

The ability to communicate through reading, writing, speaking, and listening makes humans unique. These means of communication allow us to learn from the experiences of others through the messages they impart. As North Dakota students grow and learn, the messages they encounter enlighten and empower them to meet life’s challenges. The standards and benchmarks set forth in this document create a framework whereby educators will provide the atmosphere and opportunity for all students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, race, LEP status, socioeconomic status, or disability, to succeed in essential literacy learning. In creating literacy-rich conditions and opportunities, our students will be exposed to a variety of cultures, human experiences, and a common literary foundation.

Students must understand the power of language and how to use that power ethically and creatively in an increasingly complex world. Students will learn to explore and articulate ever-changing issues and ideas in a diverse culture. The purpose of this document is to provide our students the tools needed to become skilled writers, fluent readers, effective communicators, and thoughtful listeners. This document is a useful resource for educators in a standards-based educational system as they align their curricula and design instruction to meet students’ needs. As they play an integral part in helping students learn, parents, community members, and state and local policy-makers are encouraged to consult this document.

These standards were designed to inform, assist, and advise stakeholders in the educational development of our children. Stakeholders include: (1) teachers and students in all subjects and in all grades or special settings; (2) school and district curriculum planners, designers, or writers; (3) school administrators and board members at school sites and central office levels; (4) parents and community members. When planning instruction, teachers will refer to current grade-level benchmark expectations as well as previous and following grade level expectations.

In accordance with federal and state legislation, educators need clearly defined benchmark expectations for literacy learning at all grade levels. A writing team comprised of K-12 teachers and administrators from all regions of the state developed The North Dakota English Language Arts (NDELA) Content and Achievement Standards document. To ensure continuity and representation, team members incorporated features and language from the 2003 preparatory materials and the 1996 document which was aligned with national English Language Arts documents. In addition, team members consulted locally developed standards documents.

This document is organized around a core of fundamental English Language Arts standards for all students in the state of North Dakota. Benchmark expectations for each standard were written for every grade level, kindergarten through grade twelve. These expectations reflect what every student at the completion of each grade level should know and be able to do. This document is organized in the following way:

Content Standard: A broad description of what students should know and be able to do within a particular content discipline or subject.

Subtopic: A category within a content standard that aids in the organization of benchmark expectations and that may carry across grade levels.

Benchmark Expectation: A translation of a standard into what students should know and be able to do at developmentally appropriate levels, clearly specifying and itemizing the content of a standard at a specific grade level. When referenced, “i.e.” means “including these things,” and “e.g.” means “for example.”

Achievement Standard: Also known as a performance standard, a description of what a student knows and can do to demonstrate proficiency on a content standard. Descriptors for achievement are set at four levels including advanced, proficient, partially proficient, and novice.

Qualifiers/ Quantifiers: The qualifiers and quantifiers (effectively, frequently, etc.) used in this document change according to the benchmark and grade level. For example, “frequently” may mean advanced proficient at one grade level, but it may mean proficient at a higher grade level. Proficiency levels (Advanced Proficient, Proficient, Partially Proficient, Novice) at each benchmark need to be examined as a whole to understand the intent of the qualifiers/ quantifiers.

This document is intended to be an interdisciplinary tool for all parties involved in the literacy education of North Dakota’s children.

Standard 1: Students engage in the research process

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BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>Kindergarten</p> <p>PLANNING RESEARCH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a topic • Discuss questions related to a topic of study <p>ACCESSING INFORMATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use developmentally appropriate reference tools; e.g., picture dictionary, ABC chart, nonfiction books <p>ORGANIZING AND PRESENTING INFORMATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share items and/or information related to a topic 	<p>Student thoroughly demonstrates the ability to choose a topic and participates in discussion related to that topic.</p> <p>Students automatically use appropriate reference tools.</p> <p>Students nearly always share items and/or information related to a topic.</p>	<p>Student effectively demonstrates the ability to choose a topic and participates in discussion related to that topic.</p> <p>Students frequently use appropriate reference tools.</p> <p>Students often share items and/or information related to a topic.</p>	<p>Student typically demonstrates the ability to choose a topic and participates in discussion related to that topic.</p> <p>Students occasionally use appropriate reference tools.</p> <p>Students sometimes share items and/or information related to a topic.</p>	<p>Student demonstrates minimal ability to choose a topic and participates in discussion related to that topic.</p> <p>Students rarely use appropriate reference tools.</p> <p>Students rarely share items and/or information related to a topic.</p>

