



**FAIRFIELD
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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To: Mr. Michael Testani, Superintendent
From: Janine Goss, Executive Director of PK-12 Literacy
Date: August 13, 2026
Re: Revisions to the Middle School ELA Grades 6-8 Curricula Documents

Middle school curricula for grades 6-8 ELA were presented to the Board of Education on June 23, 2026. The proposed list of additional book club and independent reading titles are now organized into two categories—grade-level texts and challenging texts—consistent with the format used at the high school level. The categorized lists are provided below.

Additionally, errors in the proposed grades 6-8 ELA curricula documents were identified and have been corrected. A list of the corrections appear below the book lists.

These documents have been updated online.

Grade 6 - Unit 1 - Grade-Level Texts

Book Club Books

American as Paneer Pie by Supriya Kelkar
Because of Mr. Terupt by Rob Buyea
Class Act by Jerry Craft
Counting by 7s by Holly Goldberg Sloan
The First Rule of Punk by Celia C. Pérez
Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt
Five Things About Ava Andrews by Margaret Dilloway
Frizzy by Claribel A. Ortega
Front Desk by Kelly Yang
Ghost by Jason Reynolds
Greetings From Witness Protection by Jake Burt
Holes by Louis Sachar
Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus by Dusti Bowling
Invisible by Christina Diaz Gonzalez and Gabriela Epstein
I Survived... book series by Lauren Tarshis
The Kind of Friends We Used to Be by Frances O'Roark Dowell
Look Both Ways by Jason Reynolds
Lu (Track Series) by Jason Reynolds
Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish by Pablo Cartaya
My Life as a Potato by Arianne Costner
Notorious by Gordon Korman
Out of My Heart by Sharon M. Draper
Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper
Patina (Track Series) by Jason Reynolds
Posted by John David Anderson
Restart by Gordon Korman
Room to Dream by Kelly Yang
Save Me a Seat by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks
Secret Language of Girls by Frances O'Roark Dowell
The Seventh Most Important Thing by Shelley Pearsall
Stella Diaz Has Something to Say by Angela Dominguez
Sunny by Jason Reynolds
Swindle by Gordon Korman
Three Keys by Kelly Yang
Unplugged by Gordon Korman
Unstoppable by Tim Green
Who Is...? and Who Was...? series

Grade 6 - Unit 1 - Challenging Texts

Book Club Books

Freak the Mighty by Rodman Philbrick
Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson
One for the Murphys by Lynda Mullaly Hunt
The Thing About Jellyfish by Ali Benjamin
The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle by Leslie Connor
War Stories by Gordon Korman

Grade 6 - Unit 3 - Grade-Level Texts

Book Club Books

Amari and the Night Brothers by B.B. Alston
Amulet: The Stonekeeper by Kazu Kibuishi
Bloom by Kenneth Oppel
Crenshaw by Katherine Applegate
Fuzzy Mud by Louis Sachar
The Grimm Legacy by Polly Shulman
James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl
The Key to Rondo by Jennifer Rowe
The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan
Masterminds by Gordon Korman
The Missing: Found by Margaret Peterson Haddix
Rise of the Jumbies by Tracey Baptiste
Sal and Gabi Break the Universe by Carlos Hernandez
Savvy by Ingrid Law
The School for Whatnots by Margaret Peterson Haddix
Snow & Rose by Emily Winfield Martin
Space Case by Stuart Gibbs
The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez by Adrianna Cuevas
The Unwanteds by Lisa McMann
The Wishing Spell (Land of Stories) by Chris Colfer

Grade 6 - Unit 3 - Challenging Texts

Book Club Books

Eragon by Christopher Paolini
In a Glass Grimly by Adam Gidwitz
The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone by J.K. Rowling
How to Train Your Dragon by Cressida Cowell
Life As We Knew It series by Susan Beth Pfeffer
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (Chronicles of Narnia) by C.S. Lewis
Nevermoor by Jessica Townsend
The Ranger's Apprentice: The Ruins of Gorlan by John Flanagan
A Tale Dark and Grimm by Adam Gidwitz
Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt
When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle

Grade 6 - Unit 4 - Grade-Level Texts

Book Club Books

96 Miles by J.L. Esplin
Across the Desert by Dusti Bowling
Alone in the Woods by Rebecca Behrens
Distress Signal by Mary Lambert
Escape by Gordon Korman
Hatchet by Gary Paulsen

