

# Northfield Public Schools K-12 Language Arts Beliefs

(Reviewed 2013)

## 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.*