SUMNER SCHOOL DISTRICT
A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN.

DATE: **January 10, 2018**
TO: **Sumner School District Board of Directors**
FROM: **LeeAnn Alfano - Director of Secondary Curriculum**
Laurie Sjolund - Elementary Program Administrator
RE: **English/Language Arts Board Report**

Purpose and How does this relate to board policy? : The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of Directors regarding English/Language Arts in the Sumner School District. The process for selection and adoption of core curricular materials is specifically addressed in Board Policy 2020 and 2020P.

Vision 2020: English/Language Arts falls under Goal 1: Academics in Vision 2020 to provide equitable access to a rigorous, standards-based education. Success is measured by the Smarter Balanced Assessment in ELA for Grades 3-12.

Background and Current Reality:
Elementary: In 2016-17 we implemented Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) in K-5 classrooms. CKLA is a comprehensive literacy program for teaching skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, while also building students' knowledge and vocabulary in literature, history, geography, and science. CKLA offers two distinct strands for Grades K-3 and integrates them into one for Grades 4-5. Through a robust design, CKLA develops foundational skills and oral comprehension. Teachers are provided print and digital materials to complement instruction in the classroom. Although CKLA is a complex and challenging program to implement, teachers have embraced this program. Teachers welcome the increased rigor and students and families are fascinated and engaged with the thought-provoking content.

Secondary: In 2016-17 we implemented Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Collections in all of our 6-12 ELA classrooms (with the exception of AP and IB). Collections is a literacy based program for teaching reading, writing, speaking and critical thinking standards. Alongside the materials teachers developed comprehensive frameworks to guide instruction. The implementation of a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all ELA students grade 6-12 has been both challenging and rewarding. Teachers have reported a new level of excitement about the materials and the increased opportunity to collaborate from classroom to classroom and between school buildings.

Budget: The budget for continued support of ELA implementation K-12 is $260,000. Elementary expenses include $195,000 for student consumables, $9,000 for new (additional) classroom materials (due to growth), and $12,000 for professional development and framework writing. Secondary expenses include $13,000 for professional development and demonstration lessons, $15,000 for framework development and $18,00 for new (additional) classroom materials.

Student Performance:
Elementary: Although we are still in the early phases of implementation, we are seeing positive student performance outcomes. The 2024 graduating class cohort increased their Smarter Balanced Assessment ELA scores from 70.0 percent in 2015 to 72.4 percent in 2017. We also saw an increase in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade MAP Scores from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016.

Secondary: The 2016-17 school year was the first year of Collections usage. Despite the learning curve that accompanies the implementation of a new curricular resource, our secondary students are scoring above the state average in all measured areas of the ELA SBA. This includes: special education, low income, and students of varying race and ethnicity. We expect to see significant growth in year two as secondary teams align assessments and progress monitor student learning.

Relationship to Equity:
When students experience an intentional and aligned English Language Arts curriculum, each should have equitable preparation to access advanced courses. CKLA and Collections materials focus on increasing background knowledge, comprehension, and mastery of skills through sequenced and coherent instruction which evens the playing field for all students, regardless of prior experiences. It builds a broad foundation of knowledge and systematically increases skills so that students can be successful readers, writers and thinkers.

Benefiting parties:
Students are benefiting from having a guaranteed and viable curriculum in each classroom. The coherent design and common instructional routines allow students to seamlessly transition year to year. Teachers are benefiting from professional development and collaboration opportunities across the district to share strategies. Schools are benefiting from having students learn about engaging topics across the grades. Parents and families are benefitting from having students come home excited and engaged with the compelling content.

What is working well?
Elementary**:** To ensure successful implementation, we created a robust and responsive professional learning plan. Highlights of this plan included a customized support day for each elementary school. A consultant from Amplify (the publisher), along with Elementary Instructional Services administrators, the building principal, and the Literacy Support Leader designed a professional learning day based on the needs of the staff at that school. Buildings choose from a menu of options that included peer observations, guided team planning, and demonstration lessons. These days were highly valuable to be able to differentiate our support and provide common messaging to all buildings. Instructional Services is continuing this work through our Literacy Leaders team, Cross-District Late Starts and customized support to individual buildings.

Secondary: To assist in the integrity of implementation, Instructional Services developed a comprehensive and differentiated professional learning plan designed to support all ELA teachers 6-12. That plan includes: time to reflect, monitor and adjust frameworks, customized model lesson experiences housed in each building in the district, framework writing days for those teams who need additional time and support, and a cross-district focus on the development and monitoring of common formative and summative assessments. Instructional Team Leaders and Literacy Support Leaders play an instrumental role in communicating building needs to Instructional services.

Where are opportunities for improvement?
Instructional Services will continue to support the creation and refinement of CKLA and Collections Curriculum Frameworks to provide teachers guidance on the critical aspects of the curriculum. This will help us “cut the fluff” and focus on what will make the most difference for students. We will also continue our work to support differentiation within the program to meet the needs of each student. In addition, we are working on enhancing the core skills program through a responsive intervention system.