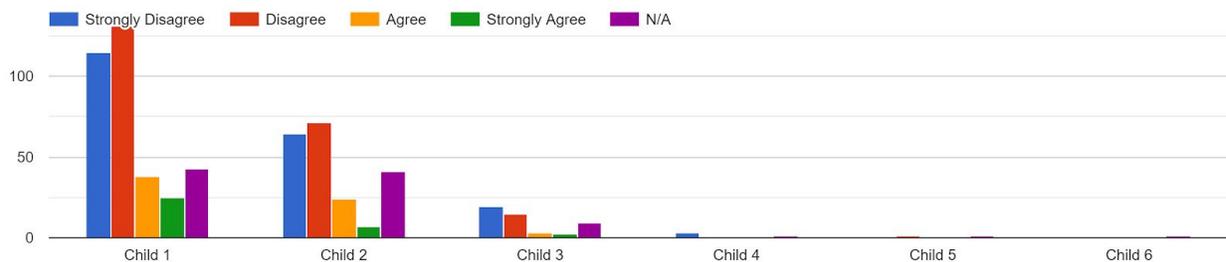
Parent Survey Questions

1. I am concerned that my child sometimes misses instructional time for English Language Arts to participate in other school activities.
2. With regard to the most recent academic year, my child was appropriately challenged in his/her English Language Arts class.
3. With regard to the most recent academic year, my child received appropriate English Language Arts support in his/her English Language Arts class.
4. My child has a positive attitude towards English Language Arts.
5. My child enjoys reading.
6. There should be assigned summer reading for students in ELA.
- 6a. If you wish to elaborate or specify with regard to your response to question 6, above, please do so here:
- 6b. What should be the purpose of summer reading? Would that purpose vary by grade or course level?
7. The primary purpose of summer reading should be: (please rank in order of importance, 1 being most important and 5 being least)
8. In terms of my child's ELA class, I feel that I am aware of the learning goals and curricular expectations that are intended.
9. Please rank the following components of an ideal English Language Arts program in order of importance: (with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.)
10. The reading and writing of cursive should be taught in English Language Arts.
11. Mechanics/grammar are being taught adequately in the current ELA program.
- 11a. Please use this space to elaborate on the instruction of mechanics/grammar in the current ELA program.
12. Spelling/phonics are being taught adequately in the current ELA program.
- 12a. Please use this space to elaborate on the instruction of spelling/phonics in the current ELA program.
13. The books and resources used in my child's English Language Arts class are appropriate for the grade level and content.
- 13a. Please use this space to elaborate on specific books and/or resources.
14. Projects and long-term assignments are appropriate in content and rigor.
15. The average amount of time my child spends on English Language Arts homework per night (including assigned reading) is:

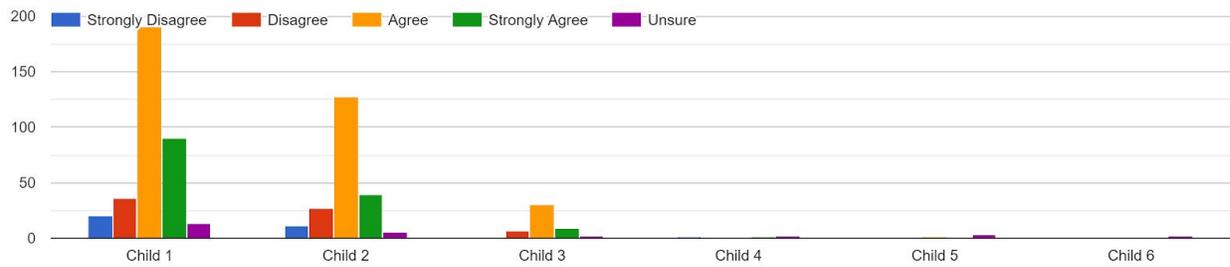
16. How effective is English Language Arts instruction in preparing your child for success on standardized tests? (MAP, NJLSA, SAT, ACT, AP exams, etc.)
17. My child has access to the following technologies at home: (check all that apply)
18. Outside of scheduled English Language Arts classroom time, my child receives the following support: (check all that apply)
19. I have used the following resources to keep informed about my child's English Language Arts performance: (check all that apply)
20. How well does the current English Language Arts program prepare students for career and college readiness? (with 1 being very well prepared and 5 being not at all prepared)
- 20a. Please use this space for any additional information you would like to provide on career and college readiness.
21. Are there any courses in English Language Arts that are not currently offered that would meet the needs of your child?
22. Please share any additional information that you feel would be relevant about the English Language Arts program in our district.

Parent Survey Results

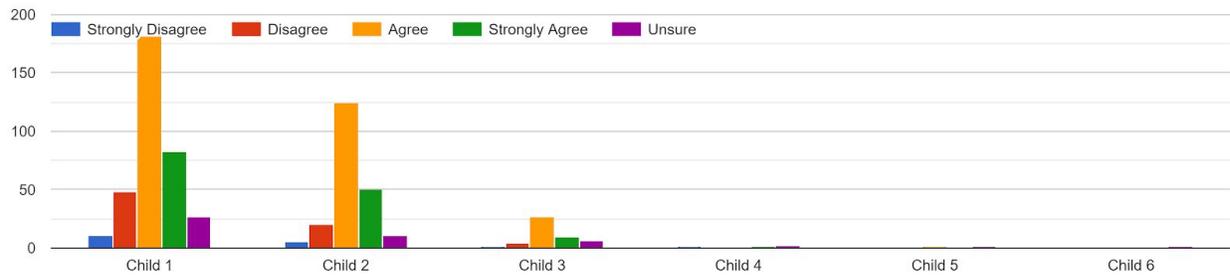
1. I am concerned that my child sometimes misses instructional time for English Language Arts to participate in other school activities.



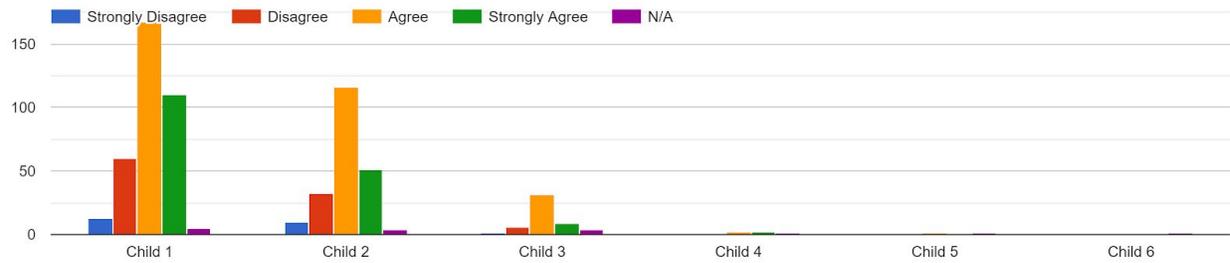
2. With regard to the most recent academic year, my child was appropriately challenged in his/her English Language Arts class.



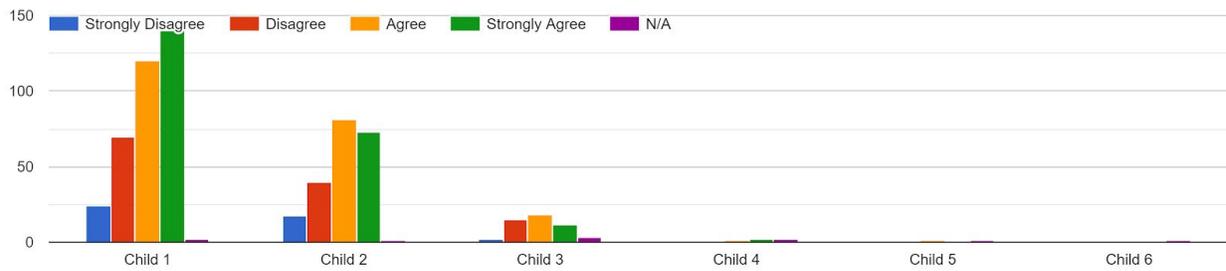
3. With regard to the most recent academic year, my child received appropriate English Language Arts support in his/her English Language Arts class.