Standard 2: Students engage in the reading process

Standard 2: Students engage in the reading process				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>Kindergarten</p> <p>LITERARY /INFORMATIONAL GENRES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize variety of genres; i.e., fiction, nonfiction, fairy tales, poetry, and nursery rhymes • Recognize the elements of a fiction text; i.e., character, setting, events, and ending • Demonstrate book handling knowledge; i.e., locate front of book, beginning and end of sentence and story • Demonstrate early reading behaviors; i.e., one-to-one match, directionality, locating known and unknown words in authentic texts • Know text features of fiction; i.e., fairy tales, poetry, and nursery rhymes • Know text features of nonfiction books; i.e., newspapers, magazines, picture dictionaries, and other developmentally appropriate reference materials 	<p>Students always recognize different genres and correctly identify the elements of a fiction text.</p> <p>Students nearly always demonstrate competent performance of book handling knowledge and early reading behaviors.</p> <p>Students describe in precise detail the characteristics of fiction and non-fiction materials.</p>	<p>Students regularly recognize different genres and correctly identify the elements of a fiction text.</p> <p>Students consistently demonstrate competent performance of book handling knowledge and early reading behaviors.</p> <p>Students describe in adequate detail the characteristics of fiction and non-fiction materials.</p>	<p>Students sometimes recognize different genres and correctly identify the elements of a fiction text.</p> <p>Students occasionally demonstrate competent performance of book handling knowledge and early reading behaviors.</p> <p>Students describe in moderate detail the characteristics of fiction and non-fiction materials.</p>	<p>Students rarely recognize different genres and correctly identify the elements of a fiction text.</p> <p>Students rarely demonstrate competent performance of book handling knowledge and early reading behaviors.</p> <p>Students describe in minimal detail the characteristics of fiction and non-fiction materials.</p>

NORTH DAKOTA
DRAFT—LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS FOR GRADES K-12—DRAFT

Standard 2: Students engage in the reading process				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>PHONOLOGICAL/PHONEMIC AWARENESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that words make up sentences • Know that syllables make up words • Identify and manipulate individual sounds in words • Identify similarities and differences of sounds within words • Isolate and say the first or last sound in a word • Combine or blend the separate sounds in a word to say the word • Break or separate a one syllable word into its parts—onset and rime • Identify and begin to create rhyming words 	<p>Students thoroughly demonstrate an understanding that words make up sentences and syllables make up words.</p> <p>Students automatically demonstrate an awareness of individual sounds in words.</p> <p>Students have an extensive sense of segmenting and blending sounds.</p> <p>Students automatically identify and begin to create rhyming words.</p>	<p>Students effectively demonstrate an understanding that words make up sentences and syllables make up words.</p> <p>Students routinely demonstrate an awareness of individual sounds in words.</p> <p>Students have a reasonable sense of segmenting and blending sounds.</p> <p>Students accurately identify and begin to create rhyming words.</p>	<p>Students occasionally demonstrate an understanding that words make up sentences and syllables make up words.</p> <p>Students occasionally demonstrate an awareness of individual sounds in words.</p> <p>Students have a marginal sense of segmenting and blending sounds.</p> <p>Students occasionally identify and begin to create rhyming words.</p>	<p>Students rarely demonstrate an understanding that words make up sentences and syllables make up words.</p> <p>Students rarely demonstrate an awareness of individual sounds in words.</p> <p>Students have a poor sense of segmenting and blending sounds.</p> <p>Students rarely identify and begin to create rhyming words.</p>

