



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

TO: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent
District 97 Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Amy Warke, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer
Dr. Helen Wei, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

RE: Adoption of *Reading Units of Study* for Reading Instruction (K-2) and
Classroom Library Supplementation (grades K-5)

DATE: January 24, 2017

Purpose of the Report: Approve purchase of Reading Units of Study and Classroom Libraries

As a result of Dr. Kelley's listening tour last school year, this fall we adopted our district vision and goals to guide our work. Our vision is to:

Create a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive, and focused on the whole child.

We propose that we make the following budgetary commitments for the 2017-2018, to continue to strengthen our K-5 literacy instruction within a balanced literacy framework:

- **Reading Units of Study** - gradual roll-out
- **Classroom Libraries Supplementation** - purchase of additional books to ensure classroom libraries are diverse and well-stocked for reading workshop
- **Reading and Writing Workshop Professional Learning** - job-embedded coaching, workshops, and support
- **Word Study Materials** - instructional materials for phonics, spelling, and vocabulary - recommendations will be shared with the Board of Education in March

The *Reading Units of Study (RUOS)*, developed by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project from Columbia University (TCRWP), will help teachers to plan and implement well-designed lessons with personalized instruction according to student needs, as well as help us address the following district goals which are directly aligned to the Teaching and Learning Department:

- **Students and staff feel empowered, valued, and respected.**

RUOS values student choice and encouraging student voice, as well as providing support to teachers through their instructional materials and rationales for instructional decisions. The materials themselves are professional learning, in that they empower teachers with a deep understanding of literacy development. In addition, we plan to provide professional learning to teachers through job-embedded coaching, as well as workshops, to support their learning and implementation of RUOS. We also plan to support instructional coaches and administrators in leading implementation.

- **Every student is challenged and engaged.**

Each student is known for who they are and their unique needs are met.

Students lead their own learning and become lifelong learners

RUOS instruction is personalized according to students' reading levels, development, and growth. The RUOS learning progressions and student rubrics help students to self-assess, receive feedback from their peers, and receive feedback from the teacher, so that students understand how to continue to grow and progress. RUOS also draws upon students' own experiences as writers in learning how an author makes decisions about writing. RUOS also uses a gradual release of responsibility, in which students learn to be independent and engaged in their learning process.

- **All students have access to programs and supports to prepare them for success in high school.**

We support every student to be a critical thinker, ready to contribute to their community.

RUOS will help our students to become more confident and proficient readers, writers, and thinkers.

- **Students feel safe and a sense of belonging.**

Caring adult-student relationships

RUOS will help teachers and staff to continue to develop lifelong connections with our students, provide them with a vehicle for student voice and agency, and help instill within them a love for reading, writing, and communicating. RUOS provides opportunities for teachers to conference with students, meet with small groups, and to build relationships with students. In addition, in the RUOS, students work and learn in partners and in small book clubs, in which students may build connections with one another. Classroom libraries that will support implementation of the RUOS will include titles that reflect our diverse student population, as well as provide a door to other experiences and worldviews.

2016 data released by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) indicate that students in TCRWP schools outperform students in non-TCRWP schools in New York City, and their work has also resulted in:

- Improved ELA performance for the student population at large
- Improved performance across all groups of learners, including ELL/ESL students and Students with Disabilities
- Increased ELA proficiency for each year spent in a TCRWP school
- Higher scores overall at all grade levels (3-8) compared to New York City and New York State

For more details on the data demonstrating the effectiveness of TCRWP's work on balanced literacy and the *Units of Study*, please go to <http://tinyurl.com/tcrwpdata2016>.

Because the *Reading Units of Study* is research-based, supports our district goals, has demonstrated effectiveness through data, and complements our current writing program (*Writing Units of Study*), we highly recommend that we adopt the *Reading Units of Study* for grades K-2 (2017-2018) and grades 3-5 (2018-2019).

Budgetary Impact for 2017-2018

We recommend a gradual roll-out of the *Reading Units of Study* next year, with implementation in grades K-2 for the 2017-2018 school year.

The anticipated costs are:

- *Reading Units of Study* (K-2) and Classroom Libraries (K-5): **\$1,574,810.20**

Please note that we are currently piloting an inventory process of classroom libraries at one school, and will be conducting the district-wide classroom library inventory this spring. The **classroom library expenditure** above is the *maximum* amount possible. Most likely, the amount spent on classroom libraries will be less than the requested amount, once we have taken inventory of all classrooms and determine how to supplement our existing classroom libraries.

Action: Approve the purchase of Reading Units of Study K-2 and classroom libraries K-5 not to exceed 1.5 million dollars.