

**Middle School English Literature  
Selection Advisory Committee:  
8th-Grade Reading Group**

**1/20/21**

# Welcome!

Thanks for being here.

And Happy New Year!



# Public Observers

- All our meetings are open to the public
- Observers may submit their questions, concerns, and observations in writing via the observer form
- Meeting notices, agendas, and notes are posted on the district webpage:  
<https://www.pausd.org/about-us/committees-task-forces/ms-literature-selection>

# Agenda

*A copy of the agenda was emailed to you & is in our shared folder.*

## **Goals:**

- ❑ Become (re-)acquainted with each other
- ❑ Review thinking behind, and process of, last 18 months
- ❑ Establish group norms and expectations
- ❑ Return to book lists and identify titles to read for Feb.
- ❑ Leave with clarity about “to do’s”

# Introductions

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# Introductions: New & Old Members

Please tell us your name,  
the school you are affiliated  
with, and your role/roles on  
this committee



# 8th-Grade Reading Group

<b>Fletcher</b>	<b>Greene</b>	<b>JLS</b>	<b>Other</b>
Deanna Jones	Jedd Bloom	Kim Lohse	Shaina Holdener - Gunn
Ander Lucia	Brooke Tassa	Kari Nygaard	Kathie Laurence - DO
Kristen Lee	Kelly Zalatimo	Jen Valero	Karen Logue - Facilitator
Olivia Souter		Iva Reid	

# **Big Picture Thinking to Date**

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# Committee's Charge

*A copy of the Charge Statement is in our shared folder.*

Committee process & Charge governed by AR 6161.1

## **Products:**

- A recommendation for two CDE-approved core literature texts at each grade level, 6, 7 and 8, and a recommendation for a menu of CDE-approved supplemental literature at each grade level, 6, 7 and 8, no later than Spring Semester 2021 to the Board of Education. The recommendation is to include a written rationale for the selection(s) in comparison to those not chosen on the finalist list.

# Guiding Questions

<b>CCSS and ELA/ELD Framework</b>	Which elements of the CA CCSS and the ELA/ELD Framework could be addressed through reading this text?
<b>Text Complexity</b>	Does this text present a grade-level appropriate challenge for students? Consider qualitative and quantitative measures of text complexity as well as reader and task considerations.
<b>Access and Support</b>	What tools are available to provide access and support to students reading this text on their own?
<b>Diversity</b>	Whose voices does the text include? Whose voices does it exclude or relegate to minor roles? Consider race, ethnicity, gender, class, age, ability, religion, place, immigration status, or LGBTQ+ identity.
<b>Genre, Culture, and Time Periods</b>	What genre(s), culture(s), and time period(s) is represented by this text? Does it tie into other content-area standards?
<b>Relevance and Engagement</b>	Is this text relevant to students' lives and will it engage students?

# The Guiding Questions Informed:

The Vetting Tool: <https://tinyurl.com/VettingTool>

The topics we have explored over the last 18 months:

- Common Core Shifts & Literary Nonfiction Exploration
- MS Student Survey Results & HS Student Panel
- Text Complexity
- “Curriculum as Window and Mirror,” Diversity in Children’s Books, & “The Danger of a Single Story”
- Awards Lists, TeachingBooks Gap Analysis, and more!

# Refresher: MS Student Survey

September 2019

1833 responses (6th,  
7th, and 8th graders)

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# Student Survey: Takeaways

- 51% “liked” or “loved” D’Aulaires’ *Greek Myths* and 65% “liked” or “loved” *The Outsiders*
- Students would like new books to include characters of different races & ethnicities, different social classes, and different ages
- Students would like more fantasy, realistic fiction, and graphic novels

# Student Survey: Takeaways

- Students would like autobiographies, biographies, and narrative nonfiction
- Students would like books connected to Art and Music; Design & Engineering; Technology; Sports and Wellness
- Access to paper books remains important.

# DIVERSITY IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2018

Percentage of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds based on the 2018 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison:  
[ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp](http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp)



Illustration by David Huyck, in consultation with Sarah Park Dahlen  
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The CCBC Inventory includes 3,134 books published in 2018. This graphic would not have been possible without the statistics compiled by the CCBC, and the review and feedback we received from Edith Campbell, Molly Beth Griffin, K. T. Horning, Debbie Reese, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, and Madeline Tyner. Many thanks.

# Questions/Thoughts?





# **Work/Process to Date**

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# Stage 1: September - December, 2019

## Current PAUSD

### Lit:

- PAUSD Core + Supplemental
  - Additional titles
  - Book Closet
- (208 titles)**



**6th: Revised  
PAUSD Lit List  
(61 titles)**

**7th: Revised  
PAUSD Lit List  
(34 titles)**

**8th: Revised  
PAUSD Lit List  
(45 titles)**

# Stage 2: January - April, 2020

**Young Adult Literature**

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Awards list  
list  
- r

Vetting Tool +

in  
Reading Groups

6th: Pool of Possible New Titles

7th: Pool of Possible New Titles

8th: Pool of Possible New Titles

**Interrupted - March, April, and May meetings cancelled**

# Stage 2: September - November, 2020



**6th: Pool of Possible New Titles (54+ titles)**

**7th: Pool of Possible New Titles (56+ titles)**

**8th: Pool of Possible New Titles (41+ titles)**

# Stage 3: November/December, 2020

**6th: Revised  
PAUSD Lit List  
(61 titles)**



**6th: Possible  
New Titles (54+)**



**6th: Updated List  
(Core Lit Short List  
& Supp'l Menu)**

**7th: Revised  
PAUSD Lit List  
(34 titles)**



**7th: Possible  
New Titles (56+)**



**7th: Updated List  
(Core Lit Short List  
& Supp'l Menu)**

**8th: Revised  
PAUSD Lit List  
(45 titles)**



**8th: Possible  
New Titles (41+)**



**8th: Updated List  
(Core Lit Short List  
& Supp'l Menu)**

## Stage 3: December 2020

**6th: Core Lit  
Short List**

**7th: Core Lit  
Short List**

**8th: Core Lit  
Short List**

Committee considered  
vertical articulation of  
core lit titles and  
decided on  
advisability of pilots

