



CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING

Friday, September 25, 2026 11:30 AM

Glastonbury Public Schools, Central Office, Conference Room A
628 Hebron Avenue
Glastonbury, CT 06033

1. Art Curriculum Review Report
2. English Language Arts Curriculum Review Report

ART

Curriculum Review Report
2025-2026

Glastonbury Public Schools
Glastonbury, CT

Submitted by:
Holly Buckley

Presented to the Glastonbury Board of Education
Fall 2026



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Committee Membership

Holly Buckley,
Director of Art, K-12

Brendan Callahan,
Director of History/Social Sciences, K-12

Tonya M. Claiborne,
Ed.D., Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Adriana Bruno,
Grades 5-6 Art Teacher,
Gideon Welles School

Christopher Del Coro,
Grades 7-8 Art Teacher,
Smith Middle School

Rachel Gaivoto,
Grades 9-12 Art Teacher,
Glastonbury High School

Dawn Mistretta,
Grades K-5 Art Teacher,
Hopewell Elementary School and Gideon Welles School

Kara Nolan,
Grades K-5 Art Teacher,
Nayaug Elementary School

Taylor Torro,
Grades K-5 Art Teacher,
Hebron Elementary School and Gideon Welles School

Brigette Roy,
Grades K-5 Art Teacher,
Buttonball Lane School and Nayaug Elementary School

Introduction

Thank You

A piece of art evolves through reflection and refinement; the curriculum review of the Art Program is no exception. Thank you to the Art Curriculum Review Steering Committee and the entire department for your dedication to this valuable process. To cultivate a truly vibrant arts program, we must pause to critique our own process. By curating our practices through reflection, we refine the opportunities we offer our students for years to come.

We will continue to grow as a department through this work and be able to serve the diverse and changing needs of our students. I am pleased that our department all had a voice in this work, using our collaborative and discerning eyes to not only celebrate but define growth opportunities. I am fortunate to work hand in hand with such a dedicated group of professionals who consistently inspire me and bring their passion for the importance of art education to our students' lives.

Your time, insights, expertise, and passion in ensuring that the art program in Glastonbury continues to evolve and grow as an innovative and exceptional experience for all learners speaks to your dedication as educators, and I thank you.



Holly Buckley
Director of Art, K-12

Purpose of Curriculum Review

The formal, comprehensive Curriculum Review is designed to be systematic, collaborative, and consistent with the Glastonbury Public Schools curriculum development process across content areas. As scheduled every five years, Curriculum Directors examine the entire program, including curriculum and assessment, instructional practices, student outcomes, professional learning, outreach, and resources.

Through this process, we seek to identify areas for continued development, evaluate the alignment of program initiatives, and advance the goals and actions of the 6th Generation Strategic Plan. Findings will drive long and short-term goals and recommendations to support program improvements.

To complete the process, Director of Art, Holly Buckley, led the department and a Curriculum Review Steering Committee through the examination of five program domains. This process is designed to determine strengths and challenges of each domain as well as produce recommendations to support short and long-term goals for the program. The five domains under review include:

1. Curriculum & Assessment
2. Teaching & Learning
3. Professional Development
4. Communication & Outreach
5. Operations

Furthermore, two specific domains of the program were examined through an equity lens. This process supports our district's commitment to providing students with "mirrors" reflecting their own experiences and "windows" into experiences different from their own. We believe the curriculum should include diverse representation and perspectives, and that teaching and learning should ensure equity and access by all.

This rigorous and reflective Curriculum Review underscores our school system's dedication to fostering inclusive and dynamic learning environments and experiences, ensuring our curricula not only meets the highest standards but also resonates with and supports every student.

Department Description

Mission and Philosophy

The mission of the Glastonbury Art Department is to empower all students to develop as creative, flexible, collaborative, innovative problem solvers and confident thinkers who demonstrate artistic literacy and can contribute a unique vision to a dynamic global society.

The Glastonbury Art Department believes that all students can be successful in the visual and media arts through meaningful and active engagement in the artistic process. The arts program is accessible to all students and challenges them to explore self-expression through their personal artistic vision at a variety of skill levels.

