

HCS District-Wide Writing Program

Statutory Authority and Purpose

In accordance with House Bill 257 (2026) and Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) 158.6453(19), this policy establishes the district-wide writing program. Effective with the 2026-2027 academic year, local school districts are responsible for adopting and publishing writing policies that integrate instruction across the curriculum, as the state no longer requires standardized on-demand writing or editing-and-mechanics tests on the Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA).

The primary goal of this program is to ensure all students utilize writing as a tool for learning and develop complex communication skills for various purposes and audiences. The superintendent shall ensure this policy is published and publicly accessible on the district website.

Core Instructional Alignment and Framework

Alignment to KAS for Reading and Writing

The district curriculum is vertically and horizontally aligned to the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing through the implementation of High-Quality Instructional Resources (HQIRs). Reading and writing are treated as reciprocal learning experiences, integrated across all disciplines to foster comprehensive literacy. To support early literacy development, the program mandates foundational handwriting instruction, focusing on print in grades K-1 and cursive in grades 2-3.

The program defines three essential modes of writing:

- **Writing to Learn:** Informal writing to process new information.
- **Writing to Demonstrate Learning:** Formal tasks to show mastery of content.
- **Writing for Publication:** Polished work intended for a specific audience.

Students will produce work across several required genres, including literary, opinion/argumentative, informational, and practical/workplace materials. Teachers will maintain literacy-rich environments based on Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices (ILPs), where "text" is defined broadly as anything that communicates a message. This framework explicitly supports postsecondary readiness, aligning with the Kentucky Board of Education's vision for student success.

Dedicated Instructional Time

Instructional schedules include daily time for text-based, evidence-based writing integrated into content areas such as Science, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Career Studies. This includes explicit instruction in the writing process—planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and

reflecting. Teachers provide consistent feedback and incorporate opportunities to apply writing skills to oral communication and student choice to drive engagement.

Disciplinary-Specific Writing

Writing instruction will be integrated across all content areas, ensuring students engage in text-based writing specific to various fields to both teach and demonstrate content knowledge. To extract and construct meaning, students engage in **reciprocal reading and writing** processes to become increasingly strategic and automatic readers and writers.

- **Elementary Focus:** Emphasis on foundational skills including 3.8 paragraph formatting, scaffolding toward 5-paragraph essays for informational and opinion pieces.
- **Middle and High School Focus:** Transition from foundational writing to an emphasis on Argumentative and Informational writing, with Narrative writing integrated across other modes for grades 8-12. Instruction focuses on developing complex research and communication skills, critical analysis, and evaluating, synthesizing, and citing sources to prepare students for postsecondary readiness.
- **Interdisciplinary Practice:** Students will engage with a wide range of multimodal texts across disciplines to ground writing in complex, grade-level material.

Instructional Strategies and Tools

To support diverse learners and meet high-yield engagement goals, the following resources and strategies are authorized:

- **Technological Integration and Resources:** Use of print materials, digital platforms, multimodal texts (artwork, photos, maps, etc.), and exemplars to support the writing process. Technology is applied as a tool to evaluate and communicate with critical thinking, inquiry, and global collaboration.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Implementation of differentiated strategies and tailored language resources to ensure accessibility and equitable learning outcomes for all students.
- **Strategic Models:** Implementation of evidence-based instructional frameworks that require students to:
 - Engage in three categories of writing: writing to learn, writing to demonstrate learning, and writing for publication.
 - Experience authentic, meaningful writing tasks at all grade levels for a variety of purposes (Opinion/Argumentative, Informative/Explanatory, Narrative) and audiences.
 - Utilize the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and reflecting) with consistent, timely feedback.
- **High-Yield Engagement:** Ensure writing is a natural, integrated component of the reading curriculum, fostering reciprocal literacy development.

Support for Diverse Learners

The writing program must provide equitable access and support for all student populations:

- **Dyslexia Support:** In compliance with HB 253, the district maintains specific policies for identifying and assisting students in K-3 with dyslexia.
- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS):** As required by Senate Bill 9 (Read to Succeed), schools will provide comprehensive supports to ensure all students reach grade-level performance in reading and writing by the end of grade 3.
- **Special Education:** Writing instruction will utilize specific interventions and tailored accommodations to reduce achievement gaps.

Evaluation and Assessment

With the removal of state-level on-demand assessments, the district will utilize internal evaluative methods to monitor student progress.

- **Formative Measures:**
 - **Evaluation of Student Writing:** Teachers will evaluate student writing using consistent, criteria-based rubrics that align with the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing. This process includes providing constructive, timely feedback that addresses both the development of ideas and the conventions of writing, ensuring students understand the criteria for proficiency and can reflect on their own growth.
- **SBDM Review:** School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) councils or designated committees will annually assess the school's writing policy for alignment.