4. My child has a positive attitude towards English Language Arts.

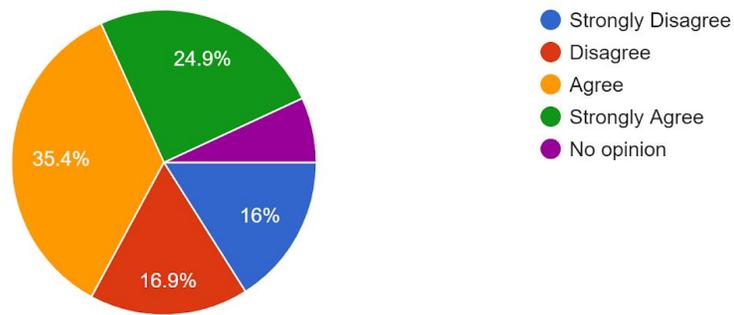


5. My child enjoys reading.

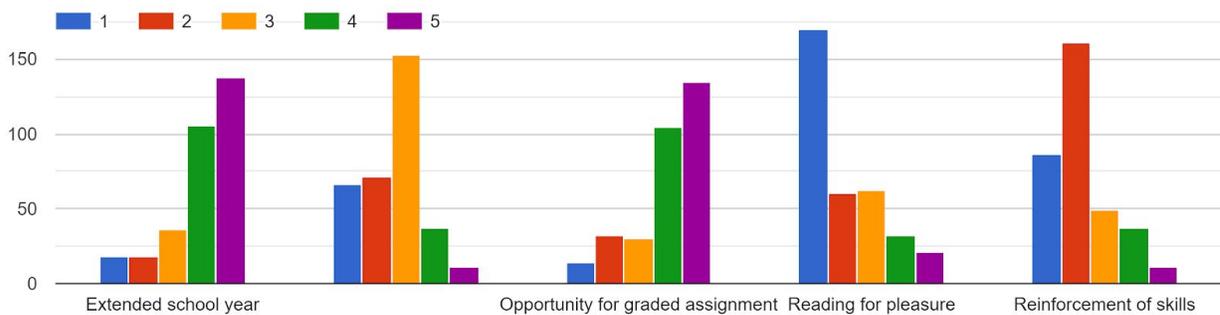


6. There should be assigned summer reading for students in ELA.

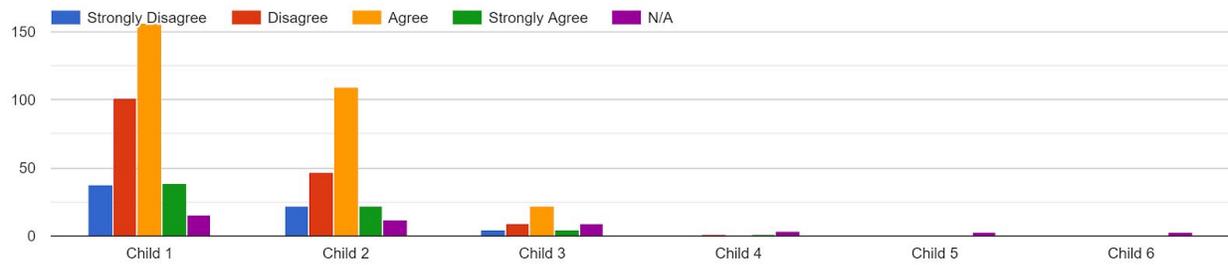
362 responses



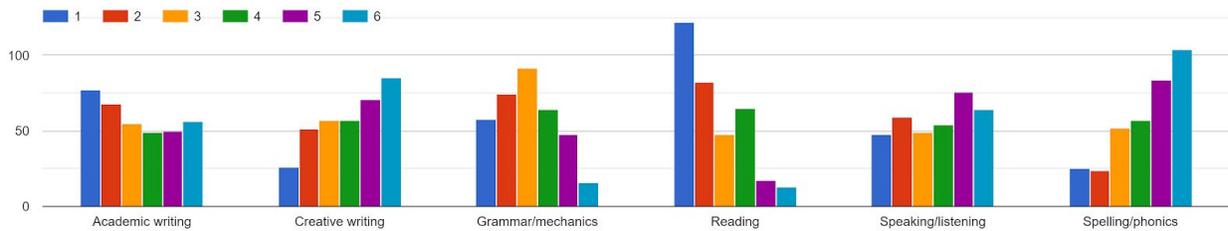
7. The primary purpose of summer reading should be: (please rank in order of importance, 1 being most important and 5 being least)



8. In terms of my child's ELA class, I feel that I am aware of the learning goals and curricular expectations that are intended.

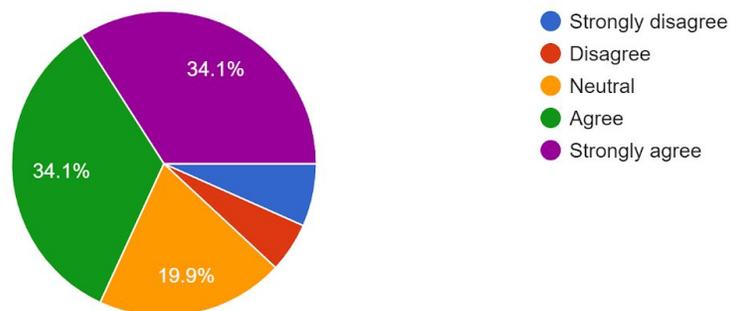


9. Please rank the following components of an ideal English Language Arts program in order of importance: (with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.)



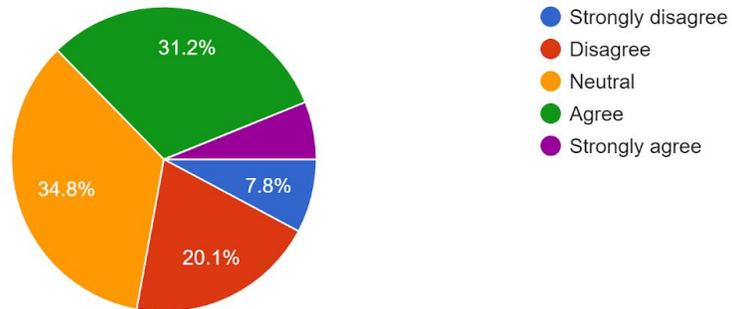
10. The reading and writing of cursive should be taught in English Language Arts.

361 responses



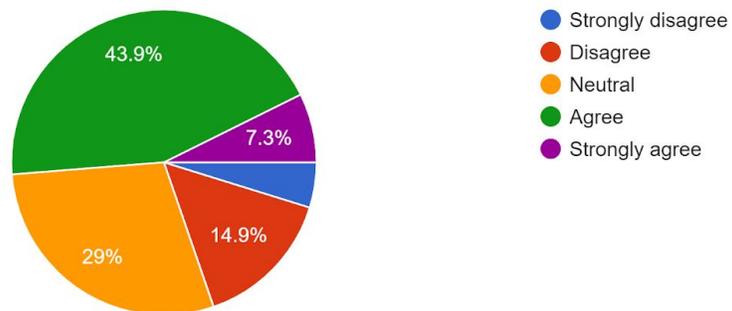
11. Mechanics/grammar are being taught adequately in the current ELA program.