Through research, exploration, experimentation, collaboration, revisions, and reflection, students show their artistic growth and ability to problem-solve as they develop original, innovative works of art and design. Participation in the art program helps students to consider multiple points of view while appreciating and understanding various cultures, ideas, and aspects of their own identity.

We believe engagement in the Glastonbury Art Program empowers students to successfully approach future challenges with creativity, confidence, and adaptability as contributing citizens and lifelong learners in a dynamic global society.

GPS Course Offerings and Staffing

Elementary (5.0 Teachers)	
Kindergarten	<i>Unit Titles: Ceramics - Pinch Pot, Expressive Line/Shape, Landscape Near/Far, Printmaking/Purposeful Play, Color Mixing</i>
First Grade	<i>Unit Titles: Narrative Art, Ceramics - Coil Construction, Still Life, Illustrative Collage</i>
Second Grade	<i>Unit Titles: Relief Sculpture, Observation & Abstraction, Representational Portrait, Masters of Color - Value/Light/Shadow</i>
Third Grade	<i>Unit Titles: Figures in Motion, Landscapes, Stamp Statement Design</i>
Fourth Grade	<i>Unit Titles: On-Point Perspective, Identity Collage, Relief Sculpture</i>
Fifth Grade	<i>Unit Titles: Abstract Painting, Design Unit, Photography</i>
Secondary (4.0 Teachers)	
Grade 6	<i>Unit Titles: Portraiture, 2-Point Perspective, Sculpture</i>

Grade 7	<i>3D Art Art Zone</i>	<i>Art of Animation Crafts</i>
Grade 8	<i>Digital Art & Media Modern Design</i>	<i>Studio Art & Media Sculpture</i>
Glastonbury High School (3.0 Teachers)		
Grades 11-12	<i>AP Studio Art (Year-long course, Level 1) Advanced Drawing (Offered Level 2 & Level 1 ECE)</i>	
Grades 9-12	<i>Animation Art Foundations Ceramics Contemporary Craft Design Creative Connection in Art (Year-long course) Design Careers in STEAM (Offered Level 2 & Level 1)</i>	<i>Digital Art & Media (Offered Level 2 & Level 1 ECE) Drawing & Painting Fashion Design Film & Video Production (Offered Level 2 & Level 1 ECE) Sculpture</i>

Executive Summary

The Glastonbury Public Schools Art Program is committed to offering students a well-rounded curriculum that is challenging, meaningful, and engaging. Through authentic, standards-based learning experiences, students are encouraged to become active participants in their artistic growth. The committee and department identified key findings and developed actionable next steps to support the diverse needs of all learners. Areas of focus included expanding opportunities for collaboration with specialized staff and fellow art educators, improving scheduling structures to better support students and programs, and exploring additional programming options such as adaptive and peer-based experiences, as well as advanced media courses.

The department takes pride in many strengths, including the knowledge and dedication of its teachers who deliver high-quality instruction, the strong partnerships within the community that create meaningful, real-world opportunities for students, and a rigorous, responsive curriculum that continues to grow and adapt. This review process provided an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the department's successes while also identifying areas for continued improvement and future growth as Glastonbury's Art Program evolves to serve all students effectively.

Strengths and Celebrations

- The art program fosters student success with the number of recognitions awarded to students each year.
- The K-12 curriculum is comprehensive, rigorous, and aligned with both National and State Core Art Standards, the GHS Portrait of a Learner, and the GPS Strategic Plan.
- Integration of inclusive content and diverse artist representation that offers a global perspective and "windows and mirrors" for students.
- Teachers leverage Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to foster access and agency in the creative process, while using restorative practices to foster an inclusive environment.
- Varied, project-based assessments that allow students to demonstrate mastery through multiple modalities and reflections.
- Strong community partnerships and community connection through art advocacy, art shows and competitions, and art programming.
- Instruction is supported with quality materials, technology, and tools to ensure a well-supported and secure learning environment.
- Highly qualified and dedicated staff who are lifelong learners in arts education.
- Discipline-specific leadership offering content-specific expertise and a unified vision of the department.

Priority Recommendations

- Continue curriculum development of At-A-Glance and Unit Overview guides, common assessments, and K-12 grading criteria to ensure consistency in program delivery.
- Establish dedicated, structured opportunities for art teachers to collaborate with Special Education (SPED) and Multi-Language Learner (MLL) staff.