P.O. Box 320189 • 501 Kings Highway East • Suite 210 • Fairfield, CT 06825

The Last Kids on Earth by Max Brallier
Red Fox Road by Frances Greenslade
The Running Dream by Wendelin Van Draanen
Shipwreck by Gordon Korman
Survival by Gordon Korman

Grade 6 - Unit 4 - Challenging Texts

Book Club Books

All Thirteen by Christina Soontornvat
The Canyon's Edge by Dusti Bowling
Her Own Two Feet by Rebecca Uwitonze and Meredith Davis
Northwind by Gary Paulsen
Two Degrees by Alan Gratz
Zane and the Hurricane by Rodman Philbrick

Grade 7 - Unit 1 - Challenging Texts

Independent Reading

The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes by Suzanne Collins
Sunrise on the Reaping by Suzanne Collins

Grade 7 - Unit 4 - Grade-Level Texts

Book Club Books

The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis
Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson
Countdown by Deborah Wiles
Distant Waves: A Novel of the Titanic by Suzanne Weyn
Esperanza Rising by Pam Muñoz Ryan
Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers
Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson
Fire From the Rock by Sharon M. Draper
The Great Trouble by Deborah Hopkinson
Lions of Little Rock by Kristin Levine
The Lost Year by Katherine Marsh
The Memory of Things by Gae Polisner
Mississippi Trial, 1955 by Chris Crowe
The Night Diary by Veera Hiranandani
A Night Divided by Jennifer A. Nielsen
Nine, Ten: A September 11 Story by Nora Raleigh Baskin
One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia
Prisoner B-3087 by Alan Gratz
Resistance by Jennifer A. Nielsen
Search and Destroy by Dean Hughes
SOS Titanic by Eve Bunting
Stella by Starlight by Sharon M. Draper
Ties That Break, Ties That Bind by Lensey Namioka

Towers Falling by Jewell Parker Rhodes
Uprising by Margaret Peterson Haddix
War Games by Alan Gratz
The War That Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
When the World Was Ours by Liz Kessler

Grade 7 - Unit 4 - Challenging Texts

Book Club Books

Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis
The Downstairs Girl by Stacey Lee
Ground Zero by Alan Gratz
Lyddie by Katherine Paterson
March Forward, Girl: From Young Warrior to Little Rock Nine by Melba Pattillo Beals
The Mighty Miss Malone by Christopher Paul Curtis
My Brother Sam Is Dead by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier
Okay for Now by Gary D. Schmidt
Refugee by Alan Gratz
Revolution by Deborah Wiles
The Rock and the River by Kekla Magoon
Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor
Waiting for the Rain by Sheila Gordon
The Watsons Go to Birmingham —1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis

Grade 8 - Unit 1 - Grade-Level Texts

Independent Reading (Novels in Verse)

Booked by Kwame Alexander
The Crossover by Kwame Alexander
Forget Me Not by Ellie Terry
Full Cicada Moon by Marilyn Hilton
House Arrest by K.A. Holt
Lifeboat 12 by Susan Hood
Rebound by Kwame Alexander
Solo by Kwame Alexander

Grade 8 - Unit 1 - Challenging Texts

Independent Reading (Novels in Verse)

All the Broken Pieces by Ann E. Burg
Alone by Megan E. Freeman
Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson
Force of Nature by Ann E. Burg
Lifeboat 5 by Susan Hood
Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds
Louder Than Hunger by John Schu
A Time to Dance by Padma Venkatraman
Unbound by Ann E. Burg

Grade 8 - Unit 2 - Grade-Level Texts

Independent Reading (Realistic Fiction Books)

Checked by Cynthia Kadohata

Curveball: The Year I Lost My Grip by Jordan Sonnenblick

Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie by Jordan Sonnenblick

Gym Candy by Carl Deuker

Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World by Ashley Herring Blake

Linked by Gordon Korman

Nothing But the Truth by Avi

Orbiting Jupiter by Gary D. Schmidt

Payback Time by Carl Deuker

Pop by Gordon Korman

Red Kayak by Priscilla Cummings

Schooled by Gordon Korman

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

Supergifted by Gordon Korman

Ungifted by Gordon Korman

Grade 8 - Unit 2 - Challenging Texts

Independent Reading (Realistic Fiction Books)

The Boy Who Dared by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

Genesis Begins Again by Alicia Williams

The Help by Kathryn Stockett

Inventing Elliott by Graham Gardner

Jupiter Rising by Gary D. Schmidt

The Rag and Bone Shop by Robert Cormier

Trouble by Gary D. Schmidt

Grade 8 - Unit 2 - Grade-Level Texts

Independent Reading (Memoirs)

