



# Wyoming Primary Schools

Elm • Hilltop • Vermont

October 18, 2024

Dear WPS Families,

With our standards-based report cards coming home in next week's Thursday Folder, I wanted to share a bit of background on our work with Ohio's Learning Standards (OLS). As a public school district in Ohio, OLS drives what we teach and what we hold ourselves and our students accountable for knowing and being able to do in each grade level and subject area. Best practices in grade-level standards instruction involve strategies and approaches that effectively help students meet or exceed the learning expectations set by Ohio's Learning Standards. These practices ensure that all students have access to high-quality, equitable instruction that supports their academic growth.

Here's what best practices in grade-level standards instruction entail:

## 1. Clear Learning Objectives

- **Standards-Based Planning:** Teachers begin by unpacking the grade-level standards to understand the specific skills and knowledge students need to acquire. Learning objectives are then clearly defined and communicated to students, so they know what they are expected to learn and why it's important.
- **Learning Targets:** Daily lessons include specific, measurable learning targets aligned with the standards, helping students focus on the key concepts and skills they need to master.

## 2. Differentiated Instruction

- **Meeting Diverse Needs:** Recognizing that students come with varying levels of prior knowledge and learning styles, teachers differentiate instruction by providing multiple pathways to understanding. This could include varied instructional methods, tailored activities, and flexible grouping.
- **Scaffolding:** Teachers provide appropriate scaffolds, such as guided practice, visual aids, or strategic questioning, to help all students access the grade-level content.

## 3. Engaging and Relevant Instruction

- **Active Learning:** Instruction is designed to be interactive and engaging, involving students in hands-on activities, discussions, and collaborative work. This keeps students motivated and allows them to explore concepts more deeply.
- **Real-World Connections:** Teachers connect the content to real-world scenarios, making the learning relevant and meaningful to students. This can include problem-based learning, projects, and cross-curricular connections.

#### 4. Formative Assessment and Feedback

- **Ongoing Assessment:** Teachers use formative assessments regularly to gauge student understanding and adjust instruction as needed. This can include quizzes (“Quick Checks”), exit tickets, observations, or student reflections.
- **Timely Feedback:** Providing students with timely and constructive feedback helps them understand their progress toward the standards and what they need to improve. Feedback should be specific and linked directly to the learning targets.

#### 5. Data-Driven Instruction

- **Using Data to Inform Teaching:** Teachers use assessment data to identify trends in student learning, inform instructional decisions, and differentiate support. This data helps in grouping students, choosing appropriate interventions, and ensuring that instruction is aligned with students’ needs.
- **Targeted Interventions:** Based on data, teachers provide targeted interventions for students who are struggling with specific standards, as well as enrichment opportunities for those who have already mastered the content.

#### 6. Student-Centered Learning

- **Personalized Learning:** Instruction is designed to be student-centered, allowing for student choice and voice in the learning process. This might include offering different ways for students to demonstrate their understanding or letting them choose topics for deeper exploration.
- **Inquiry-Based Learning:** Encouraging students to ask questions, explore, and investigate helps them take ownership of their learning and develop critical thinking skills.

#### 7. Collaboration and Communication

- **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):** Teachers collaborate with colleagues to plan, assess, and reflect on instruction, ensuring consistency and sharing best

practices across grade levels. PLCs provide a platform for discussing strategies that work and addressing challenges in meeting standards.

- **Parent and Family Engagement:** Keeping parents informed about grade-level standards and involving them in the learning process helps reinforce what students are learning at school.

## 8. High Expectations for All Students

- **Growth Mindset:** Teachers maintain high expectations for all students, believing in their ability to meet or exceed grade-level standards. They foster a growth mindset by encouraging persistence, resilience, and the belief that effort leads to improvement.
- **Equity in Access:** A key component of best practices is ensuring that all students, regardless of background or ability, have access to high-quality instruction and the resources they need to succeed.

## 9. Integration of Technology - Zearn and Lexia

- **Tech-Enhanced Learning:** Technology is used to enhance instruction, provide access to digital resources, and personalize learning. Tools such as educational apps, online platforms, and interactive boards can support students in achieving the standards.
- **Blended Learning:** Incorporating a blend of in-person and online learning opportunities allows students to engage with the content in multiple ways, supporting different learning styles and needs.

## 10. Reflective Teaching and Continuous Improvement

- **Ongoing Professional Development:** Teachers continuously seek out professional development opportunities to stay current with best practices, deepen their understanding of the standards, and refine their instructional strategies.
- **Reflective Practice:** Teachers regularly reflect on their own practice, considering what worked well, what didn't, and how they can improve their instruction to better meet the needs of their students.

