

**RA Jones Middle School Writing Policy  
May 2011**

**Writing Goals**

To develop a school-wide Writing Program that is equitable in teacher responsibility and encompasses the five key components of Writing Plan per KY Revised Statute 158.6451 (2009) and Senate Bill 1 writing policy requirements. Students shall have the following to aid in their writing and communication instruction:

- Multiple opportunities in all core content classes to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes
- Access to and the use of technology tools to develop and refine complex 21<sup>st</sup> century communication skills (Vodcasts, Podcasts, wiki's, blogs, etc.)
- Access to and the use of language resources
- Feedback to students regarding writing and communication skills in order to make improvements before placing items in a portfolio

**STUDENT'S WRITING EXPERIENCES**

To provide ***multiple opportunities to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes and use a variety of language resources***, all students will experience the following:

- Writing to learn, writing to demonstrate learning, and writing for publication.
- Authentic, meaningful writing at all grade levels which includes a variety of purposes and audiences, shows ownership, and is a product of students' own experiences.
- The writing process, (planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and reflecting), across the curriculum, at all grade levels, as the natural outcome of content studied.
- Read and analyze a variety of print and non-print materials (i.e., artwork, photographs, electronic text, graphics, illustrations, web images, maps, multimedia) including persuasive, literary, informational, and practical/workplace materials.
- Learn about and use appropriate resources for writing (i.e., observations, print materials, and technology) when considering purpose and audience.

**INSTRUCTIONAL WRITING STRATEGIES GUIDELINES**

Teachers will provide multiple opportunities for students to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes through:

- **Writing to learn** activities in every unit of study in ALL core content and unified arts classes. Examples include: Learning logs, journals, or organized notebooks, dialogue journal, double-entry journal, writer's notebook, entrance/exit slips, quick writes, and any other writing used to reflect or demonstrate the learning from a class or series of classes focused on one objective.
- **Writing to demonstrate** learning in every unit of study in ALL core content and unified arts classes. These include open response questions, written response to teacher prompt, lab reports, process papers, or any writing that demonstrates knowledge in a

- formal written report. These should be marked and scored and recorded as summative grades.
- **Writing for publication.** In Language Arts, Social Studies and Science, student samples will be developed in every unit that could be taken to publication. The writing must be **embedded during instruction** and not a separate experience. The writing should involve the following ideas:
    - Authentic, meaningful writing at all grade levels which includes a variety of purposes and audiences, shows ownership, and is a product of students' own experiences.
    - The writing process, (planning, drafting, revising, editing, **refining**), across the curriculum, at all grade levels, as the natural outcome of content studied.
    - Learn about and use appropriate resources for writing (i.e., observations, print materials, and technology) when considering purpose and audience.
  - **On-demand writing** in the core subjects of Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science in each unit of study and all other areas as naturally occur through content.
  - Teach higher-order thinking skills.
  - **Assign students to read and analyze a variety of print and non-print materials (i.e., artwork, photographs, electronic text, graphics, illustrations, web images, maps, multimedia) including argumentative, informative/explanatory, literary, research, and analysis materials in every subject area**
  - Provide appropriate resources for writing (i.e., observations, print materials, and **technology**) while considering different audiences and promoting student choice.
  - Provide models of specific learning objectives and involve self assessment of those objectives
  - Document evidence of these opportunities in Unit Plans and Daily Assessment plans

To ensure the writing process includes reflection, assessment, and feedback, the teacher will incorporate:

- Feedback on all writing to demonstrate and writing for publication pieces
- Giving students the opportunity to improve writing after providing feedback
- Co-developing scoring guides/rubrics to assess writing
- Participate in content meetings that focus time in each meeting to look at and reflect on the types of writing being developed.
- Setting clear writing goals with students that are celebrated and revised as needed

## **SCHOOLWIDE STRUCTURES AND MONITORING**

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To ensure every student has a **writing portfolio that includes samples of work that show interests and growth over time, follows the student from grade to grade, and follows the student to any school he/she attends**, the principal will:

- **Assign the Academic Performance Committee to review on a yearly basis the Writing Program review document and make changes to policy as needed**
- Ensure instructional practices include guidelines for incorporating student and teacher **use of technology tools.**

- Ensure the implementation of the Instructional writing strategies guidelines as well as all aspects of the Writing Program review document.
- Ensure that the council reviews, revises (if necessary), and approves the writing policy by April of each year.
- Ensure teachers receive professional development needed to improve writing instruction. RA Jones Instructional Coach, Cluster Leader, and Language Arts Lead will provide opportunities for teacher training and assistance with writing materials, ideas, strategies and procedures throughout the year as stated in the SIP and Kentucky Writing Program review Document.

## STUDENT WRITING FOLDERS

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1. RA Jones students will develop writing folders (at all grade levels). Teachers will continue focusing on writing instruction in every classroom, and each content area is responsible for contributing to the development of the writing folders:
  - Language Arts must produce **at least: one literary piece (examples: personal narratives, essays, memoirs, short stories, or poetry), one literary analysis piece, one informational/explanatory piece (examples: editorial, feature article, essay) and one argumentative piece.**
  - Science **must produce at least:** one informational/explanatory piece (examples could include but are not limited to editorial, feature articles, describing a process or any type of analytical writing) **and one argumentative piece. One piece is refined for publication and the other is on-demand form.**
  - **Social Studies must produce at least:** one informational/explanatory piece (examples could include but are not limited to editorial, feature articles, describing a process or any type of analytical writing) **and one argumentative piece. One piece is refined for publication and the other is on-demand form.**
  - Math **must produce** a piece of **explanatory** writing in which students either explain or describe how to solve a real-life mathematical problem.
  - All subject areas may provide other types of writing embedded during instruction.

## WRITING PORTFOLIOS

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1. By March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, all writing **pieces** will be given to the Language Arts teacher. Students will then select the pieces they wish to include in their portfolio with input from the **Language Arts** teacher. **The portfolio will advance with the student as he/she progresses to the next grade.**
2. Writing portfolios will contain four pieces per grade level: **one literary writing, one informational/explanatory, one argumentative writing and one literary analysis. At least two of these pieces should be written for publication. Others should be generated in an on-demand situation.**

3. RA Jones will conduct a school-wide, single-blind, **analysis** of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade writing portfolios, on a yearly basis, to measure student development in writing and communication and to allow teachers to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the school writing program.
  - Sixth Grade teachers and unified arts teachers will **analyze** eighth grade portfolios to determine strengths and weaknesses of the writing program as a whole across grade levels.
  - Seventh grade teachers will **analyze** sixth grade portfolios to determine strengths and weaknesses that can be addressed when those students return as seventh graders
  - Eighth grade teachers will **analyze** seventh grade portfolios to determine strengths and weaknesses that can be addressed when those students return as eighth graders. As well as indicate the improvements made from sixth grade to seventh grade.

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## **POLICY EVALUATION**

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

Date Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed or Revised: \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Chairperson's Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed or Revised: \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Chairperson's Initials \_\_\_\_\_

This sample policy includes all Senate Bill 1 writing policy requirements which are in bold italics in this sample policy.

Adapted from 2009 KASC School wide "Writing Program Kit"