OVERARCHING LANGUAGE ARTS BELIEFS

We believe the most effective language arts instruction offers students a “Balanced Literacy” approach.

Therefore, we will include the following components in our language arts instruction at the appropriate grade levels:

♦ modeled reading and writing
♦ shared reading and writing
♦ interactive reading and writing
♦ guided reading and writing
♦ independent reading and writing
♦ individual reading and writing conferences
♦ word study
♦ speaking, listening & viewing

We believe the optimal learning model should guide instruction and be embedded at all levels.

Therefore, during instruction we will embed demonstration, shared demonstration, guided practice and independent practice to provide a framework for students to move from dependence to independence.

We believe multiple student assessment data should be used to individualize instruction and drive curriculum.

Therefore, we will formally and informally assess student reading, writing, word knowledge, and speaking/listening/viewing to inform our instruction.

We believe students bring varied experiences, backgrounds and skill-sets to the classroom.

Therefore, we will differentiate instruction to effectively meet the needs of all students.
**READING BELIEFS**

We believe the reader’s workshop model is the framework that supports best practices.
   Therefore, we will implement the following grade-appropriate components of the reader’s workshop: mini-lessons, reading time (independent reading, guided reading, literature circles, individual reading conferences), & sharing time.

We believe readers should be literate in a wide range of genres.
   Therefore, we will guide students through reading in a variety of genres.

We believe effective readers use multiple strategies to read text.
   Therefore, we will explicitly teach comprehension strategies and decoding skills to foster fluent reading.

We believe readers need choices.
   Therefore, we will provide reading experiences that include student choice.

We believe effective readers apply acquired reading skills and strategies in all their reading.
   Therefore we expect students to apply these skills and strategies in all content areas.

**WRITING BELIEFS**

We believe the writer’s workshop model is the framework that supports best practices.
   Therefore, we will implement the following grade-appropriate components of the writer’s workshop: mini-lessons, writing time (independent writing, guided writing, individual writing conferences), & sharing time.

We believe writers need the skills and practice when writing for different purposes, genres and audiences.
   Therefore, we will guide students through writing in a variety of genres.

We believe writers learn from the craft of other writers.
   Therefore, we will provide students with many opportunities to read and listen to pieces that demonstrate exemplary writing.

We believe writers need choices.
   Therefore, we will provide writing experiences that include student choice.

We believe effective writers apply acquired writing skills and strategies in all their writing.
   Therefore, we expect students to apply these skills and strategies in all content areas.

We believe writing is a process, not just a product.
   Therefore, we will lead students through the writing process and encourage them to use it in their writing.

We believe writers should write legibly in manuscript and cursive.
   Therefore, we will instruct the correct formation of letters in grades K-5.
WORD STUDY BELIEFS

We believe the purpose of word study is to facilitate the fluency and comprehension of reading and writing authentic text.

Therefore, we will apply the study of words within meaningful reading and writing contexts.

We believe the study of words in isolation should be brief and explicit.

Therefore, we will devote most of our word study instruction to studying words within the context of authentic text.

We believe readers and writers will be most successful in learning words when given the opportunity to apply their word knowledge during self-selected reading and writing.

Therefore, we will give students opportunities during reader’s and writer’s workshop to use word study concepts.

We believe writers should spell grade-appropriate words correctly in all their writing.

Therefore, we will hold students accountable for correctly spelling high-frequency words.

SPEAKING, LISTENING & VIEWING BELIEFS

We believe speaking, listening and viewing effectively are critical skills in modern society.

Therefore, we will provide classroom opportunities for speaking, listening and viewing in the context of large and small group settings, in both formal and informal situations.

We believe students must be able to communicate to different audiences for different purposes.

Therefore, we will provide students with frequent speaking, listening and viewing opportunities in and out of the classroom.

We believe students must be able to apply listening skills to a variety of settings.

Therefore, we will explicitly teach listening skills to all students.