359 responses

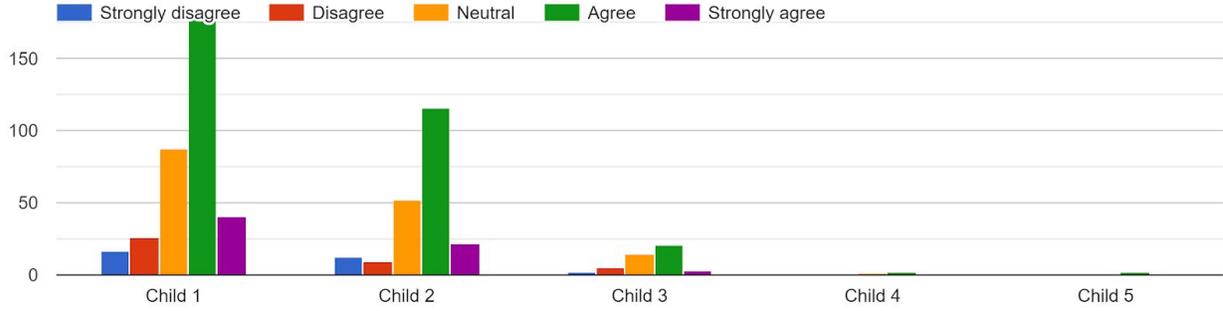


12. Spelling/phonics are being taught adequately in the current ELA program.

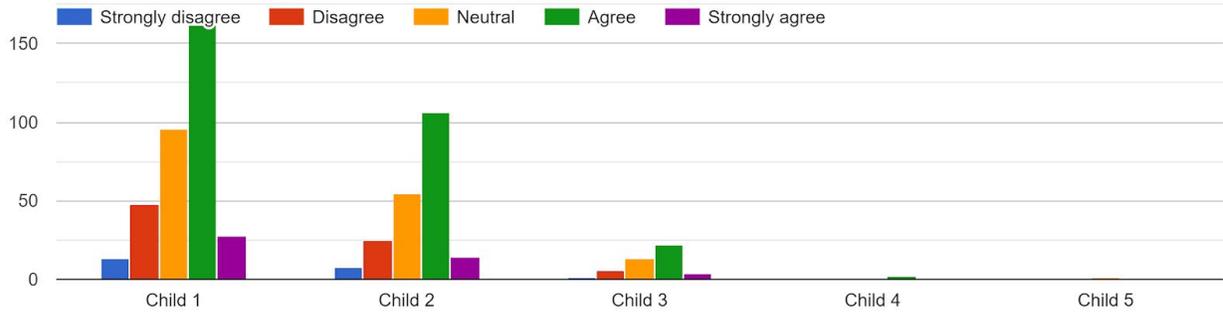
355 responses



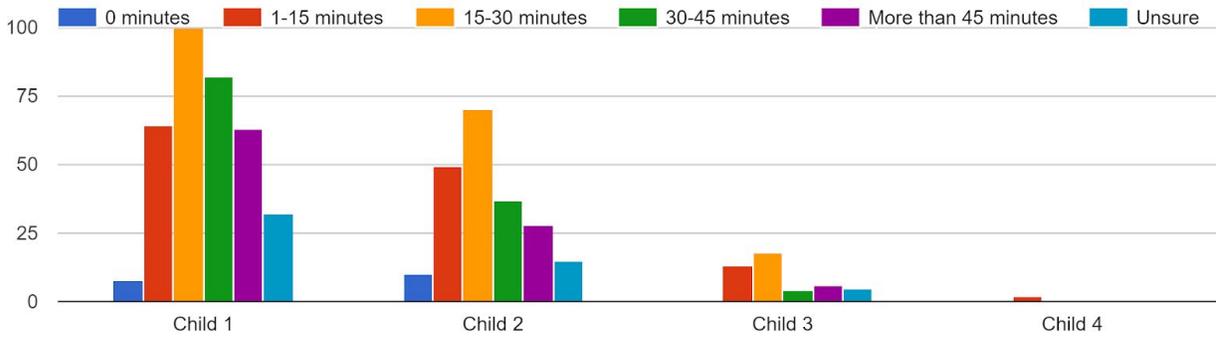
13. The books and resources used in my child's English Language Arts class are appropriate for the grade level and content.



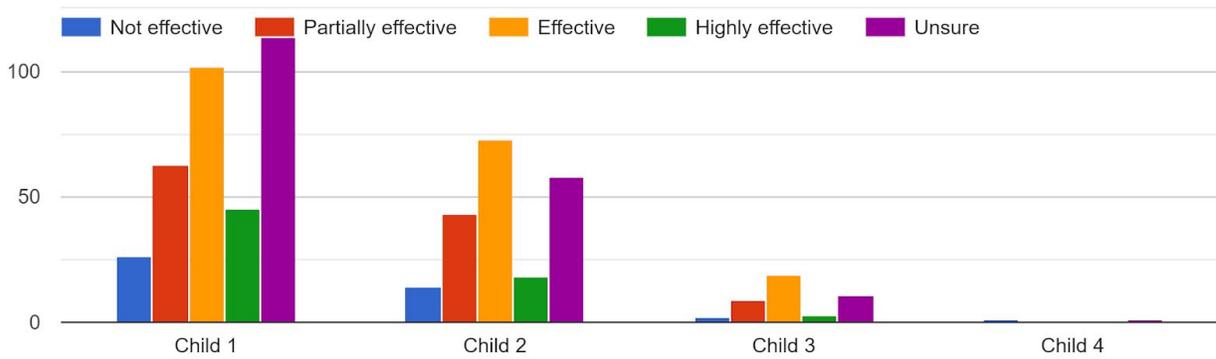
14. Projects and long-term assignments are appropriate in content and rigor.



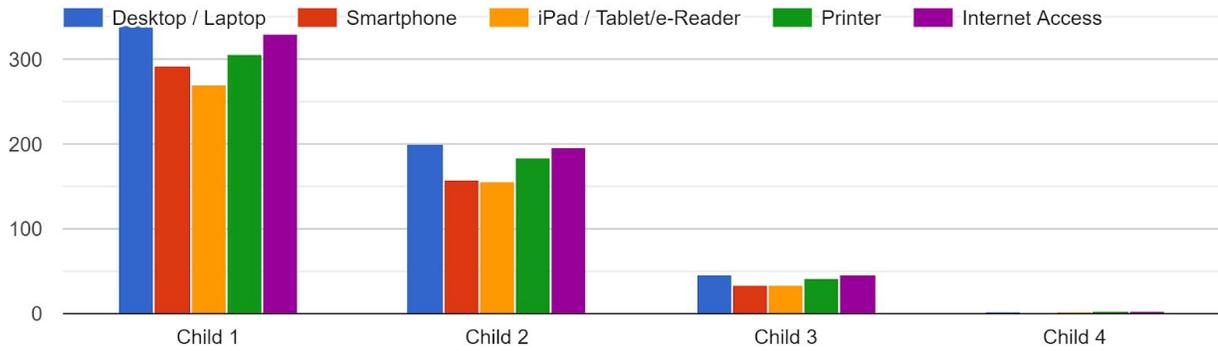
15. The average amount of time my child spends on English Language Arts homework per night (including assigned reading) is:



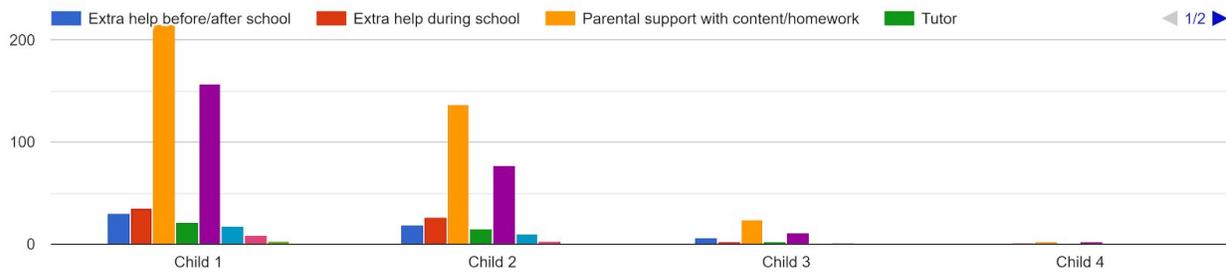
16. How effective is English Language Arts instruction in preparing your child for success on standardized tests? (MAP, NJLSA, SAT, ACT, AP exams, etc.)



