DOVER-SHERBORN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Dover & Sherborn School Committees Meeting

June 3, 2025



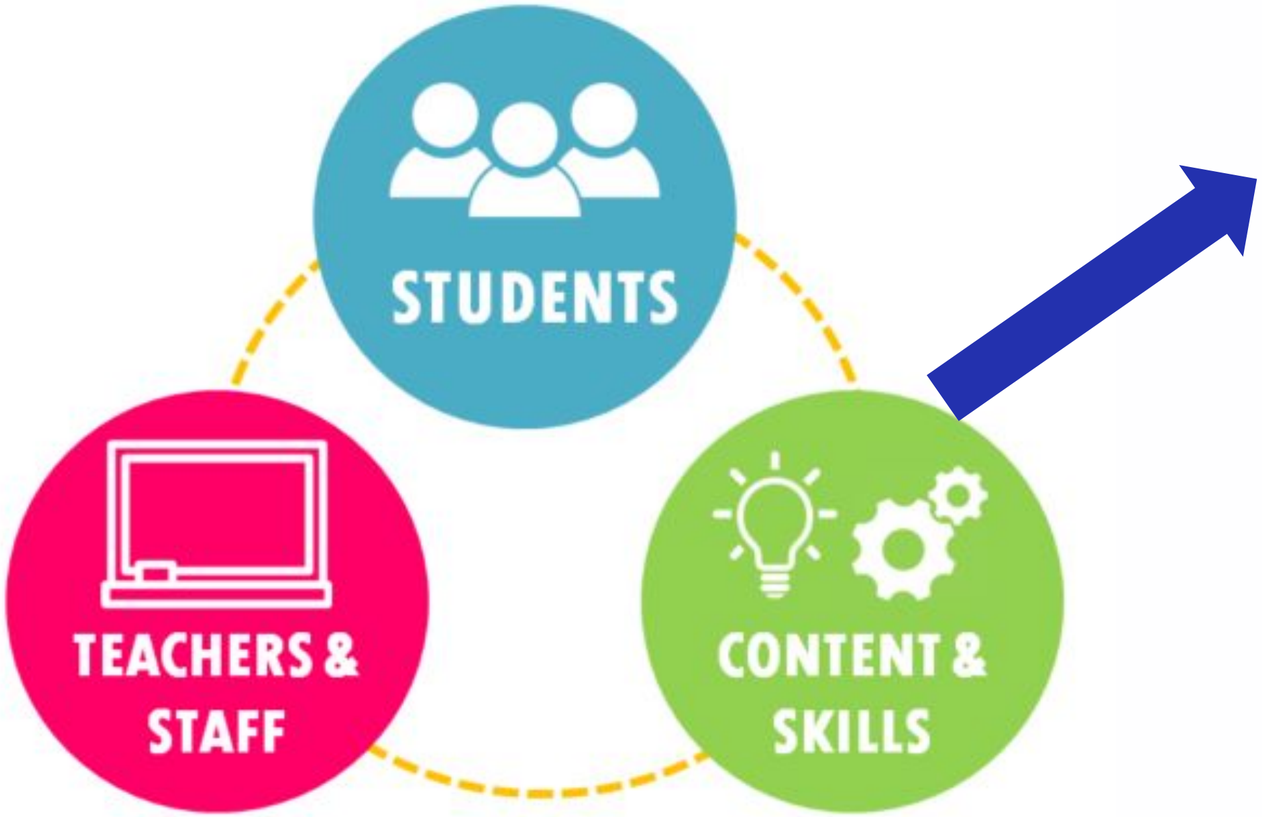
A Reminder About Curriculum Programs:

There is no such thing

as a perfect

curriculum program

The Instructional Core (Elmore 2008)



The ELA programs that we choose are only one part of the Instructional Core. We rely on our **teachers** who make decisions on what to do with the curriculum and support them with PD time and coaching.

Teachers build relationships with **students** to give them what they need (MTSS) and we prioritize a curriculum/instruction that gives students voice and choice.

