

OSPI Learning Standards Review

English Language Arts

Updated as of 9.26.23

Background /Purpose

According to RCW 28A.655.070, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will periodically revise the state learning standards. In the fall of 2022, OSPI started to review ELA, mathematics, and science learning standards. OSPI anticipates review and approval in 2024, with transitional support to districts starting in 2025 and implementation in classrooms anticipated in 2026.

OSPI is intentionally addressing supports for all students during the review process, with an emphasis on students furthest from educational justice. The updated WA standards will include support for learning design with content integration, Universal Design for Learning, language development, social-emotional learning, culturally responsive teaching, and more.

English Language Arts (ELA)

1. English Language Arts (ELA) educators in Washington (WA) will transition from the ELA Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to an updated version of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)/International Reading Association (IRA) standards to be implemented no sooner than 2026. The updated WA ELA standards will:
 - Allow teachers to go deeper with streamlined standards.
 - Build on students' background knowledge, interests, and cultural assets as they develop as readers, writers, speakers, listeners, critical thinkers, curious and critical consumers and creators of media, and responsible digital citizens.
 - Embed media literacy and digital citizenship to complement the work already being done by teacher-librarians.
 - Prepare students to use literacy in post-secondary pathways, careers, civic engagement, and their personal lives.
2. The updated WA ELA standards will include approximately 12 standards that are the same across grade levels, which reflects the nature of ELA skills and activities that students build upon throughout their school careers.
3. The updated WA ELA standards will be packaged with additional features to help educators unpack the standards and see progressions of students' literacy development across time. This will include:
 - **The updated WA ELA standards:** the larger overarching concepts and practices that describe what is needed to be literate in society.
 - **3 Dimensions:** These dimensions (What? Why? How?) describe the skills, content, purposes, approaches, and processes that support students to achieve the standards.



- **Grade-Level Considerations:** These Grade-Level Considerations can be used by educators to think about how the updated WA ELA standards and 3 Dimensions (What? Why? How?) might look at each grade level. Insights from the science of reading will reside in the Grade-Level Considerations and will continue the work in early literacy development that has already begun in WA.
4. The release of the updated WA ELA standards will be accompanied by professional learning and transition support for districts, schools, and educators.

FAQs

Q: What support will be available for educators to implement the updated WA ELA standards and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development (ELD) standards together in their classrooms?

A: The updated WA ELA standards build on students' background knowledge, interests, and cultural assets as they develop as readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and critical thinkers. ELA and Multilingual Education are collaborating to create documents such as crosswalks, considerations for instructional strategies, and FAQs to support educators as they braid content and language development standards in their language arts classes.

Q: How will the NCTE/IRA standards be updated?

A: The NCTE/IRA standards will be updated in two ways.

First, NCTE will be updating the standards and the ELA team at OSPI anticipates involvement during this process. Many important considerations will guide these updates and will likely include attention to media literacy, digital citizenship, the needs of multilingual learners, and informational texts.

Second, the ELA team at OSPI will create two WA-specific features to unpack each standard: 3 Dimensions (What? Why? How?) and Grade-Level Considerations. The 3 Dimensions (What? Why? How?) will describe the skills, content, purposes, approaches, and processes that support students to achieve the standards. The Grade-Level Considerations can be used by educators to think about how the updated WA ELA standards and 3 Dimensions (What? Why? How?) might look at each grade level. Insights from the science of reading will reside in the Grade-Level Considerations and will continue the work in early literacy development that has already begun in WA.

WA educators will be involved in giving feedback to drafts of the 3 Dimensions and Grade-Level Considerations for each standard.

Q: How will the updated WA ELA standards prepare students for secondary pathways, careers, civic engagement, and their personal lives?

A: The ways in which students encounter and interact with information have changed dramatically in recent years and will continue to evolve as new technologies emerge and society shifts in response. Students need to build skills that enable them to thrive as critical and curious creators and consumers of many different types of texts and means of communication that are relevant to their situations.

The inclusion of media literacy and digital citizenship will help address these needs. The updated WA ELA standards won't treat media literacy and digital citizenship as additional standards. They will highlight where these skills already show up in ELA classrooms and build on them to address the challenges students face in creating and consuming texts and information.

Q: Should districts begin work on priority standards, given that the standards will change?

A: There will be approximately 12 updated WA ELA standards, which means that districts will not need to create priority standards. In the meantime, districts should continue to make decisions about the existing standards that meet their needs.

Q: Will districts need to adopt new curricula aligned to the updated WA ELA standards?

A: No. OSPI will release resources to help educators understand key concepts in the updated WA ELA standards, as well as suggest how these key concepts can be incorporated into existing curricula and how they might already show up in them. Districts should continue to follow policies related to their local curriculum review and adoption process.

Q: Will the ELA state summative assessment change?

A: OSPI will include any information about implications for the state assessments through future updates, and in professional learning and transition support materials about the updated standards. Any changes to state tests will not affect student scores before spring 2028.

Standards Review Team Contact

Standards Review Team standards.review@k12.wa.us