NORTH DAKOTA
DRAFT—LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS FOR GRADES K-12—DRAFT

Standard 2: Students engage in the reading process				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>PHONICS/WORD RECOGNITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the relationship between letters and their sounds • State sounds for all letters in isolation • Know that letters go together to make words • Begin to use knowledge of phonics to decode words • Identify and name upper and lower case letters 	<p>Students fluently identify the relationship between letters and their sounds, including sounds for all letters in isolation.</p> <p>Students effectively use knowledge of phonics to decode words and know that letters go together to make words.</p> <p>Students precisely identify upper and lower case letters.</p>	<p>Students quickly identify the relationship between letters and their sounds, including sounds for all letters in isolation.</p> <p>Students begin to use knowledge of phonics to decode words and know that letters go together to make words.</p> <p>Students correctly identify upper and lower case letters.</p>	<p>Students occasionally identify the relationship between letters and their sounds, including sounds for all letters in isolation.</p> <p>Students occasionally use knowledge of phonics to decode words and know that letters go together to make words.</p> <p>Students occasionally identify upper and lower case letters.</p>	<p>Students slowly identify the relationship between letters and their sounds, including sounds for all letters in isolation.</p> <p>Students rarely use knowledge of phonics to decode words and know that letters go together to make words.</p> <p>Students rarely identify upper and lower case letters.</p>

NORTH DAKOTA
DRAFT—LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS FOR GRADES K-12—DRAFT

Standard 2: Students engage in the reading process				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>COMPREHENSION/READING STRATEGIES FOR MEANING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make and confirm/disconfirm predictions about what will happen in a story • Recall/Retell information in sequence • State text-to-self connections <p>PURPOSES FOR READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to use reading to be informed and/or entertained with shared reading texts; e.g., big books, charts, poems, guided reading books 	<p>Students demonstrate excellent performance in making reasonable predictions as well as retelling information in sequence.</p> <p>Students are highly effective in making text-to-self connections.</p> <p>Students effectively demonstrate understanding of how to process an authentic text and that reading is a source of entertainment and/or information.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate competent performance in making reasonable predictions as well as retelling information in sequence.</p> <p>Students often make text-to-self connections.</p> <p>Students begin to effectively demonstrate understanding of how to process an authentic text and that reading is a source of entertainment and/or information.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate marginal performance in making reasonable predictions as well as retelling information in sequence.</p> <p>Students moderately make text-to-self connections.</p> <p>Students occasionally demonstrate an understanding of how to process an authentic text and that reading is a source of entertainment and/or information.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate minimal performance in making reasonable predictions as well as retelling information in sequence.</p> <p>Students are ineffective in making text-to-self connections.</p> <p>Students rarely demonstrate an understanding of how to process an authentic text and that reading is a source of entertainment and/or information.</p>

Standard 3: Students engage in the writing process

Standard 3: Students engage in the writing process				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>Kindergarten</p> <p>PREWRITING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify audience and purposes for writing • Discuss ideas drawn from personal experience • Use developmentally appropriate tools for prewriting (ABC chart, word walls, environmental print) 	<p>Students are highly effective in demonstrating an understanding of the purposes for writing, use personal experience in writing and can select appropriate tools and strategies needed for prewriting.</p>	<p>Students effectively demonstrate an understanding of the purposes for writing, use personal experience in writing and can select appropriate tools and strategies needed for prewriting.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate a marginal understanding of the purposes for writing, use personal experience in writing and can select appropriate tools and strategies needed for prewriting.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate a minimal understanding of the purposes for writing, use personal experience in writing and can select appropriate tools and strategies needed for prewriting.</p>

NORTH DAKOTA
DRAFT—LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS FOR GRADES K-12—DRAFT

