

Zionsville Community Schools

Board of School Trustees Meeting “Item for Consideration”

New Business NB6c • Date: February 10, 2025

Grades 5-8 Literacy Instructional Materials Adoption

Category:

<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources, Personnel/Staffing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance, Budgeting, Accounting	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Board Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities, Transportation, Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Relations	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Type of Board of Trustees Consideration Sought:

Action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input type="checkbox"/>

Facts of this Matter:

In 2024, the legislature passed Senate Enrolled Act 1 that requires schools to provide reading instruction aligned with the science of reading to all students in kindergarten through grade eight. The Indiana Department of Education also created an approved materials adoption list for literacy in for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. As we have learned more about the science behind how students learn to read, teachers have asked for new literacy materials that are based on science and meet the needs of our students in Zionsville. We used a rubric to review each program that was developed by the Writing League based on research in an effort to utilize the best materials available for students and teachers while also meeting the requirements of the law.

Overview of Process:

In June 2024, ZCS hosted a Literacy Summit to help teachers learn more about the science of reading. In fall 2024, fifth through eighth grade teachers reviewed the parts of Scarborough’s Reading Rope, Writing Rope, and the science of reading rubric to make sure we had a collective understanding of what students need for literacy rich instruction at the middle level. ZCS Instructional Coaches and our literacy consultant, Kim Gray, met with teachers on e-days, after school, and during prep times to unpack the curriculum samples and determine which one best supported the science of reading. At the same time, we have been carefully studying our reading data to determine what resources we need in ZCS to continue fostering student growth in the areas of reading and writing. Teachers had the opportunity to attend in-person presentations with each textbook company.

Administrators and Coaches have also been meeting together and connecting with textbook companies to make sure they have a clear understanding of each program to help inform the best recommendation for ZCS students and teachers. Additionally, all parents were invited to attend presentations that were held at three separate times with a total of four adults in attendance. Of those in attendance, three parents left feedback forms to be included in our

analysis. Our process specifically asked teachers and parents to look at each program and provide information, from their lens, on how well each program met the rubric. This provided multiple perspectives for the coaches, administrators, and the Director of Academic Services to make a recommendation.

Overview of Recommendation:

After reviewing current materials, Indiana Academic Standards, our Zionsville student data, and the science behind how adolescents learn to read, we are recommending to adopt Great Minds – *Wit and Wisdom* for fifth grade and Great Minds - *Arts and Letters* for grades six through eight. Both programs are from the same company with *Arts and Letters* streamlined for a shorter instructional period.

Each teacher will receive a complete package of teacher resources, read aloud books, and books for students. In all grades, these materials include novels, short passages, and non-fiction selections.

Objective POSITIVES related to this item or approach:

Classroom teachers, parents, and administrators were a part of this process and gave feedback on each set of materials based on a rubric. This plan provides a common reading program for all middle school students and meets the IDOE reading requirements for fifth grade (from the required list) and sixth through eighth (based on the science of reading). Adopting a core reading program this rigorous not only meets the needs of our learners, but also ensures we are in compliance with state law passed in 2024. Adopting instructional materials at this time of the year allows us to provide training on the two remaining e-days in March and April. The company will also provide continued coaching during the 2025-2026 school year.

Objective NEGATIVES related to this item or approach:

Aside from financial cost, there is a human capacity cost. As with any new adoption, teachers will need time and support to learn all components and consider effective use of the materials within their classroom.

Opinion/Recommendation:

Kris Devereaux, Assistant Superintendent of Academics, and Christine Squier, Director of Academics, are asking the ZCS Board of Trustees

1. To adopt the materials reviewed and selected for use with the instruction of middle school literacy;
2. To authorize the Superintendent and/or her designee to sign all contracts and/or agreements to authorize the purchase of the listed adoption materials.

Financial Implications, if any:

Due to new legislation, there are no financial implications for families. The literacy materials and teacher training will be paid for using the ZCS Education Fund. The quote for the program is a total of \$344,782.20 for three years with an additional \$10,000 for move-ins and book replacement for a total of \$354,782.20.

Suggested Wording for a Motion, if any:

I move to approve the adoption of instructional materials for Grades 5-8 as presented and authorize the Leadership Team to execute the necessary contracts for purchase.