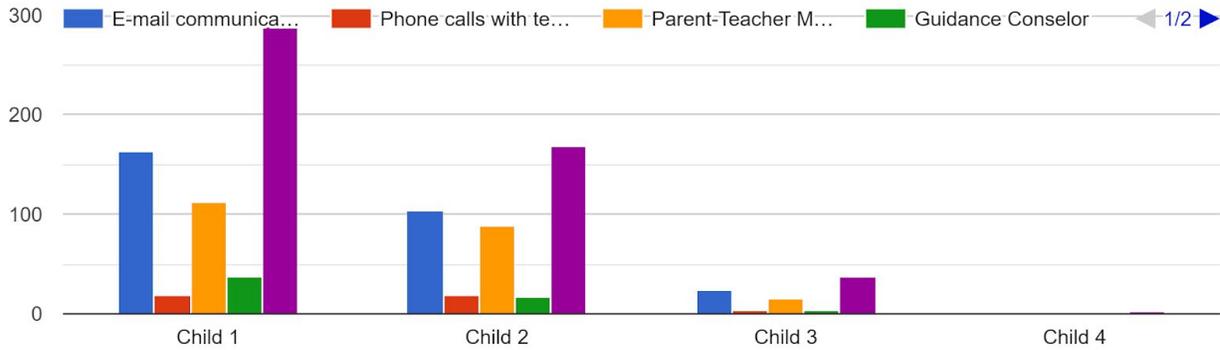
17. My child has access to the following technologies at home: (check all that apply)



18. Outside of scheduled English Language Arts classroom time, my child receives the following support: (check all that apply)

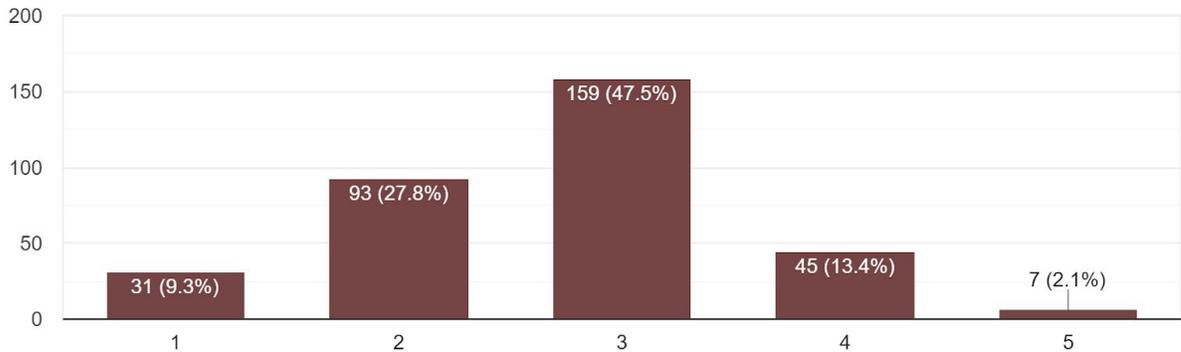


19. I have used the following resources to keep informed about my child's English Language Arts performance: (check all that apply)



20. How well does the current English Language Arts program prepare students for career and college readiness? (with 1 being very well prepared and 5 being not at all prepared)

335 responses



1 - Very well prepared

Not at all prepared - 5

Appendix D

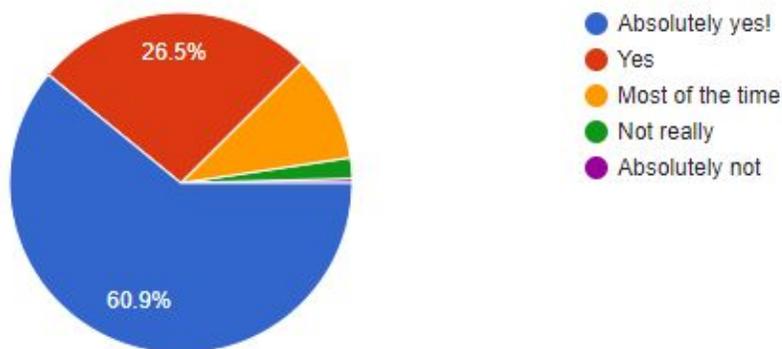
Additional Survey Analysis

Below you will find additional survey analysis that was not included in the body of the report..

ELA Attitudes and Beliefs

Parents, teachers, and students were surveyed regarding their attitudes and beliefs concerning English Language Arts (ELA). Overall, the data reflected a positive attitude towards ELA in the district. The vast majority of students (more than 90%) believed that the ability to read and write is valuable throughout their lives. Nearly 80% of parent respondents believed their children are appropriately challenged in their English Language Arts classes and that their children have positive attitudes towards English Language Arts and enjoy reading. However, less than half of parent respondents affirmed that they are aware of the learning goals and expectations of their child(ren)'s ELA curriculum. For the most part, teachers indicated that they are aware of student expectations in previous grade levels and other courses, but the survey data indicated that teachers would like more time to collaborate with teachers of other grades and departments to improve vertical and cross-curricular alignment.

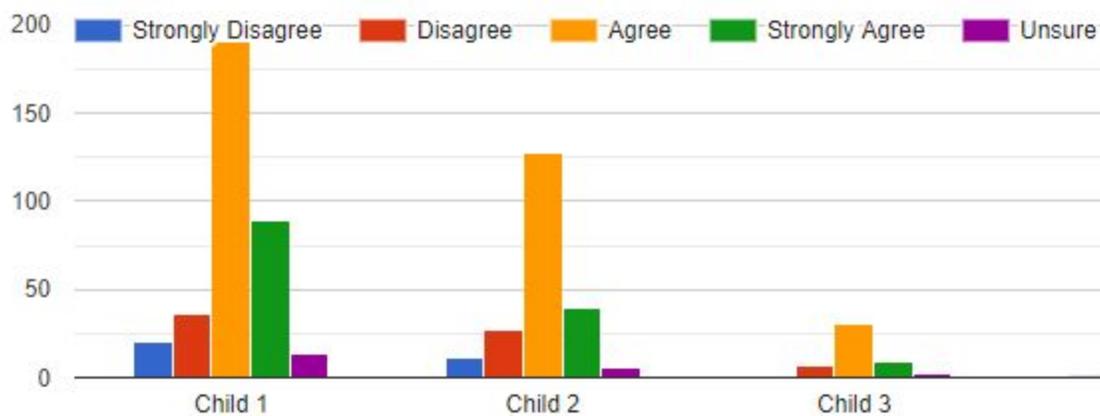
Student question 1: I think the ability to read and write will be important to me throughout my life.