Becoming Kareem by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender) Teen by Jazz Jennings

A Child of the Dream by Sharon Robinson

Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah

The Closer Young Readers Edition by Mariano Rivera

Cowboy and Wills by Monica Holloway

Discovering Wes Moore by Wes Moore

A First Time For Everything by Dan Santat

A Girl's Life Online by Katherine Tarbox

Grace, Gold, and Glory by Gabrielle Douglas

Hey, Kiddo by Jarrett J. Krosoczka

I Will Always Write Back by Caitlin Alifirenka, Liz Welch, and Martin Ganda

It's Trevor Noah by Trevor Noah

The Keeper: The Unguarded Story of Tim Howard Young Readers' Edition by Tim Howard

Navy Seal Dogs by Mike Ritland

Popular by Maya Van Wagenen

Reaching for the Moon by Katherine Johnson

Soul Surfer by Bethany Hamilton

Sunshine by Jarrett J. Krosoczka
They Called Us Enemy by George Takei and Steven R. Scott
Uprooted by Ruth Chan

Grade 8 - Unit 2 - Challenging Texts

Independent Reading (Memoirs)

Becoming by Michelle Obama
The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls
God Grew Tired of Us by John Bul Dau
How Starbucks Saved My Life by Michael Gates Gill
I Am a SEAL Team Six Warrior: Memoirs of an American Soldier by Howard E. Wasdin and Stephen Templin
Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer
The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch
Look Me in the Eye by John Elder Robison
The Making of a Navy SEAL by Brandon Webb
Once a Marine by Michael Steere and Nick Popaditch
The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore (hybrid memoir/narrative nonfiction)
Rocket Boys by Homer Hickam
Shoe Dog by Phil Knight
They Cage the Animals at Night by Jennings Michael Burch
Tuesdays With Morrie by Mitch Albom
Warriors Don't Cry by Melba Pattillo Beals
Yes, Chef by Marcus Samuelsson

Grade 8 - Unit 3 - Grade-Level Texts

Book Club Books

Among the Hidden series by Margaret Peterson Haddix
Catching Fire by Suzanne Collins
City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau
The Compound by S.A. Bodeen
Divergent by Veronica Roth
Gathering Blue by Lois Lowry
Legend by Marie Lu
Matched by Ally Condie
The Maze Runner by James Dashner
Mockingjay by Suzanne Collins
The Selection by Kiera Cass
Uglies by Scott Westerfield
Unwind by Neal Shusterman

Grade 8 - Unit 3 - Challenging Texts

Book Club Books

Animal Farm by George Orwell
The Belles by Dhonielle Clayton
Dry by Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman
Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card
Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer
The Messenger by Lois Lowry
Ready Player One by Ernest Cline
Scythe by Neal Shusterman
Son by Lois Lowry
Thunderhead by Neal Shusterman
The Toll by Neal Shusterman

Grade 8 - Unit 4 - Grade-Level Texts

Independent Reading

The Boy at the Top of the Mountain by John Boyne
Code Talker by Joseph Bruchac
Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
Red Berries, White Clouds, Blue Sky by Sandra Dallas
Soldier Boys by Dean Hughes
The War I Finally Won by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Grade 8 - Unit 4 - Challenging Texts

Independent Reading

Between Shades of Grey by Ruth Sepetys
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Girl in the Blue Coat by Monica Hesse
Parallel Journeys by Eleanor H. Ayer
Salt to the Sea by Ruth Sepetys
Tutti's Promise by K. Heidi Fishman
Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand
Unstoppable by Joshua M. Greene
The War Outside by Monica Hesse

The following errors have been identified in the April 29, 2026 BoE proposed documents indicated by the page numbers below and have been corrected:

Grade 6 - Unit 1

- Page 6: author's name for the *I Survived...* series was inadvertently omitted and has been corrected to include Lauren Tarshis
- Page 6: accent in author's name was omitted for the book *The First Rule of Punk* by Celia C. Perez (changed Perez to Pérez)
- Page 6: two words in the title of *Five things about Ava Andrews* were not capitalized (changed to *Five Things About Ava Andrews*)
- Page 6: the parenthetical note (we have the whole series -*Patina, Lu, Sunny*) has been removed from *Ghost* by Jason Reynolds because the titles in the series are listed individually
- Page 6: co-author's name Gabriela Epstein was added for *Invisible* by Christina Diaz Gonzalez and Gabriela Epstein
- Page 6: author's name for *Frizzy* was misspelled (Ortiga), and the title was incomplete (corrected to *Frizzy: Graphic Novel* by Claribel A. Ortega)
- Page 6: one word in the title *Stella Diaz has Something to Say* by Angela Dominguez was not capitalized (corrected to *Stella Diaz Has Something to Say*)

