

2016 English Language Arts (ELA) Standards Implementation Survey Results

Overview

The Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards are the statewide expectations for student achievement in K-12 public schools (Minn. Stat. §§ 120B.02, 120B.024). The standards identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area by the end of a grade level or grade band. The English Language Arts (ELA) standards, which include reading, writing, speaking, viewing, listening, media literacy, and language standards, were revised in 2010 and are to be implemented by the 2012-2013 school year.

The ELA standards and other academic standards are important because they help:

- Prepare students for college and careers.
- Define credit requirements for graduation.
- Guide school districts' adoption and design of curricula.

All students—including students with unique learning needs—must meet the credit requirements and satisfactorily complete all state and local standards in order to graduate. Read more about [Minnesota's ELA standards at http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/stds/](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/stds/)

Since 2014, Wilder Research has been hired by MDE to conduct an annual survey of Minnesota K-12 schools to assess Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) implementation as it pertains to English Language Arts (ELA) standards.

MTSS is an integrated system of high quality, standards-based instruction and interventions that are matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. The survey measures supports and implementation at three tiers, comprising core instruction (Tier 1) and supplemental and intensive intervention (Tiers 2 and 3). Within the ELA standards, the survey assesses staff knowledge of the standards and access to pertinent curriculum scope and sequence in order to cover all the grade-level benchmarks ("common understanding"), implementation of the common understanding ("in practice"), and use of student assessment data to make instructional improvement ("continuous improvement").

School leaders and stakeholders can use the survey results to understand trends, get a point-in-time picture of progress toward statewide implementation, and learn about opportunities for improvement. The results can inform ELA standards implementation at the level of the state, school districts, and schools. In other words, schools can use the results to improve organizational supports and instruction so that students receive targeted, evidence-based instruction and interventions as needed to meet grade-level ELA standards.

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Methodology

Wilder Research sent a survey to all school principals of Minnesota K-12 schools. We asked them to convene a school-wide team to complete the survey together. The teams rated a set of activities that correspond to implementation stages (ranging from not in place to full implementation).

In 2016, 721 schools completed the survey. This represents 47 percent of Minnesota's elementary, middle, high schools, and charter schools.

2016 ELA standards implementation results

Items in the survey are rated as:

- Not in place
- Exploring
- Installing infrastructure
- Partial implementation
- Full implementation

On average, schools are in the “partial implementation” stage of ELA standards implementation. Only 16 percent of participating schools report they are in the “full implementation” stage. The rates of full implementation are higher in the areas of staff having the knowledge and practice of the standards, whereas implementation is lower in the areas of gathering and using data to make continuous improvements. Overall, the rate of full implementation is higher in elementary schools than in middle and high schools, and similar in charter and elementary schools.

1. Schools in “full implementation” in ELA standards 2016

	Elementary/ K-12 (N=392-393)	Middle school (N=91-94)	High school (N=151-153)	Charter (N=81)	All schools (N=716-721)
Overall	19%	13%	9%	20%	16%
Common understanding	29%	28%	23%	31%	28%
In practice	39%	31%	23%	32%	34%
Continuous improvement	14%	7%	5%	20%	12%

Recommendations

The results of the survey provide schools and districts with an opportunity to consider challenges to implementation and identify resources to move forward.

School and district leaders should take steps to:

- Use survey results (and other data) for action planning
- Join the MTSS Community of Practice

MDE has developed the following **general guidance for schools that are at various levels of implementation of ELA standards.**

2. MDE guidance for improving or sustaining full implementation in ELA standards

If your school is at... Exploring or Installing Infrastructure	Partial Implementation	Sustaining Full Implementation
Verify staff understand and are specifically defining and implementing the shifts in the ELA standards.	Protect time for staff to meet and follow protocols for analyzing student data and planning next instructional steps.	Continue review of data to advance vertical and horizontal alignment of standards, practices, fidelity, and achievement. For example, adopt standards-based grading system, formative and summative assessments aligned to standards and build teacher capacity to differentiate instruction to grow students not on track to meet benchmarks.
Verify staff understand the benchmarks and what proficiency looks like for the grades they teach.	Ensure instructional practices are defined and coaches observe the teachers as they use the practices.	Use data from training, coaching and fidelity checks to improve organization and system supports.
Verify staff have consistent access to the curriculum, resources, and instructional practices used at each grade-level so that all teachers have the information needed to implement the instruction as designed.	Monitor data from coaching and student data to verify that staff are teaching the practices.	

Source. Minnesota Department of Education, April 2017

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May 2017