Rigor

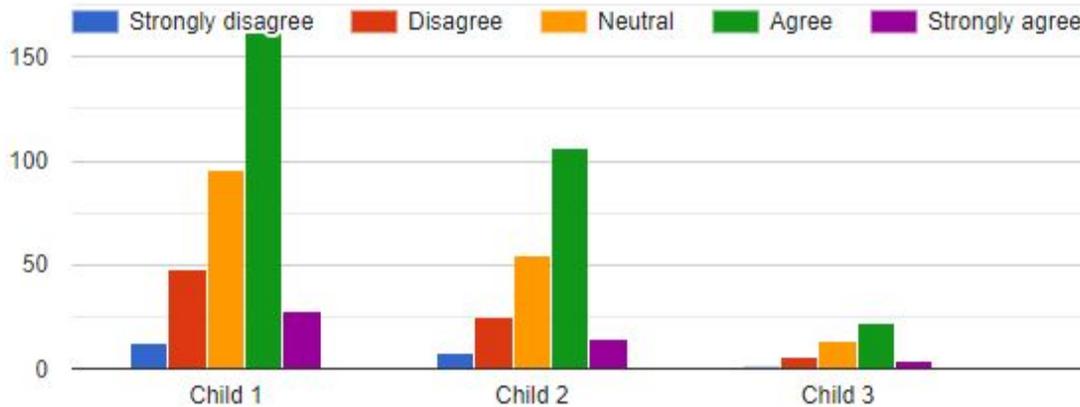
The vast majority of parents responded that the ELA curriculum is sufficiently rigorous. 80% of parents surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that their children were appropriately challenged in ELA classes.

Parent Question 2: With regard to the most recent academic year, my child was appropriately challenged in his/her English Language Arts class.



Specifically, parents indicated that projects and long-term assignments were “appropriate in content and rigor.” Only 15% of parents responded that these assignments were not appropriately rigorous, though responses did not clearly indicate whether these assignments were too rigorous or not rigorous enough.

Parent Question 14: Projects and long-term assignments are appropriate in content and rigor.

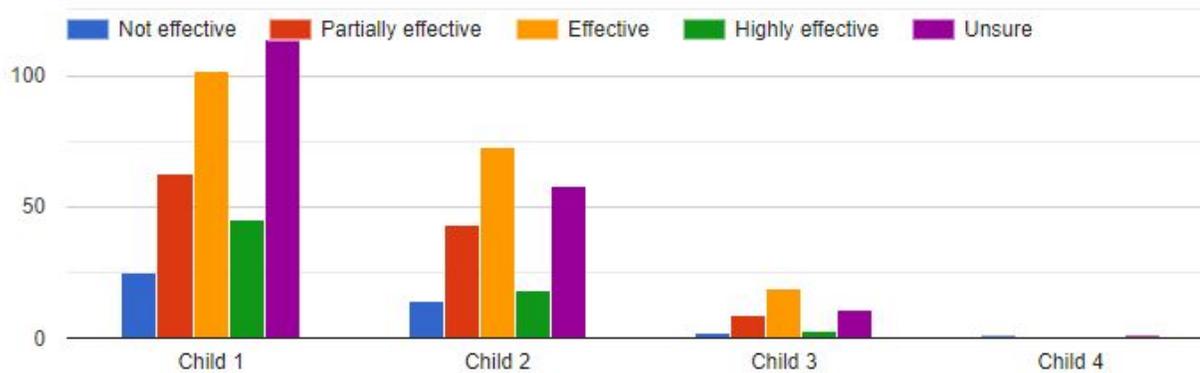


Preparation for Standardized Testing

Standardized testing and the way it impacts instruction is a topic about which many stakeholders in the district had strong feelings. Results of the three surveys – parents, teachers, and students – revealed statistically that overall ELA instruction effectively prepares students for standardized testing, but results varied in some significant ways. It is important to note that survey questions about standardized tests covered all standardized tests students could take, including, but not limited to, MAP testing, NJSLA, and SAT / ACT.

Most notable regarding the parent survey was that 33% of parents were unsure of the effectiveness of the ELA instruction in preparing students for success on standardized tests. Many factors may have impacted parent responses to this question such as the age of their child(ren) as well as access to information about standardized tests and/or learning goals in the classrooms, as indicated in the open-ended survey responses. However, despite this, most parents indicated that their children were effectively prepared. In fact, only 7% of parents surveyed believed that ELA instruction did not effectively prepare students for standardized testing.

Parent Question 16: How effective is English Language Arts instruction in preparing your child for success on standardized tests? (MAP, NJLSA, SAT, ACT, AP exams, etc.)

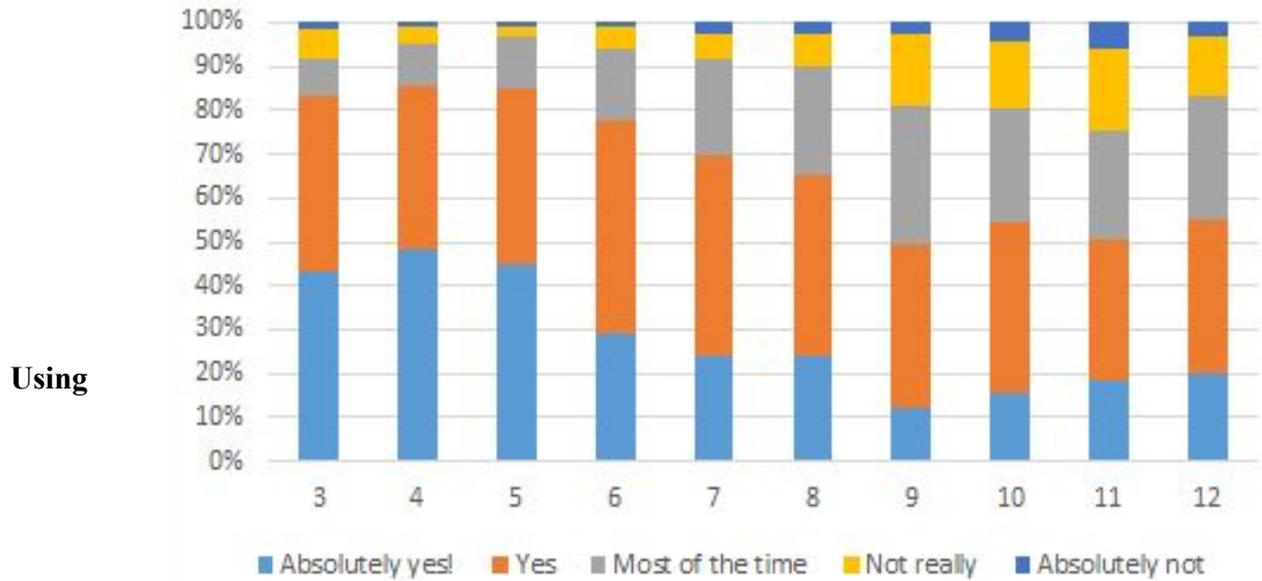


While nearly 70% of teachers indicated the ELA curriculum adequately prepared students for standardized assessments, roughly 20% of teachers either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Teachers were also given an opportunity to elaborate in open-ended responses. A significant number of teachers questioned whether or not the curriculum should provide explicit standardized test preparation. Additionally, some teachers indicated that more instruction should be dedicated to our writing program in regards to test preparation.

Students were also asked if they were well prepared for standardized ELA assessments. Very few students indicated that they were “absolutely not” prepared. In elementary and intermediate schools, at least 80% of students responded either “yes” or “absolutely yes!”. This number dropped slightly for middle school students and somewhat more significantly for high school students: only 50% of high school students responded “yes” or “absolutely yes!”.

Student Question 15: My classes have prepared me well for standardized ELA assessments (NJSLA, AP, SAT, etc.)