Standard 3: Students engage in the writing process				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>DRAFTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write from left to right • Write frequently • Use consonant sounds at beginnings and ends of words • Use some easy to hear vowels • Begin to use spaces to separate words • Incorporate grade-level appropriate vocabulary in writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate meaning through drawing; e.g., setting, characters • Match story with drawing • Read their own writing <p>PUBLICATION/PRESENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share published work with peers, teachers and family members 	<p>Students nearly always demonstrate directionality in writing, use consonants and some vowel sounds in spelling, use spaces separating words and incorporate developmentally appropriate vocabulary in writing.</p> <p>Student writing precisely matches their drawing. Students precisely read their writing.</p> <p>Students exhibit excellence when presenting published work to others.</p>	<p>Students often demonstrate directionality in writing, use consonants and some vowel sounds in spelling, use spaces separating words and incorporate developmentally appropriate vocabulary in writing.</p> <p>Student writing often matches their drawing. Students correctly read their writing.</p> <p>Students effectively present published work to others.</p>	<p>Students occasionally demonstrate directionality in writing, use consonants and some vowel sounds in spelling, use spaces separating words and incorporate developmentally appropriate vocabulary in writing.</p> <p>Student writing sometimes matches their drawing. Students somewhat read their writing.</p> <p>Students are generally effective in presenting published work to others.</p>	<p>Students rarely demonstrate directionality in writing, use consonants and some vowel sounds in spelling, use spaces separating words and incorporate developmentally appropriate vocabulary in writing.</p> <p>Student writing rarely matches their drawing. Students minimally read their writing.</p> <p>Students are minimally effective in presenting published work to others.</p>

Standard 4: Students engage in the speaking and listening process

Standard 4: Students engage in the speaking and listening process				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>Kindergarten</p> <p>VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use developmentally appropriate speaking vocabulary including words that describe people, places, things, locations, and actions • Actively listen to the speaker • Follow one and two step directions <p>CONVERSATION, GROUP DISCUSSION, AND ORAL PRESENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to peers in conversations • Take turns speaking in conversations • Formulate and respond appropriately to questions 	<p>Students extensively use appropriate speaking vocabulary, actively listen to speakers, and follow directions.</p> <p>Students extensively respond to peers and take turns speaking in conversation.</p> <p>Students thoroughly formulate and respond appropriately to questions.</p>	<p>Students frequently use appropriate speaking vocabulary, actively listen to speakers, and follow directions.</p> <p>Students frequently respond to peers and take turns speaking in conversation.</p> <p>Students effectively formulate and respond appropriately to questions.</p>	<p>Students generally use appropriate speaking vocabulary, actively listen to speakers, and follow directions.</p> <p>Students sometimes respond to peers and take turns speaking in conversation.</p> <p>Students generally formulate and respond appropriately to questions.</p>	<p>Students rarely use appropriate speaking vocabulary, actively listen to speakers, and follow directions</p> <p>Students rarely respond to peers and take turns speaking in conversation.</p> <p>Students ineffectively formulate and respond appropriately to questions.</p>

Standard 5: Students understand media

Standard 5: Students understand media				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
Kindergarten MEDIA GENRES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing and developing media • Recognize that books, magazines, newspapers, television, and computer programs are types of media. 	Students nearly always identify various media genres.	Students often identify various media genres.	Students sometimes identify various media genres.	Students rarely identify various media genres.

Standard 6: Students understand and use principles of language

Standard 6: Students understand and use principles of language				
BENCHMARK EXPECTATION	PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTOR			
	ADVANCED PROFICIENT	PROFICIENT	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT	NOVICE
<p>Kindergarten</p> <p>LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS/MECHANICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use sentences to convey a message • Use conventions of punctuation (period) • Use developmentally-appropriate principles of spelling i.e., inventive spelling, commonly used words in writing 	<p>Students nearly always use punctuation and principles of spelling in conveying messages.</p>	<p>Students often use punctuation and principles of spelling in conveying messages.</p>	<p>Students sometimes use punctuation and principles of spelling in conveying messages.</p>	<p>Students rarely use punctuation and principles of spelling in conveying messages.</p>