- Increase alignment of K-12 professional learning to ensure pedagogy, skills, resources, safety, and knowledge are properly scaffolded, developed, and communicated.
- Continue to prioritize high-impact community connections that bridge students, professional artists, and the community (e.g., Calendar Art Showcase at WTML and Exploring the Arts Program).
- Establish staffing and scheduling to maximize student engagement inside and outside of the classroom, ensure common planning time, and offer further opportunities for peer model learning to promote access and support all students.
- Continue to host receptions and art shows celebrating student work and process information to increase awareness of student talent and program impact.
- Continue maintenance and improvements of facilities to meet learning needs, safety, and health guidelines and protocols.

Curriculum Review Findings

Domain 1: Curriculum & Assessment
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Guiding Questions:

- Is the curriculum comprehensive, rigorous, and based on relevant standards?
- Are the assessment expectations and criteria clearly communicated?
- Do assessments provide valid and reliable information on student learning that is used to drive ongoing instructional decisions?
- Are there frequent opportunities to help identify and address learning gaps?
- *How does our curriculum and assessments ensure equitable representation and perspectives of all students?*

Strengths:

- The K-12 curriculum is comprehensive, rigorous, and aligned with both National and State Core Art Standards, the district's Portrait of a Learner, and the GPS Strategic Plan.
- Inclusive, diverse artists and perspectives are integrated into the curriculum to accurately and affirmingly reflect varied histories and cultures, providing students with both windows and mirrors.
- Assessment and learning criteria are clearly communicated through the syllabus, digital learning management systems (Google Classroom, Seesaw), and communication home.
- Instruction focuses on the creative process and self-expression, fostering student voice, choice, divergent thinking, and authentic self-expression.
- Varied, project-based assessments that allow students to demonstrate mastery through multiple modalities and reflections.
- The high school program offers dual credit opportunities and real-world connections for all students.

Recommendations & Actions:

- Continue curriculum development of At-A-Glance and Unit Overview guides, common assessments, and K-12 grading criteria to ensure consistency in program delivery.
- Schedule dedicated time to collaborate with the special education, counseling, and WL/ML departments in the development of curriculum resources and strategies to support all learners on an ongoing basis.
- Dedicate time to review and reflection on K-12 assessments and curriculum.

Domain 2: Teaching & Learning

Guiding Questions:

- Does instruction foster active learning by students K-12?
- Are Tier 1 strategies known and used by teachers to support all learners?
- Are there a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding?
- *How does teaching and learning promote access and support for all learners?*

Strengths:

- Teachers leverage Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to foster access and agency in the creative process, while using restorative practices to foster an inclusive environment.
- Teachers utilize Tier 1 strategies within classroom structures (e.g., small group instruction, stations, and scaffolded resources) to provide multiple pathways for accessing information.
- Project-based art units enable students to demonstrate mastery through various modalities (e.g., artwork, reflections, critiques, and process metacognition).
- Instructional content promotes diverse personal perspectives and acknowledges various creative processes and messages.

Recommendations & Actions:

- Develop dedicated opportunities to continue to evolve and integrate inclusive content and diverse artist representation that offer a global perspective and "windows and mirrors" for students.
- Establish staffing and scheduling to maximize student access to teachers and ensure common planning time.
- Address structural challenges to reduce "pull-outs" (elementary and middle school), ensuring students have access to the art curriculum and instruction.
- Establish dedicated, structured opportunities for art teachers to collaborate with Special Education (SPED) and Multi-Language Learner (MLL) staff.
- Establish staffing and scheduling to maximize student engagement inside and outside of the classroom, ensure common planning time, and offer further opportunities for peer model learning to promote access and support all students.

Domain 3: Professional Development

Guiding Questions:

- Are department-based goals provided to staff to support success with Educator Evaluation Plans?
- Do PL opportunities serve to promote active learning and high expectations for all students?
- Do PL opportunities serve to create safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments?
- Do PL opportunities serve to prioritize the health and well-being of students and staff?
- Do all staff have access to interest-based professional learning experiences both in and out of the district?