*Results by Grade Level

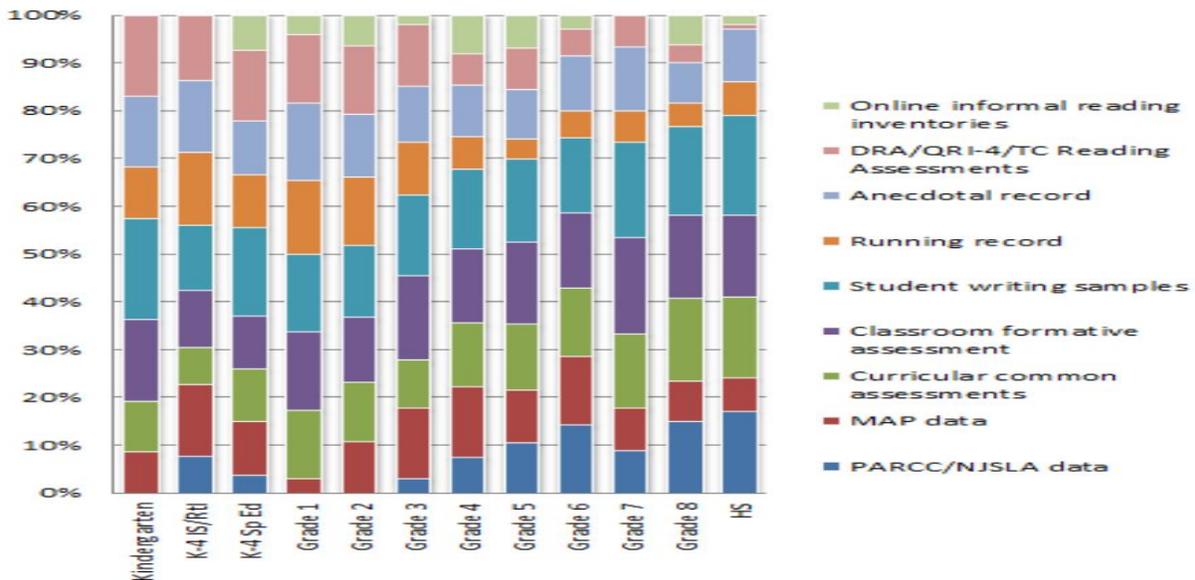


Assessments

Teachers were asked what types of assessments are used in the ELA classroom to inform instruction. Results indicated that teachers at all grade levels used a wide variety of assessments to inform instructional planning. Nearly 100% of teachers used student writing samples; 90% of teachers used formative assessments; 75% of teachers used curricular common assessments. While these were the most statistically significant assessments indicated in the teacher survey, there were additional assessments commonly used, including, but not limited to, anecdotal records and MAP and PARCC / NJSLA data. At the primary level, nearly all teachers used running records to inform instruction.

Teacher Question 6: What types of assessment data are you using to inform your instructional planning for ELA? (Check all that apply)

*Results by Grade Level



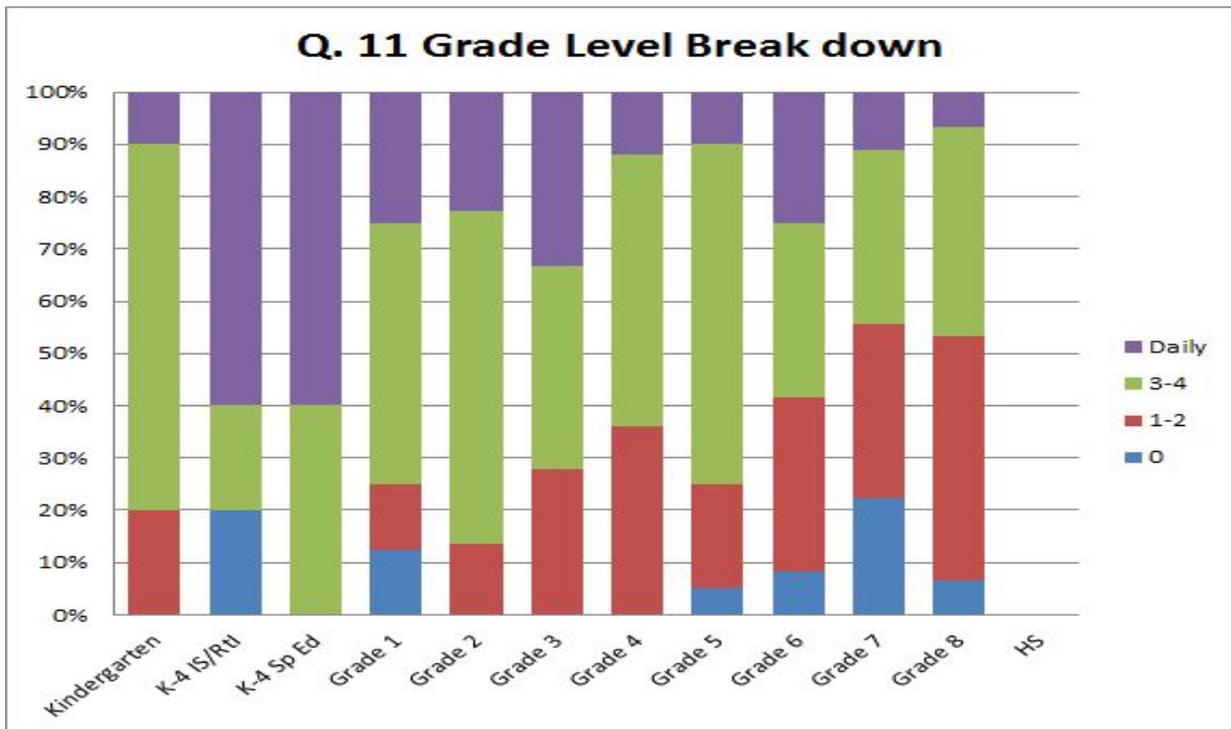
Objective data from the teacher survey indicated that teachers throughout the district place students in groups using various methods. When asked to identify which grouping method was most effective and used most often, some teachers noted that they group students heterogeneously and some teachers noted that they group students homogeneously. However, teachers indicated that grouping methods varied based on the learning objectives.

Summer Reading and Homework

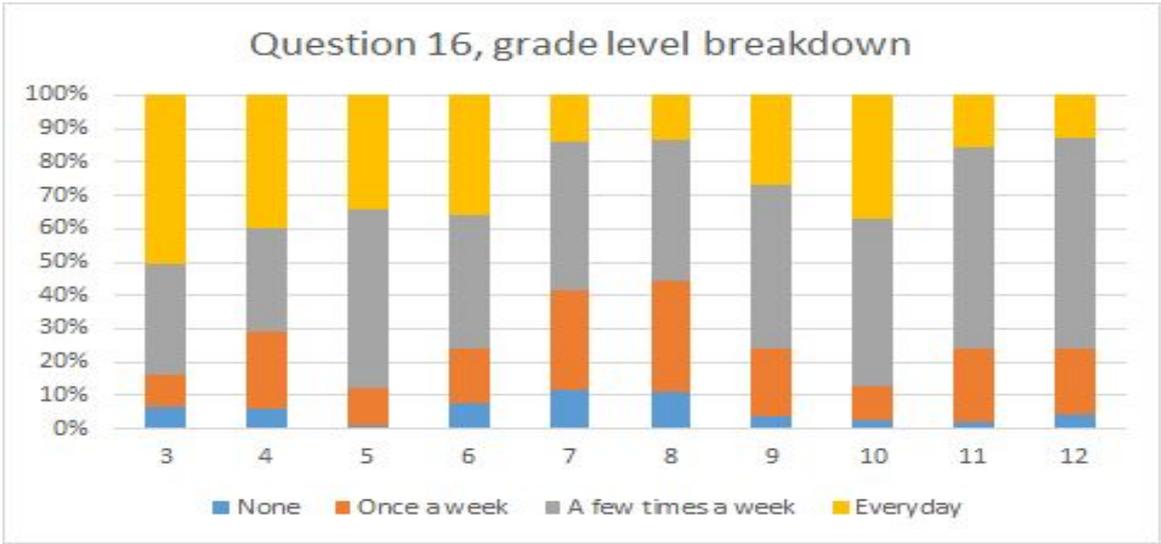
Consideration has been given in recent years as to whether there should be required summer reading across all grade levels. When surveyed on this topic, 61% of parents reported there should be assigned summer reading, while 32% felt there should not be assigned summer reading. 7% offered no opinion. When asked what the primary purpose of assigned summer reading should be approximately 50% of parents indicated reading for pleasure as their first choice. Reinforcement of skills was clearly ranked as second in importance. The fewest respondents felt summer reading should be used as a graded assignment.

