

ECSD Learning Resource Adoption Recommendations

Spring, 2014 – English/Language Arts

In accordance with the Georgia Department of Education's prescribed cycle for adoption of Learning Resources, representative groups of teachers from all schools and grade levels convened to consider system needs for K-12 ELA learning resources. Elementary Assistant Curriculum Coordinator Melodie Fulcher and Secondary Curriculum Coordinator Judith Shuman facilitated the process.

Teachers were asked to consider student performance and achievement data, current resource inventories, recent curriculum changes, anticipated assessment changes, and the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards for ELA prior to beginning examination of proposed resources. Teachers were also provided with a common protocol to use in guiding their selections.

Grades 9 -12

The high school teachers have selected a Pearson Literature product line as their primary resource for the regular ELA classes. The series provides the students and teachers with access to the canon of literature typically associated with high school ELA such as American, British and World Literature classics; however, unlike previous resources, these also contain a wider selection of informational texts. Both teachers and students will have access to the digital versions of the resources as well. As a gratis inclusion, the schools will also receive two novels for each text purchased. The digital Teacher Tools resource allows teachers to digitally rearrange content, thereby optimizing resource alignment to the local curriculum sequencing.

The Advanced Placement (AP) instructors also choose Pearson products for their primary resource. For AP Language and Literature (11th grade) the recommended resource is *Writing America*. For AP Literature (12th grade) the recommendation is *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*.

The teachers also recommend the adoption of resource sets of the following: Prestwick House's *Vocabulary from Latin/Greek Roots* (9-12); Prestwick House's *Grammar for Writing* (9th); Bedford/St. Martin's *A Writer's Reference* (10th); *MLA Handbook* (10th).

Total estimated cost of grades 9-12 adoption - \$185,000.00

Grades 6-8

The middle school teachers have selected the Scholastic product, *Code X* for their primary ELA resource. The construction of the resource mirrors the construction of our own locally developed units; however, the advantage of this resource is that the text selections are gathered into a single book, providing greater accessibility and convenience for both students and teachers. As one teacher stated, "*Code X* does what we are trying to get our units to do: support classroom instruction by offering a comprehensive list of options and tools for the classroom teacher to use to address our standards." One of the primary advantages of this product was what one teacher referred to as "ready resources" – academic vocabulary, daily writing, cold read assessments. Teachers also cited strengths

such as variety and quality of text selections, differentiation opportunities, scaffolded teacher guidance, thematic units, progressive Lexile levels, and grammar taught in context.

The teachers recommend purchase of additional copies of novel titles reflected in their current units to use for classroom novel studies. Finally, the group also recommends the *Scope* language arts magazine. This resource provides teacher and student access to text from which students can build and reinforce reading, writing, and critical-thinking skills through content such as an exciting narrative nonfiction, read-aloud plays, grammar activities, guided writing prompts, and vocabulary.

Total estimated cost of grades 6-8 adoption - \$ 80,000.00

Grades K – 5

An outcome of the elementary ELA resource adoption process was the consensus that an instructional resource to support foundational reading skills was the largest gap that needed to be filled in elementary ELA classrooms. Identifying a resource for foundational skills (phonics and phonemic awareness) became the priority.

The recommendation to support instruction in foundational skills (phonemic awareness and phonics) for grades K-2 is *iRead*. *iRead* is a digital foundational reading program that provides targeted instruction, embedded assessment, and ongoing practice in foundational skills for K-2 students (phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonics, decoding, word recognition, fluency, and morphological awareness). *iRead* is appropriate for K-2 classrooms and can be used during independent learning centers, small-group differentiated instruction, and whole group instruction directed by the teacher. It is a web-based program that allows students 24/7 access. The program includes teacher materials to support implementation of the software and provides teacher directed instruction on foundational skills. As with all programs from Scholastic, *iRead* will include initial training for teachers as well as in-classroom support and coaching for teachers during the first year of implementation.

For core ELA programs for grades K-5, two resources were cited on the committee recommendations - Houghton Mifflin's *Journeys* and Benchmark Education's *Benchmark Literacy*. These core programs included phonics instruction but did not provide adequate focused and targeted instruction in foundational skills, which is the reason *iRead* became the resource selected to fill that instructional resource gap.

At this juncture, the recommendation is to implement a three-phase adoption for the core ELA program for grades K-5.

Phase one will begin in the fall of 2014 with the purchase of *iRead* and the computers (Chromebooks) needed to implement *iRead* for the K-2 classrooms. The *iRead* program in K-2 will be an integral part of the district's balanced literacy framework for next year. K-2 teachers will begin professional development during the fall of 2014 to support implementation of *iRead* in their classrooms. Additionally, the *iRead* program will be a site license so that any teacher who has a student needing additional differentiation in foundational skills may utilize the software, including special education staff.

Phase two will be a deeper review of the *Journeys* and *Benchmark Literacy* programs during the fall of 2014 with a final decision completed by the end of the first semester. Teachers will have the opportunity to take sample materials back to their classrooms to sample some of the lessons. A drawback in this year's examination of resources was the late timing of the receipt of *Benchmark Literacy* samples, which did not allow for as full a review as needed for program comparisons. Giving teachers the additional examination time during the fall of 2014 will ensure confidence in the final decision between the two programs.

Phase three begins following the adoption/purchase of the K-5 program and will provide professional development for K-5 teachers on the new product (*Journeys* or *Benchmark Literacy*) during the spring of 2015, which would allow teachers ample time to plan for implementation in the fall of 2015. This implementation plan will allow teachers to be fully prepared to begin school with the understanding and technical skills needed for a smooth implementation of the new resource in the fall of 2016.

This staged approach to the adoption process will allow K-2 teachers to implement one resource at a time, K-5 teachers further examination time for choosing the core resource for the next seven-plus years, and a graduated purchase plan that spreads the impact of this large acquisition over two years. Until the decisions for all resources are finalized and resources purchased (end of phase three), teachers will continue to follow the current curriculum maps and ELA units.

Total estimated cost of iRead K-2 adoption - \$527,000.00 (\$164,375.78 deferred until FY16.)

- Teacher materials, initial training for teachers, in-classroom coaching visits, primary site license, installation software: \$328,751.56. This price is deferred for two years so that the cost per year is reduced to \$164,375.78.
- Hardware to support implementation in all K-2 classrooms (6 Chromebooks per ELA K-2 classroom): \$197,532.00.

High School	\$185,000.00
Middle School	\$ 80,000.00
K-2 iRead (FY15)	\$ 362,000.00
K-2 iRead (FY16 – deferred billing)	\$ 198,000.00

Total anticipated cost of FY15 ELA resource adoption plan - \$ 825,000.00