Strengths:

- K-12 PL aligns with department and district initiatives.
- PL focused on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Restorative Practices has successfully fostered safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments tailored to the unique needs and student interests.
- The evaluation plan is clear and flexible, with department/district-based sample goals and dedicated collaborative PL to support staff success. This structure provides an opportunity for teachers to collaborate on goals across department and grade-level teams.
- The department is made up of highly qualified and dedicated staff who are lifelong learners in arts education.

Recommendations & Actions:

- Increase alignment of K-12 professional learning to ensure pedagogy, skills, resources, safety, and knowledge are properly scaffolded, developed, and communicated for department staff.
- Provide more department-level PL to apply district-level professional learning.
- Establish dedicated, structured opportunities for art teachers to collaborate with Special Education (SPED) and Multi-Language Learner (MLL) staff.
- Provide specific training for technology integration, including Gen AI, industry-standard programs (Adobe, Toon Boom Harmony), and Chromebooks to maintain high instructional standards.
- Prioritize PL that offers "Be Well" PL opportunities for staff to engage in process-based PL to support the whole teacher.

Domain 4: Communication & Outreach

Guiding Questions:

- How are program goals, instructional approaches, and student learning expectations communicated to families and the broader community?
- Do community partnerships exist to support the initiatives and goals of the program?

Strengths:

- Program goals, instructional approaches, and student learning expectations are communicated via the Art Department website, ParentSquare, Google Classroom, newsletters, press releases, email, direct communication, and art receptions.
- Strong community partnerships and community connections exist through art advocacy, art shows and competitions, and art programming.
- Student learning expectations and achievements are communicated to the broader community through school art displays, annual art shows, the Vignone Gallery, the district calendar, and community exhibitions, offering a very tangible form of communication around the goals, approaches, and expectations of the art program.
- The art program fosters student success with the number of recognitions awarded to students each year.

Recommendations & Actions:

- Continue to prioritize high-impact community connections that bridge students, professional artists, and the community (e.g., Calendar Art Showcase at WTML and Exploring the Arts Program).
- Continue to host receptions and art shows celebrating student work, planning and process materials, and program information to increase awareness of student learning and program impact.
- Increase communication of art as an academic discipline through art shows and other communication platforms.
- Be responsive to opportunities for cross-curricular and community-based learning.
- Continue to engage in best practices for communication on all platforms.

Domain 5: Operations

Guiding Questions:

- Are learning environments safe, supportive, and inclusive?
- Does staffing support the intended outcomes of the curriculum?
- Does the allotted time (e.g., daily schedule) support instructional outcomes of the curriculum?
- Do the instructional spaces support the intended outcomes of the curriculum?

Strengths:

- K-12 studios are intentionally designed to be safe and supportive in the physical and emotional environment.
- Dedicated art classrooms are equipped with kilns, storage, and specialized computer labs to support the curriculum.
- Instruction is supported with quality materials, technology, and tools to ensure a well-supported and secure learning environment.
- Our community, the Glastonbury Public Schools administration, and the Board of Education strongly support our teachers and student learning in the arts.
- Our art teaching staff is highly qualified, tenured, and dedicated to the effective teaching of students.
- Art teachers feel supported by their colleagues, building staff, and administration to effectively maintain teaching and learning.
- Discipline-specific leadership provides content-specific expertise and a unified vision of the department.

Recommendations & Actions:

- Explore additional opportunities for adaptive programming and peer model art classes across the K-12 spectrum to better support diverse student needs and inclusive instructional outcomes.
- Optimize schedules that reduce/eliminate "pull-outs," minimize travel, and maximize teaching and impact.
- Develop a system for synchronous and asynchronous collaboration and resource sharing, such as common planning periods (synchronous) and shared drive (asynchronous).
- Continue maintenance and improvements of facilities to meet safety and health guidelines and protocols.