Students and teachers were surveyed about homework in their ELA classroom. Most primary students reported daily ELA homework. As they moved into intermediate school, homework was assigned a few times a week. Most middle schoolers and high schoolers reported homework being assigned once to a few times a week. Teachers reported assigning slightly less homework than students reported, but it is important to note that students' perceptions of homework may or may not include the role of independent and/or assigned reading, as well as long term assignments of projects. 85% of third graders responded that they felt homework helped them understand ELA course content most of the time. This percentage decreased to 60% by grade 7, but then steadily trended upward to 75% by 12th grade.

Teacher Question 11: How many times per week do you typically assign homework to students in ELA?



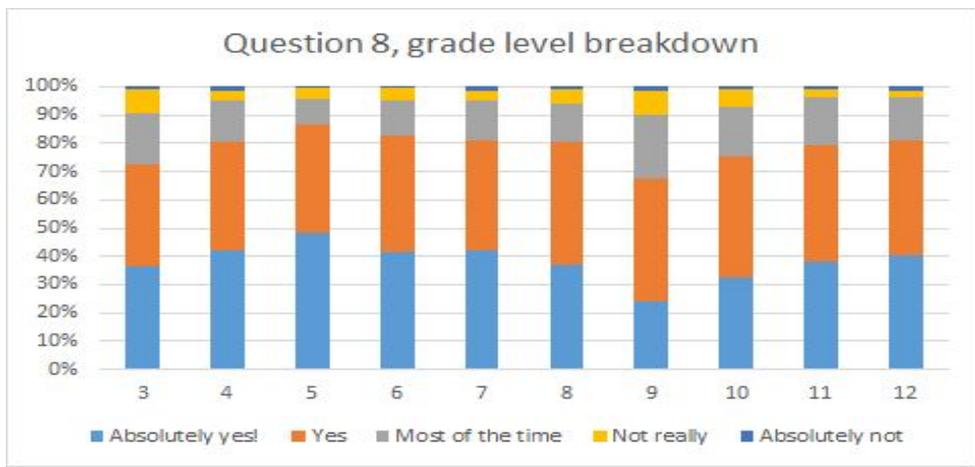
Student Question 16: In my ELA classes, I get this much homework



Additional Student Support in ELA

Students in our district were overwhelmingly positive about receiving appropriate support to be successful in their ELA classes. 40% of students grades three through twelve reported “absolutely yes” they felt appropriately supported, an additional 30-40% responded “yes,” and 15-20% said they felt supported “most of the time.” When asked about the specific types of support that were most helpful, the greatest number of students responded that teacher extra help was the most helpful type of support. This was followed by parental support at home and online resources, though online resources tended to be cited more at the intermediate level and beyond.

Student Question 8: I am receiving appropriate support to be successful in my ELA classes.



Parents were asked to consider support outside of their child’s scheduled ELA classroom time. This question was not quantified in terms of how helpful the support was or was not. Parents reported their own assistance with content and/or homework as the most frequent type of support. The child’s independent use of online resources occurred the second most frequent response, though there was no specification of the online resource(s) used. Parents reported extra help with the teacher occurring both before/after school and during school, and only several responses indicated the use of a tutor.

Appendix E
Possible ELA Program Recommendations Implementation Cycle

	Spring/Summer 2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
K	Curriculum Writing/Revisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics • Reading Workshop • Grammar • Handwriting 	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics Spring Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics • Grammar 	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop 	Implement New Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop:
		PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics (all year) • Grammar (spring) 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics (pull-out) • Grammar (MM & GL meetings) 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pilot) 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pull-out)
Grade 1	Curriculum Writing/Revisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics • Reading Workshop • Grammar • Handwriting 	Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics Spring Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics • Grammar 	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop 	Implement New Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop:
		PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics (all year) • Grammar (spring) 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics (pull-out) • Grammar (MM & GL meetings) 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pilot) 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pull-out)

	Spring/Summer 2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Grade 2	Curriculum Writing/ Revisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics • Reading Workshop • Grammar • Handwriting 	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cursive Handwriting • Grammar 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cursive Handwriting • Grammar 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop
		PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting (pull-out for pilot) • Grammar (pull-out for pilot) 	Spring Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics 	Spring Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop 	
Grade 3	Curriculum Writing/ Revisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop • Grammar • Handwriting 	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar 	
		PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pull-out for pilot) 	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pull-out) • Grammar (pull-out for pilot) 	
Grade 4	Curriculum Writing/Revisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop • Grammar 	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop * w/ Grades 5-7	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop 	Implement New Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar 	
		PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pull-out for pilot) * w/ Grades 5-7	Full Year Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar 	PD FOCUS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (pull-out) • Grammar (pull-out for pilot) 	

	Spring/Summer 2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Grades 5-8	<u>Curriculum Writing/ Revisions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-centered reading workshop model Grammar Writing Progressions Differentiated Word Study Program (G5) Vocabulary - core lists/roots & affixes (Gs 6-8) 	<u>Full Year Staggered Roll-out and Pilot:</u> Fall emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Workshop balanced with whole class novels Writing Progressions Spring emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar* Vocabulary/ Word Study *piloting grammar resources/TBD for grade 5 and 6-8	<u>Implement New Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Workshop balanced with whole class novels Writing Progressions Grammar 		
		<u>PD FOCUS: fall</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-centered workshop Using writing Progressions <u>PD FOCUS: spring</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar Vocabulary/ Word study 	<u>Continued PD:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-centered workshop Using common assessments Using writing progressions Grammar - meaning and function 	<u>Continued PD:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection on program Vertical articulation 	
Grades 9-12	<u>Curriculum Writing/ Revisions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Workshop Grammar Writing Progressions 	<u>Full Year Pilot:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Workshop (9-10) Writing Progressions & Rubrics New core novels 	<u>Implement New Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Workshop (9-10) Writing Progressions & Rubrics New core novels 	<u>Full Year Pilot:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Workshop (11-12) Writing Progressions & Rubrics Grammar 	<u>Implement New Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Workshop (11-12) Grammar Reading Workshop New core novels

		<p><u>PD FOCUS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (9-10) 	<p><u>PD FOCUS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (9-10) • Writing Progressions & Rubrics 	<p><u>PD FOCUS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop (11-12) • Writing Progressions & Rubrics • Grammar 	<p><u>PD FOCUS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar • Reading Workshop
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Appendix F

ELA Program Recommendations Cost Projections - charts by grade level bands

Estimated Cost Predictions

	K-4	5-8	9-12
Curriculum Writing/Revision	\$45,600	\$42,000	\$37,200
Professional Resources & Professional Development to Support Transition to New Curriculum	\$19,000	\$23,000	\$20,000
Instructional Resources (including implementation of new K-4 Phonics, Grammar & Reading Workshop programs)	\$540,000	\$221,000	\$172,000
Ongoing Professional Development for Teachers	Three Phases of Professional Development Over Three Years \$166,000 NOTE: If we were to adopt any of the Teachers College Reading & Writing Project Units of Study at the K-4 level, we would need to budget for additional external professional development in partnership with TC-Columbia University. This would likely be submitted as a separate special budget request.		

