



TO: Matthew L. Blomstedt, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education

FROM: Donlynn Rice, Senior Administrator, Curriculum and Instruction
Tricia Parker-Siemers, Director of Language Arts

SUBJECT: Language Arts Standards

Proposed Board Action:

Work Session: Update on College-and Career-Ready Language Arts Standards

Board Meeting: Approve the release of the Draft College-and Career-Ready Language Arts Standards for public comment.

Background Information:

The Nebraska Language Arts Standards passed in 2009, have been undergoing a rigorous review for the past several months. The State Board of Education’s goal is to have academic standards in place that prepare Nebraska students to graduate from high school ready for success in college and/or career. For postsecondary education this means students will be able to complete credit-bearing first year courses without need for remediation.

The review process began by asking Nebraska institutions of higher education to weigh in on the 2009 standards and identify areas for improvement. Once that information was gathered as with all Nebraska standards development, a writing group comprised of Nebraska K-16 educators, administrators and specialists went to work. The authors represented all regions of Nebraska, all levels of education, all sizes of school districts as well as the diverse populations of our state. The existing standards were reviewed against exemplary standards from other states, along with information from ACT, SAT, the NAEP Framework, and information from nationally known researchers. The results of the alignment study between the Common Core State Standards and the Nebraska Standards commissioned in March of 2013 were also used.

The 2014 standards look very similar to the 2009 set but have been made more rigorous as a result of the review process. The format of the standards has remained essentially the same with two small changes. The standards in the high school grade band have been split into smaller 9-10 and 11-12 grade bands, replacing the 9-12 grade band in the 2009 standards. Also, the curricular indicators will be considered a required part of each standard and will no longer be considered to only be examples. They are still organized with three “levels of specificity”:

- K-12 Comprehensive Standards – These broad, general statements cover key areas in each content area.
- Grade Level Standards – These statements are organized by key concepts and identify what students should know and be able to do by the end of a specified grade level. They are not course specific.
- Curricular Indicators – These statements provide more specific information to distinguish expectations between grade levels or grade bands.

The Board will be provided with an overview of the changes made thus far and discuss a plan for the next step in the standards process which is the public comment period. The Board will vote on whether or not to release the draft for public comment in April.

No additional

Supporting Documentation Included:

The draft standards will be available on the NDE website once official action has been taken.
<http://www.education.ne.gov>

For Additional Information on this item:

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