Timeline

Fall 2024 & Winter 2025

Review of research and current landscape

February 2025

Parent/Caregiver and Educator Surveys; ELA Q&A document shared

March-May 2025

Convening of ELA Program Review Committee (4 meetings)

June 2025

Elementary ELA Vision Statement and Criteria

Summer 2025

Evaluation of Units of Study, Fundations, Empowering Writers

Fall 2025

Decision on whether to keep current programs or pilot new ones

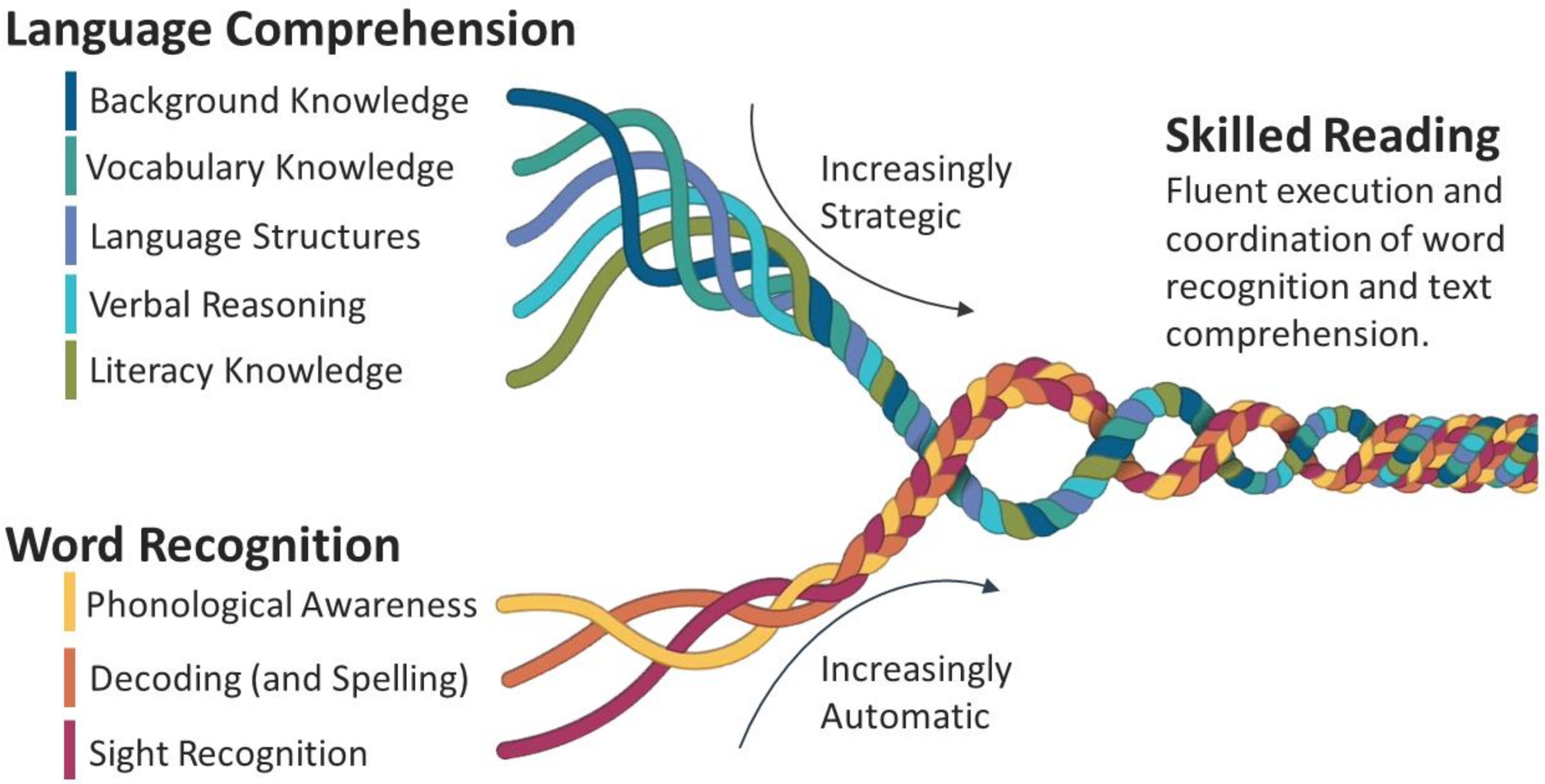
ELA Program Review Committee

- Jenee Aguilar, Pine Hill Educator
- Jim Carnes, Chickering Assistant Principal
- Denny Conklin, Assistant Superintendent
- Meredith Connery, Pine Hill Librarian
- Corinne Cummings, Chickering Educator
- Emily Daly, DSMS ELA Specialist
- Allison Gullingsrud, Pine Hill Principal
- Jim Keohane, Chickering Educator
- Lee Jeffries, Pine Hill Educator
- Chris Luczkow, EL Coordinator
- Sam Marsallo, Pine Hill Educator
- Kate Nave, Chickering Special Educator
- Ashley Oleyer, Chickering Educator
- Deb Reinemann, Chickering Principal
- Jen Ryan, Pine Hill Assistant Principal
- Phil Rodino, Pine Hill Special Educator
- Rachel Santiano, Pine Hill Literacy Coach
- Priscilla Stephan, Chickering Literacy Coach