Appendices

Vertical Articulation Guide

Department	<i>Art</i>
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Courses / At-A-Glance Guides (Teacher Facing) <i>List all of the courses and hyperlink the At-A-Glance Guides. Modify as needed based on departmental offerings.</i>	
Pre-Kindergarten	<i>N/A</i>
Kindergarten General Art	<i>Unit Titles: Ceramics - Pinch Pot, Expressive Line/Shape, Landscape Near/Far, Printmaking/Purposeful Play, Color Mixing</i>
First Grade General Art	<i>Unit Titles: Narrative Art, Ceramics - Coil Construction, Still Life, Illustrative Collage</i>
Second Grade General Art	<i>Unit Titles: Relief Sculpture, Observation & Abstraction, Representational Portrait, Masters of Color - Value/Light/Shadow</i>
Third Grade General Art	<i>Unit Titles: Figures in Motion, Landscapes, Stamp Statement Design</i>
Fourth Grade General Art	<i>Unit Titles: On-Point Perspective, Identity Collage, Relief Sculpture</i>
Fifth Grade General Art	<i>Unit Titles: Abstract Painting, Design Unit, Photography</i>
Sixth Grade General Art	
<i>Unit Titles: Portraiture, 2-Point Perspective, Sculpture</i>	
Seventh Grade Electives	Eighth Grade Electives
<i>3D Art</i> <i>Art Zone</i> <i>Art of Animation</i> <i>Crafts</i>	<i>Digital Art & Media</i> <i>Modern Design</i> <i>Studio Art & Media</i> <i>Sculpture</i>
High School Electives	
9-12 – Animation	9-12 – Design Careers in STEAM
11-12 – AP Studio Art	9-12 – Digital Art & Media ECE offered
11-12 – Advanced Drawing ECE offered	9-12 – Drawing & Painting
9-12 – Art Foundations	9-12 – Fashion Design

9-12 – Ceramics	9-12 – Film & Video Production <i>ECE offered</i>
9-12 – Contemporary Craft Design	9-12 – Sculpture
9-12 – Creative Connection in Art	
Post-Graduate – N/A	

English/Language Arts Department

Curriculum Review Report
2025-2026

Glastonbury Public Schools
Glastonbury, CT

Submitted by:

Christina O'Brien, Director of Language Arts and Library Media, K-5 (retired)
Tracey DeDonato, Director of English/Language Arts and Library Media, 6-12
Angela Buccheri, Director of English/Language Arts and Library Media, K-5

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B. Other (e.g., unique scope and sequence, department-specific terminology and/or tools)	

Committee Membership

Christina O'Brien, Director of Language Arts and Library Media, K-5 (retired June 2026)

Tracey DeDonato, Director of English/Language Arts and Library Media, 6-12

Tonya M. Claiborne, Ed.D., Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Amanda Robustelli-Price, Director of World Languages, K-12

Michael Litke, Principal, Naubuc School

Amanda Bacon, Literacy Coach, Naubuc School

Carol Cholewa, Literacy Coach, Nayaug School

Amy Charron, Literacy Coach, Hopewell School

Melissa Burke, Literacy Coach, Hebron Avenue School

Genessa Zickefoose, Literacy Coach, Buttonball Lane School

Jennifer Staskiewicz, grade K, Hopewell School

Michele Rose, grade 1, Naubuc School

Amanda Schuman, grade 2, Naubuc School

Amy Castela Torres, grade 3, Hebron Avenue School

Mikayla Glasgow, grade 4, Naubuc School

Allison Hoagland, grade 5, Gideon Welles

Deborah Ginman, grade 6 ELA, Gideon Welles School

Suzanne Lips, grade 6 ELA, Gideon Welles School

Kristy Fischer, Reading & Writing Intervention, Smith Middle School

John Landry, Library Media Specialist, Smith Middle School

Ashley DePeau, grade 7, Smith Middle School

Ilene Bloomstone, grade 8, Smith Middle School

Isabel Meagher, grade 8, Smith Middle School

Jena DeMaio, English Teacher, Glastonbury High School

Mark Dursin, English Teacher, Glastonbury High School

Sarabeth Markham, English Teacher, Glastonbury High School

Lexi Munger, English Teacher, Glastonbury High School

Steven Nicastro, English Teacher, Glastonbury High School

Lisa Scarola, English Teacher, Glastonbury High School

Christina Vemuri, English Teacher, Glastonbury High School

Introduction

Thank You

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the K–12 English Language Arts Curriculum Review Committee and all K-12 English/Language Arts teachers for their exceptional dedication, thoughtful collaboration, and unwavering commitment to student learning. Over the course of the review process, they carefully examined curriculum materials, shared insights from their classroom experiences, and engaged in meaningful discussions to ensure our program remains rigorous, engaging, and responsive to all students.

