

Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan

Five Guiding Principles

Literacy as a Critical Foundation for All Learning

Literacy is a critical foundation for all learning. Being fully literate in the 21st century requires that students read, write, and communicate at high levels to construct meaning from and across multiple sources, including print and non-print, and to communicate ideas orally and in writing. Schools must prepare students to develop the complex literacy skills they need to be future ready, to make meaningful contributions to society, and to enjoy personal fulfillment. Literacy, an important skill, and tool for learning, requires instruction and support from birth-grade 12.

Diversity

Diversity (e.g., linguistic, cultural, race and socioeconomic status) should be acknowledged, valued, and respected in our schools and classrooms. Students should have educational experiences that enable them to learn about their own culture as well as the culture of others, to make connections between what they know and what they are learning. By valuing and acknowledging diversity in our curriculum and instructional practices, student learning, motivation, and access to educational opportunities will be increased.

High Expectations

There must be high expectations for all learners and a belief that all can gain literacy skills that prepare them to be future ready; that is, to be successful in college, career, and as citizens. Instruction must address the full range of learners and be differentiated to meet each child's needs; such instruction requires a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education.

Evidence-Based Decision Making

Decision making about literacy programs, practices, and policies must be evidence-based; that is, it must be grounded in reliable and valid research results and informed by experiential and contextual evidence. Evidence must come from multiple sources and provide information about the many factors that influence student learning.

Professional Learning

Educators must be prepared to teach effectively in the schools of the 21st century. Practicing teachers will benefit from ongoing, job-embedded learning opportunities that promote lifelong learning and reflective teaching.