Committee Work

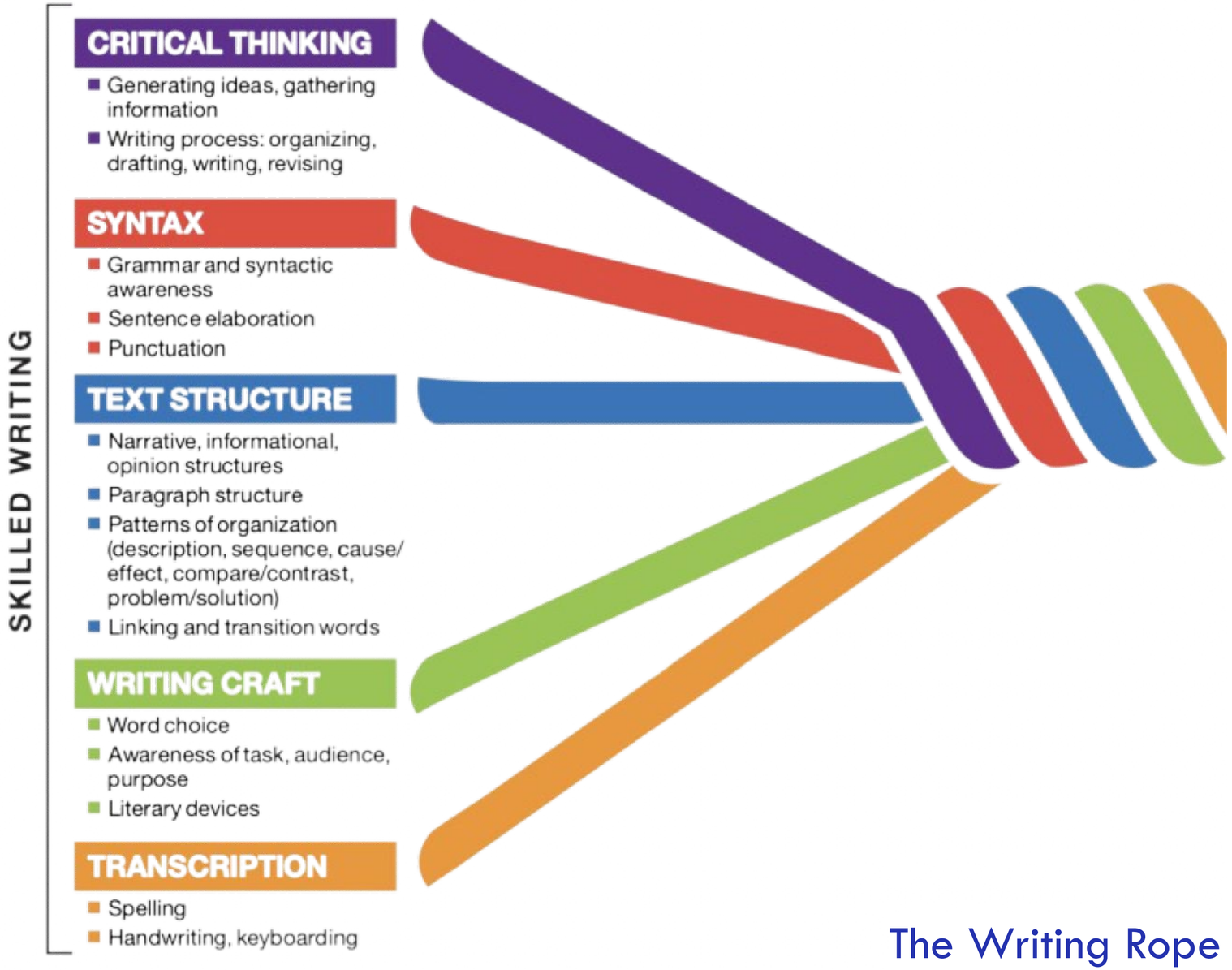
1) Reviewed and synthesized parent/caregiver and educator survey results
2) Consulted DESE Curate Rubric and Reading League Rubric
3) Exploration of current research related to elementary literacy
4) Drafting vision statement and program criteria
5) Additional feedback from educators
6) Final vision statement and criteria

Essential Components of Instruction:
What knowledge + skills do students need?