Their thoughtful reflection has been instrumental in shaping a curriculum that builds and strengthens foundational reading and writing skills while fostering creativity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning. By keeping students at the center of every conversation, they have helped advance a program that prioritizes equity, accessibility, and growth for all learners. The time and insight they have provided have been invaluable in ensuring that every student is supported and empowered in becoming a confident, capable, and inspired reader and writer.

We are incredibly grateful not only for what they have contributed to this process, but also for the opportunity to collaborate with such a genuinely passionate group of educators. Our students are fortunate to learn from them, and we are equally fortunate to work alongside them. Their care for students and belief in the power of literacy make this work truly impactful.

Purpose of Curriculum Review

The formal, comprehensive Curriculum Review is designed to be systematic, collaborative, and consistent with the Glastonbury Public Schools curriculum development process across content areas. As scheduled every five years, Curriculum Directors examine the entire program, including curriculum and assessment, instructional practices, student outcomes, professional learning, outreach and resources.

Through this process, we seek to identify areas for continued development, evaluate the alignment of program initiatives, and advance the goals and actions of the district's 6th Generation Strategic Plan. Findings will drive long-and short-term goals and recommendations to support program improvements.

To complete the process, Director of English/Language Arts K-5, Christina O'Brien, and Director of English/Language Arts 6-12, Tracey DeDonato, led the department and a Curriculum Review Steering Committee through the examination of five program domains. This process is designed to determine strengths and challenges of each domain as well as produce recommendations to support short- and long-term goals for the program.

The five domains under review include:

1. Curriculum & Assessment
2. Teaching & Learning
3. Professional Development
4. Communication & Outreach
5. Operations

Furthermore, two specific domains of the program were examined through an equity lens. This process supports our district's commitment to providing students with "mirrors" reflecting their own experiences and "windows" into experiences different from their own. We believe the curriculum should include diverse representation and perspectives and that teaching and learning should ensure equity and access for all.

This rigorous and reflective Curriculum Review underscores our school system's dedication to fostering inclusive and dynamic learning environments and experiences, ensuring our curricula not only meet the highest standards but also resonate with and support every student.

Department Description

Our K–12 English Language Arts program is designed to cultivate lifelong readers, confident writers, critical thinkers, and effective communicators. From elementary through secondary school, we guide students in building foundational literacy skills, including phonics, decoding, spelling, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, while fostering the ability to analyze and interpret texts across genres.

We prioritize student-centered learning that encourages choice, engagement, and active participation in discussions, presentations, and collaborative projects. Our instruction emphasizes creativity, reflection, and critical thinking, helping students make meaningful connections between language, literature, and the world around them.

Through exposure to diverse voices and perspectives, both in literature and within their own classrooms, students develop empathy, cultural awareness, and an appreciation for multiple viewpoints. Our goal is to prepare all students to navigate an evolving world with confidence, curiosity, and a lifelong passion for reading, writing, and learning.

Elementary English Language Arts

Classroom Teachers are instructors of English Language Arts at each grade level; they receive the support and coaching of the Literacy Coach in each of the elementary buildings.

At each grade level, there are reading, writing, and phonics units of study. Staffing is determined by student enrollment at each elementary school.

Grade	Reading Units	Writing Units	Phonics
K	We are Readers Superpowers Bigger Books	Show & Tell How-To Books Persuasive Writing	Fundations
1	Building Good Reading Habits Learning About the World Meeting Characters	Small Moments Nonfiction Chapter Books Writing Reviews	Fundations
2	Reading Growth Spurt Becoming Experts of Reading Nonfiction Series Book Clubs	Lessons From the Masters How To Guide for Nonfiction Writing About Reading	Fundations
3	Mystery Reading To Learn Character Study	Crafting True Stories Art of Information Writing Changing the World	Fundations
4	Interpreting Characters Reading the Weather Social Awareness Historical Fiction Book Clubs	The Arc of the Story Information Writing: Boxes/Bullets and Historical Fiction	Fundations
5	Interpretation Book Clubs Tackling Text Complexity Fantasy Book Clubs Historical Fiction	Narrative Craft, Lens of History Fantasy Research-Based Argument Essay	Words Their Way

Secondary English

The sixth grade reading program is supported by two reading tutors, while the middle school reading program is supported by graduate interns. At GHS, one English teacher serves as a 0.2 Technology Coach, and two tutors support reading and writing within the Reading and Writing Center.