# Decision Time:

## 6th Grade

Keep D'Aulaires' *Greek Myths*

**Pilot** *Hero Next Door* as likely 2nd core lit text

## 7th Grade

Decided on *Flying Lessons*

Either *Outsiders* or *Booked*. Asking 7th-grade teachers to read & **vote**.

## 8th Grade

Keep *Twelve Angry Men*

Reached an impasse

# Any Questions Thus Far?





# **Establish Group Norms & Expectations**

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# What Was the Impasse?

12/8: 8th-grade group decides unanimously to pilot *Hate U Give*

12/16: 8th-grade group revisits decision. Many committee members strongly support book. Some teachers express reservations. Majority votes to move forward with pilot.

1/6: Pilot survey sent out to all 8th-grade teachers. No teachers elect to pilot this semester.



# This Doesn't Feel Good to Anyone!

Committee:

Frustrated! Hurt! Angry!

Committee Members expressed “Why have a Literature Committee if its decisions are not going to be listened to?”

Teachers:

Frustrated! Hurt! Angry!

Teachers expressed that their input had not been collected.

# Compromise

- *The Hate U Give* remains on the Core Lit “Short List”
- The 8<sup>th</sup>-grade reading group continues to meet, read, and vet new titles in order to identify additional book(s) for Core Lit “Short List” as well as additional books for the Supplemental Menu
- Pilots of 8th-grade finalist titles happen in early fall of next year

# Clarification: What Exactly is a “Pilot”?

From AR 6161.1:

1C. Field testing of instructional materials may be done when it is necessary in order to make a final determination of the potential of the materials in meeting specific instructional needs. In general, a field test activity should be conducted only after the use of other selection criteria and processes have failed to result in a clear adoption recommendation.

1. Whenever possible more than one program should be field tested at one time;
2. The field testing activity should be distributed among schools, grade levels, students, and teachers who are representative of the district in terms of experience, ethnicity, etc. (...)

# Student Perspective



Please listen and  
reflect.

# Coming Back Together: Norms & Expectations

## NORMS

- Transparency: Speak publicly
- Have courage to speak your truth (even if your voice shakes)
- Assume positive intent (demands trust - need to rebuild)
- Keep student experience front and center.
- Examine what we say, so it doesn't lead to bias.

## WORK EXPECTATIONS:

- Work towards a solution.
- Before end of the meeting, clarity about tasks/to do's.
- Take ideas back to sites and gather reactions from sites to bring back (clarity and time)
- Majority rules.
- Quality literature and rich social experience (disrupt the canon)

## Previous Norms: Are there any we want to keep?

1. Begin and end on time.
2. Listen actively & participate thoughtfully.
3. Assume positive intent. All of us have the students at the center of our work.
4. Seek to understand & disagree respectfully.
5. Avoid distractions.
6. Come prepared.



# **Re-Examine Book Lists & Identify New Titles**

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# Online Resources

Find and open the Resource Repository:

- ➤ Shared folder “MS English Literature Advisory Committee 2019-21”
  - ➤ Subfolder “Resources”
- Link also in Chat

# Back to Book Lists (Finish by 5:45)

1. Orientation to excerpted 8th-grade book list: Librarian
2. Divide into self-selected **threesomes**:
  - a. **Room #1**: Publishers Weekly, ALA Youth Media Awards, Best Fiction for Young Adults
  - b. **Room #2**: California Young Reader, Coretta Scott King Awards, Great Graphic Novels
  - c. **Room #3**: Printz Award, National Book Award, Newbery Medal, Schneider Family
  - d. **Room #4**: Stonewall Awards, YALSA Award for Nonfiction, YALSA's Teens' Top Ten
3. Do the following:
  - a. Acquaint yourselves with your book lists.
  - b. Pick which titles your threesome will read and vet before our next meeting (Feb. 10)
  - c. Record your decisions in the 8th Grade: Core & Supplemental Lists graphic organizer
4. Debrief with whole group

## Debrief:

Which books are your threesome reading for Feb. 10?

Why?



## If Time: Tidy up the Supplemental Menu

- Some supplemental titles have not been vetted: *The 57 Bus*, *The Port Chicago 50*
- What about last 5 titles? Move to the Supplemental Menu?  
*Teacher*, *They Called Us Enemy*, *The Thief*, *Wolf Hollow*, *I Wish you All The Best*
- SLJ ratings of books on supplemental menu
- Consider categorization and organization of supplemental menu

## To Do's

For Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021, 4:00–6:00, please:

- Read and vet the books you selected
- Talk to your department and/or course-alike team about the books you are reading. Solicit their thoughts and tell them yours.
- Be ready to discuss your reading with the rest of the 8th-grade group.

**Thank you!**

