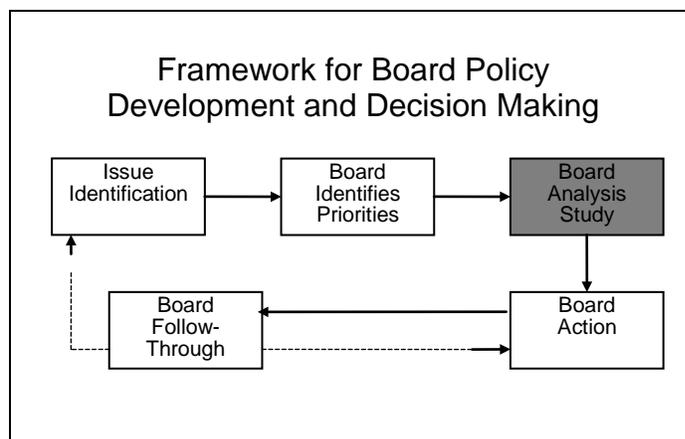


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

November 20, 2013



Agenda Item: Information on English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards

Iowa Goal: All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.

State Board Role/ Authority: The State Board acts in an advocacy role to promote effective education for all students. One of the State Board's priorities is reducing the achievement gap. This presentation addresses that issue.

Presenter: Byron Darnall, Chief
Bureau of Educator Quality

Attachments: 2

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board hear and discuss this information in preparation for a vote to adopt the new ELP standards at the January meeting.

Background: The Iowa Department of Education, in collaboration with the Stanford University Graduate School of Education's Understanding Language Center, WestEd, and a consortium of ten other states developed common ELP standards that can also be used in developing appropriate professional learning materials and student assessments. State adoption of the standards is required for Iowa's continued work with the consortium.

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards

English language proficiency standards are used by Iowa schools to guide the instruction and assessment of English language learners. They are also used by the Iowa Department of Education to meet the goals and requirements of Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Title III holds States, LEAs, and individual schools accountable for meeting these goals (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. 5).

Title III has three primary goals to help ensure that English language learners (ELLs):

1. attain English proficiency,
2. develop high levels of academic competence in English, and
3. meet the same challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet.

Title III requirements are as follows:

- ◆ To create standards for English language proficiency
- ◆ To identify, or develop, and implement annual English language proficiency assessments
- ◆ To define annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAOs) for increasing ELLs' development and attainment of English proficiency. (These AMAOs also include the number of ELLs making AYP on academic content assessments and are the State's responsibility).

As Iowa school districts work to implement the Iowa Core state standards, the Iowa Department of Education has been engaged in the process of examining our current English language proficiency (ELP) standards, in order to ensure appropriate correspondence between the Iowa Core standards (in English language arts, mathematics, and science) and the English language proficiency standards. The current standards were adopted by the Iowa State Board during the 2005-06 school year and first implemented in schools in the 2006-07 school year.

The intent of our study of the current English language proficiency standards was to ensure standards that best facilitate the academic content and language development of English language learners (ELLs) and support their successful preparation for college and careers. The study determined that current standards were not reflective of current research on English language learning and not linked to the Iowa Core content standards and therefore, needed to be revised.

The Iowa Department of Education, in collaboration with, the Stanford University Graduate School of Education's Understanding Language Center, WestEd, and a consortium of ten other states developed common ELP standards which could also be used in developing appropriate professional learning materials and student assessments. The ten consortium states are: Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia.

The ELP Standards address the following areas which are central to more rigorous college-and-career-ready standards:

- Engaging with Complex Texts to Build Knowledge Across the Curriculum
- Using Evidence to Inform, Argue, and Analyze
- Working Collaboratively, Understanding Multiple Perspectives, and Presenting Ideas
- Using and Developing Linguistic Resources to Do All of the Above



Overview of English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards

The standards are ordered using the Bunch, Kibler, and Pimentel (2013) schema (which, in turn, is based on the key shifts found in the Iowa Core). The ELP Standards address the following areas which are central to more rigorous college-and-career-ready standards:

- Engaging with Complex Texts to Build Knowledge Across the Curriculum
- Using Evidence to Inform, Argue, and Analyze
- Working Collaboratively, Understanding Multiple Perspectives, and Presenting Ideas
- Using and Developing Linguistic Resources to Do All of the Above

ELP Standards 1 through 7 address the language demands for ELLs to engage in the central content-specific practices associated with ELA & Literacy, mathematics, and science. They begin with a focus on extraction of meaning and then progress to engagement in these practices.