- Page 6: author's name was misspelled for the book *Secret Language of Girls* by Frances O'Rourke Dowell (changed O'Rourke to O'Roark)
- Pages 6-7: *Schooled*, *Supergifted*, and *Ungifted* by Gordon Korman have been removed from grade 6 and will remain in unit 2, grade 8
- Page 7: Track Series by Jason Reynolds was removed because all titles in the Track Series were listed individually

Grade 6 - Unit 3

- Page 23: author's last name for *A Wrinkle in Time* was misspelled and the word "by" was omitted; entry has been corrected to read *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle
- Page 23: *City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau has been removed and will remain in unit 3, grade 8
- Page 23: two authors' names were italicized and have been corrected (Kazu Kibuishi and Madeleine L'Engle)

Grade 6 - Unit 4

- Page 33: author's name JL Esplin for the book *96 Miles* has been corrected to include the abbreviation markers (changed JL to J.L.)
- Page 33: *Alone* by Megan Freeman has been removed and will remain in unit 1, grade 8.
- Page 33: author's name for the book *The Last Kids on Earth* is misspelled (changed Max Ballier to Max Brallier)

Grade 7 - Course Description and Unit 1

- Page 2: *The Outsiders* was not italicized and has been corrected
- Page 5: *Catching Fire* and *Mockingjay* by Suzanne Collins have been removed and will remain book club choices in grade 8, unit 3
- Page 5: extra bullet after *Scholastic Scope Magazine* has been removed

Grade 7 - Unit 4:

- Page 33: author's name for *The Downstairs Girl* was misspelled (changed Stacy Lee to Stacey Lee)
- Page 33: author's name for *Esperanza Rising* was corrected from Pam Munoz Ryan to Pam Muñoz Ryan to include the tilde in her name
- Page 33: *A Long Walk to Water* has been eliminated as a book club book because it is a required text that all students read in social studies and is also noted as an additional resource in the ELA unit 4, page 35
- Page 34: a period was eliminated after the author's name for *A Night Divided* by Jennifer A. Nielsen
- Page 34: title was incomplete (changed *Nine, Ten* to *Nine, Ten: A September 11 Story*) by Nora Raleigh Baskin
- Page 34: title *OK for Now* by Gary D. Schmidt was corrected to *Okay for Now*

Grade 8 - Unit 1

- Page 7: author's name was incorrect for *A Time to Dance* (changed Karen Kingsbury to Padma Venkatraman)

Grade 8 - Unit 2

- Page 15: the word independent was misspelled (changed Independnet to Independent)
- Page 16: *Restart* by Gordon Korman and *Two Degrees* by Alan Gatz were removed and will remain in grade 6, units 1 and 4, respectively

- Page 16: *The War That Saved My Life* by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley was removed and will remain in grade 7 unit 4
- Page 17: the title *Hey, Kiddo* by Jarrett J. Krosoczka was missing the comma (changed *Hey Kiddo* to *Hey, Kiddo*)
- Page 17: all words in the title were not capitalized and the title was incomplete (changed *I am a Seal Team Six Warrior* to *I Am a SEAL Team Six Warrior: Memoirs of an American Soldier* by Howard E. Wasdin and Stephen Templin)
- Page 17: commas were added and authors' names were sequenced correctly for *I Will Always Write Back* (changed Caitlin Alifirenka Martin Ganda, Liz Welch to Caitlin Alifirenka, Liz Welch, and Martin Ganda)
- Page 17: title was incomplete (changed *The Keeper Young Readers Edition* by Tim Howard to *The Keeper: The Unguarded Story of Tim Howard Young Readers' Edition* by Tim Howard)
- Page 17: author for *Rocket Boys* by Homer Hickam was corrected (changed Hickham to Hickam)

Grade 8 - Unit 3

- Page 25: author's name for *City of Ember* was corrected from Jeanne Duprau to Jeanne DuPrau
- Page 25: author's name for *The Compound* was corrected to include the abbreviation markers (changed SA Bodeen to S.A. Bodeen)
- Page 25: co-author's name was added for *Dry* by Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman
- Page 25-26: all author names were italicized and have been corrected so only book titles are italicized

Grade 8 - Unit 4

- Page 35: *Resistance* by Jennifer A. Nielsen has been removed and will remain in grade 7, unit 4