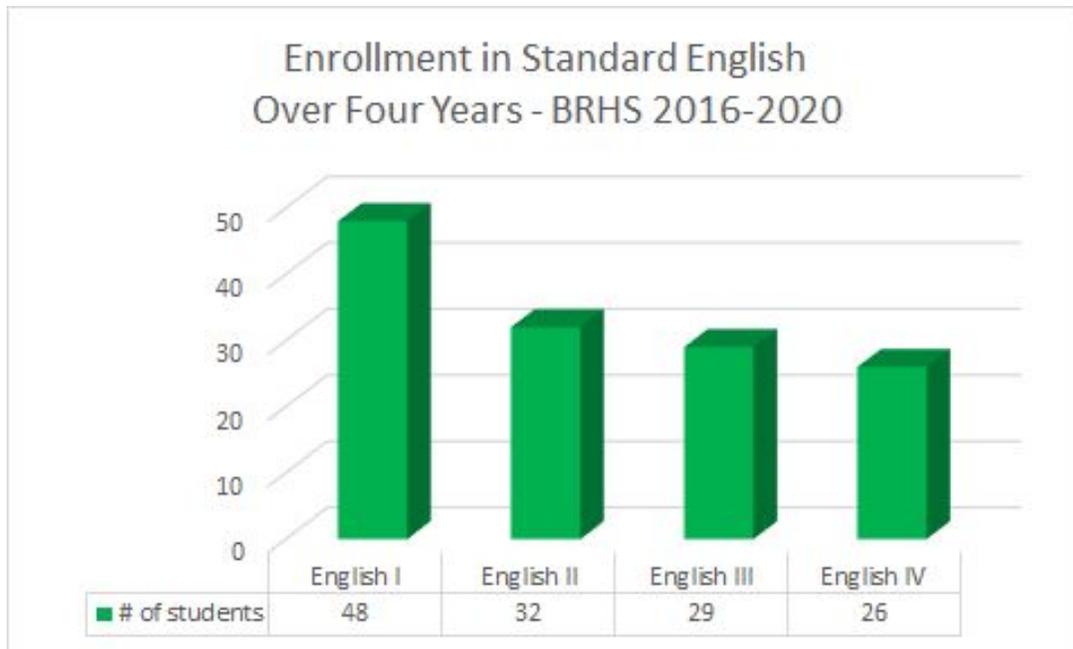
Appendix G

HIGH SCHOOLS WITH MULTIPLE ENGLISH CORE OFFERINGS

District	Course offerings		Grade level
Montgomery HS	ENG 11 102: Heroes and Villains and Monsters, OH MY! ENG 11 202: Is this Really Happening? ENG 11: Not All Those Who Wander Are Lost ENG 11: And Justice for All? ENG 12: From Beyond the Boundaries ENG 12: Happily Ever After? ENG 12: It's All Relative ENG 12: Watch Your Back!	Half year	11 12
Hunterdon Central Regional HS	Honors American Literature (5 credits) Honors Imaginative Process (5 credits) Critical Issues in Literature (5 credits) Contemporary Literature (2.5 credits) Media & Literature (2.5 credits) The Short Story (2.5 credits) Literature and Sports (2.5 credits) Sci-Fi & Fantasy Literature (2.5 credits)	Full year Half year	12
Hopewell Valley Central HS	Historical Perspectives in Literature Creative Writing Journalism Literature in Mixed Media 1 & 2 Shakespeare Survey of Poetry Twentieth Century Literature Global Public Service	Full year Half year	12 12 11,12 12 11,12 11,12 11,12 12
Columbia HS	American Literature, Creative Writing and the Study of Poetry, Contemporary Literature, Gender Identities across Literary Movements, Journalistic Writing and Analysis, Literature and Performance, Literature and Philosophy, Literature of Social Criticism, Literature of the African Diaspora, Research-Based Writing and Debate, Shakespearean Literature, Sports in Literature, World Literature	Full year	11,12

Appendix H

Enrollment in Standard English over four years



The practice of “tracking” contributes to the constraint of student growth and exacerbates the inequities in learning opportunities (Smith et. al., 2017).

If our students do not exit Standard English by the end of Grade 9, they will most likely remain in Standard English courses throughout high school.

Appendix I

Demographics in specific ELA programs

Grades K-8

	F	M	Hispanic	Asian	Black	Nat. Ame	Pacific Is.	White	Multi	F/R Lunch	IEP	504	ELL
AI	53%	47%	5%	79%	1%	0%	0%	11%	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%
E	54%	46%	5%	59%	1%	0%	1%	32%	2%	1%	4%	2%	0%
General	47%	53%	20%	26%	3%	0%	0%	46%	3%	11%	19%	2%	3%
Overall Population	48%	52%	18%	31%	3%	0%	0%	44%	3%	10%	17%	2%	3%

Noticings:

- 5% of students in AI & E are Hispanic (if all were equitable it should be 18%)
- 11% of students in AI are White (if all were equitable it should be 44%)
- 79% of students in AI & 59% of students in E are Asian (if all were equitable it should be 31%)

	F	M	Hispanic	Asian	Black	Nat. Ame	Pacific Is.	White	Multi	F/R Lunch	IEP	504	ELL	% of all students enrolled in level
AI	4%	4%	1%	10%	2%	4%	4%	1%	4%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%
E	9%	7%	2%	16%	2%	9%	11%	6%	4%	1%	2%	7%	0%	8%
General	86%	89%	97%	74%	96%	87%	85%	93%	91%	99%	97%	93%	100%	88%
Overall Population														

Noticings:

1% of Hispanic students are in the AI program

10% of Asian students are in the AI program

An Asian student is 10 times more likely to be in the AI program than a White or Hispanic student

Demographics in specified ELA programs

Grades 9-12

	F	M	X	Hispanic	Asian	Black	Nat. Ame	Pacific Is.	White	Multi	F/R Lunch	IEP	504	ELL
AP	60%	40%	0%	2%	73%	2%	1%	0%	22%	1%	3%	0%	3%	0%
Honors	60%	40%	0%	8%	58%	1%	0%	0%	32%	0%	2%	1%	3%	0%
Academic	48%	52%	0%	19%	19%	3%	0%	1%	56%	1%	8%	13%	5%	0%
Standard	35%	65%	0%	35%	2%	9%	0%	1%	50%	2%	30%	67%	7%	0%
ESL	39%	61%	0%	58%	25%	2%	0%	0%	11%	5%	38%	8%	0%	88%
Resource/Life Skills	22%	78%	0%	28%	10%	5%	0%	0%	56%	1%	21%	100%	1%	2%
Population Percent				18.5%	27.2%	3.0%	0.1%	0.6%	49.3%	1.3%				

Noticings:

73% of AP students are Asian; 58% of Honors students are Asian
 22% of AP students are White; 2% of AP students are Black & 2% are Hispanic
 35% of Standard students are Hispanic; 2% of Standard students are Asian

	F	M	X	Hispanic	Asian	Black	Nat. Ame	Pacific Is.	White	Multi	F/R Lunch	IEP	504	ELL	% of students enrolled in level
AP	8%	5%	0%	1%	18%	4%	33%	0%	3%	3%	2%	0%	5%	0%	7%
Honors	18%	11%	0%	6%	31%	4%	0%	6%	10%	5%	3%	1%	9%	0%	15%
Academic	67%	69%	100%	72%	47%	74%	67%	88%	78%	73%	63%	54%	80%	0%	68%
Standard	2%	4%	0%	6%	0%	8%	0%	6%	3%	5%	10%	12%	5%	0%	3%
ESL	2%	3%	0%	7%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	8%	10%	1%	0%	95%	2%
Resource/Life Skills	2%	8%	0%	8%	2%	10%	0%	0%	6%	5%	13%	33%	2%	5%	5%

Noticings:

1% of Hispanic students are enrolled in AP classes
 31% of Asian students are enrolled in Honors classes
 78% of White students are enrolled in Academic classes

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