Grade	Course Offerings/Units	
6 (8 ELA Teachers and 1 Reading Teacher)	English 6	
7-8 (8 English Teachers and 1 Reading & Writing Interventionist)	English 7, Level 1 and Level 2 English 8, Level 1 and Level 2 Reading Strategies Writing Strategies	
9-12 (18 English Teachers and 2 Reading & Writing Center tutors)	Full-Year Courses English 9, Level 1 and Level 2 English 10, Level 1 and Level 2 English 11, Level 1 ECE and Level 2 AP English Language and Composition AP English Literature and Composition	Semester-Long Electives Drama 1, Level 2 (Grades 9-12) SAT Prep (in conjunction with math) (Grade 11) Creative Writing, Level 1 and Level 2 (Grades 11-12) Film Study, Level 1 (Grades 11-12)
	Grade 12 Semester-Long Courses A Courses The American Paradox, Level 1 and Level 2 World Expressions of the Human Story, Level 1 and Level 2 Youth in the Modern World, Level 1 and Level 2 B Courses Global Perspectives and Citizenship, Level 1 and Level 2 Verse and Voice in Poetry, Level 1 and Level 2 Critically Understanding Mass Media, Level 1 and Level 2	

Executive Summary

The K–12 English Language Arts program reflects a strong, standards-aligned commitment to structured literacy, equitable instructional practices, and meaningful student engagement. In grades K–3, Foundations provides systematic and explicit instruction in phonics, decoding, and spelling, establishing strong foundational literacy skills for all learners. Units of Study in reading and writing expose students to diverse genres while promoting choice, autonomy, and engagement. Across grades K–5, differentiated instruction is supported by multiple assessment measures, which provide actionable data to inform instruction, intervention, and MTSS decision-making.

In grades 6–12, the program builds on this foundation through a coherent, standards-aligned curriculum emphasizing critical thinking, communication, and content knowledge. Middle and high school units promote independent reading, authentic writing, and student voice within clear curriculum structures and consistent assessment calendars. A balanced system of formative and summative assessments guides instruction and identifies learning needs, while an equity-centered approach incorporates diverse perspectives and expands representation beyond the traditional literary canon.

Across the K–12 continuum, teachers effectively differentiate instruction, foster safe and inclusive learning environments, and leverage strong staffing supports and community partnerships. Clear department goals and consistent assessment practices further strengthen program implementation.

Strengths and Celebrations

- A coherent K–12 English Language Arts program aligns instruction with Common Core State Standards to establish clear expectations across grade levels.
- Structured literacy foundations deliver explicit phonics, decoding, and spelling instruction to support early reading success.
- A rigorous curriculum emphasizes critical thinking, text analysis, evidence-based writing, and effective communication.
- Student-centered learning environments promote choice, engagement, creativity, and authentic literacy experiences.
- Data-driven assessment practices generate actionable data to inform instruction, MTSS processes, and targeted interventions.
- Differentiated instruction and flexible pathways ensure access and success for multilingual learners and diverse student needs.
- Culturally responsive curriculum design provides “windows” into the experiences of others and “mirrors” that reflect students’ own identities.
- Consistent communication practices convey program goals and expectations to students, families, and staff.
- Ongoing curriculum refinement and expanded elective opportunities promote student voice, engagement, and lifelong literacy.

Priority Recommendations

- Develop and implement a clearly articulated, vertically aligned K-12 literacy framework that defines progression in grammar, vocabulary, writing, and comprehension skills.
- Deepen the impact of the elementary literacy curriculum by refining units and instructional practices to ensure consistent implementation of evidence-based approaches grounded in Structured Literacy and the Science of Reading.
- Increase protected and uninterrupted instructional time in elementary grades to support explicit instruction, guided practice, and small-group differentiation.
- Optimize the effectiveness of the district's assessment framework by evaluating K–12 assessment practices for alignment, purpose, and efficiency while maintaining a strong focus on student learning outcomes.
- Allocate structured, ongoing time for teacher collaboration focused on curriculum alignment, assessment design and calibration, data analysis, and instructional refinement.
- Expand classroom libraries with diverse, contemporary, and culturally responsive texts that reflect a wide range of identities and perspectives.
- Increase interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary learning opportunities to deepen relevance and application of literacy skills.
- Expand authentic, real-world learning experiences and increase opportunities for student self-reflection on growth, skill development, and learning processes.