Standards 8 through 10 focus in on some of the more micro-level linguistic features that are undoubtedly important to focus on, but only in the service of the other seven standards.

- **Standard 1: construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational text through grade-appropriate listening, reading, and viewing**
 - Standard 1 focuses on the construction of meaning and extraction of information from oral presentations and texts of different density. [We use “construct,” not “determine” here since meaning is interpretive, not deterministic.]

Why this ELP Standard refer to *close reading of text*? We believe it can refer to something larger than an ELA/Literacy focus.

While close reading (and listening) is important (and addressed in content standards), the challenge here is that what can be taken as "close reading" by one can be gleaned with a quick scan by others, which may cause some confusion about intended demands.

- **Standard 2: participate in grade-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, responding to peer, audience, or reader comments and questions**
 - Standard 2 focuses on exchange and response during discussion – active participation - and the language used to convey it.

- **Standard 3: speak and write about grade-appropriate complex literary and informational texts and topics**
 - Standard 3 focuses on ability to summarize key ideas and to organize/develop topics and experiences. This standard purposely is not restricted to formal presentations – we want students to express ideas in classroom discourse too.
- **Standard 4: construct grade-appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence**
 - Standard 4 focuses on constructing a claim – and the language used to convey it. *[Note: This standard takes place in the context of arguments: An argument consists of a claim, reasoning and evidence. In earlier versions, this standard focused on “justifying” an argument. While this works for ELA, in science, for example, one supports or refutes an argument; one does not justify them.]*
- **Standard 5: conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems**
 - Standard 5 focuses is on how to use language when evaluating and communicating information during research or gathering information. You’ll note the focus on research (and obtaining information) covers more than ELA. Why? Research in science involves observations and experiment, not looking at text.
- **Standard 6: analyze and critique the arguments of others orally and in writing**
 - Standard 6 focuses on language students will use to analyze and critique arguments. This is one of the most challenging standards, students are asked to use language when participating in different types of interactions.
- **Standard 7: adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing**
 - Standard 7 focuses on appropriate selection of precision of language – which makes this standard a great candidate for activities in which the teacher provides scaffolding. But instructional activities need to be placed in within the context of language for specific social and academic contexts (as students learn to create precision and different shades of meaning for different types of Discourse). *[Note: This standard takes place in the context of understanding other perspectives & cultures.]*
- **Standard 8: determine the meaning of words and phrases in oral presentations and literary and informational text**

- Standard 8 focuses on development of one specific segment of academic language: vocabulary (but should take place in service of the first 7 standards).
- **Standard 9: create clear and coherent grade-appropriate speech and text**
 - Standard 9 focuses is on how text speakers and writers weave speech and text together. We wanted to address coherence and cohesion in both oral presentations and written texts as students' development progresses from simple to more complex language. Verbal language is as important as written when the emphasis is on *language for use*.
- **Standard 10: make accurate use of standard English to communicate in grade-appropriate speech and writing**
 - Standard 10 focuses on accuracy of English language forms -- conjugation of verbs and verb phrases, inflections, syntactical structures (compound and complex sentence, independent clauses.)

References

- Bunch, G., Kibler, A., & Pimentel, S. (2013). *Realizing opportunities for English learners in the Common Core English Language Arts and Disciplinary Literacy Standards*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. May 1, 2013. San Francisco, CA. Retrieved July 12, 2013, from http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/events/Bunch-Kibler-Pimentel_AERA_2013-04-08.pdf.
- Shafer Willner, L. (2013). Initial tour of the 2013 English language proficiency standards. Developed for the Council of Chief State School Officers. Washington, DC: Author.