Scarborough, H. 2001. Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. Pp. 97-110 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) *Handbook of Early Literacy.* NY: Guilford Press.

Writing Instruction



The Writing Rope (Sedita, 2019)

What is evidence-based literacy instruction?

Foundational Skills for Understanding Texts, K-3

1. Teach students **academic language skills**, including the use of inferential and narrative language, and vocabulary knowledge. (Minimal Evidence)
2. Develop awareness of the **segments of sound in speech and how they link to letters**. (Strong Evidence)
3. Teach students to **decode words, analyze word parts, and write and recognize words**. (Strong Evidence)
4. Ensure that each student reads **connected text every day** to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. (Moderate Evidence)

Upper Elementary Literacy, 3-5

1. Build students' decoding skills so they can read **complex multisyllabic words**. (Strong Evidence)
2. Provide purposeful **fluency-building activities** to help students read effortlessly. (Strong Evidence)
3. Routinely use a set of **comprehension-building practices** to help students make sense of the text. (Strong Evidence)
4. Provide students with opportunities to practice making sense of stretch text (i.e., challenging text) that will expose them to **complex ideas and information**. (Moderate Evidence)

Sources: Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade (Institute for Education Sciences, 2019), Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4–9 (Institute for Education Sciences, 2022), Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices (Institute for Education Sciences, 2008)

Elementary ELA Vision Statement

The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn's vision for elementary literacy is to deliver comprehensive, rigorous, equitable, and research-based instruction that is inclusive and responsive to every learner's needs.

Aligned with state standards, we are committed to building strong reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills that empower students to become independent, critical thinkers and confident, effective communicators.

We will ensure equitable access and continuous growth for all students through targeted, evidence-based instruction and tiered interventions. We strive to develop deep conceptual understanding, foster respect for diverse perspectives, create opportunities for empathetic interactions, and lay a foundation of inquiry that inspires new ideas and innovative solutions.

Elementary ELA Criteria

- Materials and resources which:
  - Engage students with a variety of texts including complex, grade-level texts and texts chosen to promote reading accuracy, fluency, and application of comprehension strategies.
  - Create windows, mirrors, and sliding doors for our students.
  - Follow a coherent sequence and help students build knowledge systematically.
  - Provide physical materials for students to interact with.
- Systematic, research-based approach to teaching reading that promotes the following skills:
  - Print concepts
  - Phonological and phonemic awareness
  - Phonics for decoding and encoding
  - Word recognition and fluency
  - Morphology and vocabulary
  - Reading comprehension (strategies, not assessments)
- Develop students' love and appreciation for reading through exposure to a variety of genres and experiences (i.e. book clubs, read alouds, independent reading) with opportunities for social discourse and authentic writing connections.

Elementary ELA Criteria

- Explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies with authentic writing tasks:
  - Writing instruction connects to reading and language development.
  - Students explore various types of writing, audiences, purposes.
  - Conventions of print, grammar, and syntax are taught explicitly.
  - Writing process (planning, revising, editing) is explicitly taught and practiced.
- Progression and expansion of speaking and listening standards to promote deep comprehension, critical thinking, and effective communication.
- Program components that:
  - Set high expectations for students of all abilities (students with disabilities, ML students, students working above or below grade level).
  - Formative assessment, progress monitoring, multiple modes to demonstrate learning.
  - Materials are organized and easily accessible to teachers.
- Alignment with the MA State ELA Frameworks, Dover-Sherborn Portrait of a Graduate and 9 Best Practices.

Looking Ahead

- Fall 2025: Launch an ELA Pilot Committee next year; research potential programs by:
    - Examining current reviews/research/evidence on other programs
    - Site visits/interviews in other Districts
    - Review sample materials
- Spring 2026: make a recommendation on which program(s) to pilot in Fall 2026 and what the pilot embodies (how many teachers, how many grades, how many units)
- Fall 2026: Pilot programs
- Winter 2027: Recommend program to School Committees for adoption
- Spring 2027: Create implementation plan and professional learning plan
- 2027-2028 School Year: Implement new elementary ELA programming

THANK YOU!

Questions & Comments?