Best practices in grade-level standards instruction ensure that all students are provided with the opportunities and support they need to meet or exceed academic expectations. By combining clear objectives, differentiated instruction, engaging lessons, formative assessment, and a focus on student-centered learning, teachers can create an effective and equitable learning environment that fosters student success.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in your child's learning,

Dr. Gina Kirchner

Principal, Wyoming Primary Schools

## Counselor Corner

During the past week the Cowboy TV lessons focused on the book that was read to all the Primary students titled *The Coffee Bean for Kids*. In this book, the main character Gavin's teacher tells him that life is often like a pot of hot water because there can be harsh, stressful and difficult situations. Gavin's teacher says he can choose to be like a carrot that softens in boiling water, an egg that hardens, or a coffee bean that changes the water. Gavin's teacher further explains that people who act like carrots are weakened and softened by their surroundings; those like eggs are hardened when difficult things happen; and individuals who are like coffee beans overcome challenges and positively transform their environment. As parents, you can encourage your children to be like "coffee beans" by teaching them how they can impact the world around them; improve their own outlook; become a leader who creates positive change; make new friends; and become a positive influence by sharing smiles, kindness, and positive energy.

## Pupil Services News & Updates

As demonstrated in our core values and strategic plan, Wyoming is committed to educating the "whole child", that is, to teach academic and life skills that prepare students for college, career, and beyond. These life skills include *working through adversity, being a critical thinker, accepting responsibility for one's own actions, and getting along with others*.

New this year, Wyoming City Schools is administering to students in kindergarten through grade 12 a developmentally-appropriate resiliency screener, called Terrace Metrics. Resiliency means that an individual has personal strengths that allow them to overcome or work through adversity. Resiliency is a key factor in positive school and learning experiences. Therefore, high resiliency contributes to better academic performance.

### What Should I Know as a Parent/Guardian about the Terrace Metrics Screener?

- Only students who have parent permission will participate. If you do not wish to have your student participate in the Terrace Metrics Screener, please complete this [form](#). The form must be completed by October 29th.
- Only designated members of our school team (e.g., counselors, administrators) will have access to your child's individual report.
- The assessment is not a diagnostic tool, and no information will be placed into your child's education file. The purpose of this system is to inform us of how each student is functioning within specific resilience indicators.
- This screener is administered electronically to students and takes an average of 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

- You can view the screener items by contacting the director of pupil services, Dr. Tracy Wurtzler at [wurtzler@wyomingcityschools.org](mailto:wurtzler@wyomingcityschools.org) or 513.207.7022 by October 24, 2024.

Between November 4th and December 4th, your child will have the opportunity to participate in the fall administration of the Terrace Metrics screener. The following indicators will be assessed at the primary level (for grades K-3, an animated video will read the items to the student, and students will respond by selecting the appropriate emoji):

- Global Life Satisfaction: Overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular point in time, ranging from negative to positive.
- Positive School Experiences: Assessment of a student's experiences with their learning, as well as their overall interactions with school personnel.
- Grit: Assesses the level of commitment (and tenacity) to achieve a long-term goal.
- Hope (only grades 3 and 4): Assesses goal-directed thinking in which the student has the perceived capacity to find routes to goals (pathways thinking), and the motivation to use those routes (agency thinking).
- Social Ostracism: Items reflect being ignored by others.
- Generalized Anxiety: 7 item, self-reported questionnaire for screening and severity of general forms anxiety (not tied to any one source).

School counselors and administrators will analyze the results very carefully and will provide school-based interventions for students, as necessary. You may be contacted by the school's counselor or administrator if your child's overall scores are significantly below expected measures as compared to peers nationally.

Wyoming, in partnership with Terrace Metrics, is offering an optional parent presentation to learn more about the Terrace Metrics screener on October 23th from 6-7 pm via zoom. To access this live presentation, please use this [link](#) on the 23rd. There is no need to RSVP.

## Family Math Night

We are excited to invite Wyoming Primary School families and students to our fourth annual Family Math Night on Thursday, October 24th, at 6:30 PM at Wyoming Middle School! Parents are encouraged to attend with their child for a fun-filled hour of engaging math games, designed specifically for each grade level. It's a great opportunity to support your child's learning while enjoying hands-on activities together. We look forward to seeing you there!

## PSA Art Fundraiser

PSA is excited to share that we have a new vendor, Original Works (OW), for our primary fall art fundraiser. In addition to new products, our PSA will receive 30% of proceeds. Individual brochures, showcasing your students' artwork, will be sent home in Thursday folders on October 24.

## Upcoming Dates

- **Third Grade Ohio State Test in Reading** - Tuesday, October 22nd, and Wednesday, October 23rd
- **Family Math Night** - Thursday, October 24th - 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Wyoming Middle School
- **Halloween Parades & Parties** - Thursday, October 31st - (view and print [letter and permission slip](#))
- **Conference Day** - Friday, November 1 - No School for Students

[View the full online WCS calendar here.](#)

## News from Around Wyoming

[Click here for more Events and Information from around WCS & the community](#), including:

- FAQ: State Funding & the WPS Facilities Project
- Wyoming City Schools 2024 Quality Profile
- JWC Light Up kits discounted until Oct. 20

## Photos from the Week

Click [HERE](#) to view photos from the week at WPS!