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# ASHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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## SAMPLE WRITING POLICY

Date Adopted: August 5, 2014

Date Reviewed or Revised: June 3, 2014

## DEFINITION

“Writing’ means a purposeful act of thinking and expression that uses language to explore ideas and communicate meaning to others. Writing is a complex, multifaceted act of communication.” – Writing, as defined by SB1, 2009

There are three purposes for writing that will be implemented in classrooms for grades K-5. These three purposes are:

- Writing to Learn
- Writing to Demonstrate Learning
- Writing for Publication

### **I WRITING TO LEARN**

Students use this writing in order to process information, develop their thinking, learning content, and synthesize new concepts. Since the purpose of writing to learn is to assist students in assimilating and remembering information, the audience for this writing is the learner himself.

“Writing to Learn” will be used as an instructional tool to promote learning as a natural outcome of classroom activities in all areas of curriculum.

At each grade level, Writing to Learn can look like:

- Early Start, K and 1: drawing and labeling pictures, defining and illustrating vocabulary, writing simple sentences to explain concepts taught in various subject areas, shared research
- 2 and 3: vocabulary, reading response journals, note-taking, math journals, research
- 4 and 5: note-taking, research, journals for each subject area

### **II WRITING TO DEMONSTRATE LEARNING (UNDERSTANDING OF CONTENT)**

Teachers use the student writing to ascertain whether or not a student understands the content and/or concepts being taught. Regularly asking students to think and write at higher levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy, can help students reflect on the content and reveal what they know in depth. Since the students are demonstrating their knowledge, the teacher is usually the audience when “Writing to Demonstrate Learning.”

At each grade level, Writing to Demonstrate Learning can look like:

- Early Start, K, and 1: combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to create answers to extended response questions and short answer questions
- 2 and 3: writing answers to extended response questions and short answer questions
- 4 and 5: writing answers to extended questions and short answer questions

### **III WRITING FOR PUBLICATION**

Students must synthesize, analyze or evaluate what they have learned and communicate through both oral and written formats to a wider audience. The goal is to help students develop skills in communicating with real audiences (i.e. speaking or writing for authentic purposes). This writing provides students with opportunities to write in “real-world” settings and to make decisions about audience, purpose and form.

At each grade level, Writing for Publication can look like:

- K and 1: with guidance and support from adults explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to create pieces for publication
- 2 and 3: with guidance and support from adults explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, write to create pieces for publication
- 4 and 5: with some guidance and support from adults use technology including internet to produce and publish writing

## SCHOOL-WIDE STRUCTURES AND MONITORING

Classroom teachers in grades K-5 will implement the use of a portfolio for each child in order for:

- determining student's performance in communication
- grading procedures and feedback to students regarding their writing and communication skills
- the responsibility for review of the portfolios and feedback to students
- samples of individual student work that represent the interests and growth of the student over time
- other policies to improve the quality of an individual student's writing and communication skills

### **I EXPECTATIONS OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS IN REGARDS TO A PORTFOLIO:**

- Classroom teachers will keep a classroom writing folder for each student. The writing folder will hold prewriting and drafts of various genres.
- Students, with teacher collaboration, will choose the best work to be put into the working portfolio at the end of the year.
- Classroom teachers will ensure that student working portfolios (hard copy and/or digital) will follow students from Kindergarten through fifth grade. Working portfolios will be sent to appropriate middle schools at the end of fifth grade.
- Classroom teachers will give students, parents, and SBDM members via committee reports frequent feedback on student progress in writing and communication skills in order to move learning forward.
- The Curriculum Instruction and Assessment Committee will develop a written plan for implementing and monitoring working portfolios.
- The principal will ensure the implementation of the writing plan.
- The principal will ensure the plan includes guidelines for incorporating student and teacher use of technology tools.
- The principal will ensure ongoing, embedded professional development will be provided to address needed areas of growth for teachers to improve student achievement and to address the school's writing program.
- School administration and leadership will support the writing program.
- The SBDM Council will ensure that the council annually reviews, revises (if necessary), and approves the writing plan by June each year.

## **II EXPECTATIONS OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS IN REGARDS TO WRITING INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT:**

Writing to learn (at least twice a week):

- Assessed formatively and/or summatively through a simple rubric or for correct or incorrect answers.

Writing to demonstrate learning:

- Open response items (at least once a month):
- Assessed formatively and/or summatively through a 4 level rubric.
- On-demand writing(at least once a year):
- Focus on two genres (business letter and article) and two purposes (to inform or to persuade).
- Assessed formatively and/or summatively using Kentucky Writing Scoring Guide.

Writing to publish:

- One argumentative piece.
- One informative/explanatory piece.
- One narrative piece.
- All writing to publish pieces are scored formatively and/ or summatively using a standard rubric (such as the Kentucky Writing Scoring Guide or 6+1 Writing Traits).

## **III REFLECTION, ASSESSMENT, AND FEEDBACK**

- Rubrics/checklists will be used as a self-assessment tool, which will facilitate student growth.
- Students will be provided many opportunities to conference with teachers and peers.
- Students will be given the opportunity to reflect on and improve their writing and communication skills based on descriptive feedback.
- Every grade level team will review working portfolios, classroom writing folders, and other data such as walkthroughs, lesson plans, and checklists at least twice a year in order to revise the school writing program. Strengths and weaknesses will also inform whole class and whole school instruction.

## **POLICY EVALUATION**

We will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy through our School Improvement Planning Process.