Curriculum Review Findings

Domain 1: Curriculum & Assessment
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Guiding Questions:

- Is the curriculum comprehensive, rigorous, and based on relevant standards?
- Are the assessment expectations and criteria clearly communicated?
- Do assessments provide valid and reliable information on student learning that is used to drive ongoing instructional decisions?
- Are there frequent opportunities to help identify and address learning gaps?
- *How do our curriculum and assessments ensure equitable representation and perspectives of all students?*

The findings of the committee include:

Strengths:

K-5

- The K–3 literacy curriculum incorporates Foundations, which is comprehensive, systematic, and aligned to standards, providing explicit instruction in phonics, decoding, and spelling that supports mastery for all learners.
- Units of Study for reading and writing provide structured exposure to genres, sentence writing, conventions, and comprehension strategies.
- Teachers employ flexible instructional strategies to support student engagement and literacy growth.

6-12

- Each unit intentionally builds background knowledge, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration while guiding students to analyze complex texts, support claims with evidence, and express ideas through structured writing, with opportunities for student choice.
- English 11 includes a deliberate emphasis on student choice and authentic writing.
- Twelfth grade course revisions intentionally broaden perspectives, expanding engagement with texts beyond the traditional literary canon.
- In addition to core courses, the department offers electives that provide opportunities for students to explore specialized interests in literacy and communication.
- The department demonstrates a strong equity-centered belief system: commitment to belonging, respect, individualized strengths, and preparation for life beyond high school.

K-12

- All units are aligned with grade-level Common Core State Standards and reflect a rigorous, standards-based approach.
- Assessments provide actionable data to monitor progress and inform instruction, and curriculum documents and assessment calendars are clear, user-friendly, and consistently applied across grade levels.
- Small group instruction and MTSS meetings enable teachers to differentiate instruction and respond to individual learning needs, providing responsive, differentiated instruction through flexible supports and varied learning pathways.
- The curriculum promotes independent reading and student choice. Library Media Specialists support this work, promoting authentic engagement with texts and fostering lifelong reading habits.
- The curriculum and assessments incorporate and reflect the principles of the “Windows and Mirrors” initiative, providing equitable representation and inclusive perspectives so that all students see themselves reflected and gain insight into experiences different from their own.

Recommendations & Actions:

K-5

- Develop a vertically aligned K–5 literacy framework that clearly outlines standards progression and spirals key skills to ensure rigor, stamina, and proficiency.
- Strengthen cross-curricular alignment, particularly in grades 4-5, to better integrate science and social studies content into literacy instruction.
- Implement explicit grammar, editing, and structured test-preparation mini-lessons with authentic practice opportunities in grades 3-5.

6-12

- Reduce the number of units in Grade 6 to allow for more deep, high-impact learning experiences.
- Revisit major summative assignments in Grade 6 to ensure they are authentic, rigorous, and reflective of key learning goals.
- Revise assessments, particularly in co-taught classes, to ensure alignment, rigor, and accessibility, and revisit key performance tasks (e.g., rhetorical analysis, major summative projects) to ensure clarity of purpose.
- Allocate structured department and course-specific meeting time to:
 - share and calibrate assessments.
 - discuss assignment relevance.
 - analyze student performance data.
 - access resources to address identified learning gaps.
 - refine curriculum.
 - plan for co-teaching and/or intervention.
- Ensure elective offerings (e.g., Creative Writing, Drama, Film Study, SAT Prep) are reviewed alongside core courses for alignment, rigor, and relevance.

K-12

- Expand teacher support and professional development focused on interpreting assessment data, planning differentiated instruction, and implementing the curriculum consistently.
- Create authentic, cross-disciplinary learning experiences that deepen relevance and expand opportunities for student reflection of skill development. Continue to use the “windows and mirrors” approach to teaching and learning, providing students opportunities to see themselves reflected in learning while also exploring diverse perspectives and experiences.

Domain 2: Teaching & Learning
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Guiding Questions:

- Does instruction foster active learning by students K-12?
- Are Tier 1 strategies known and used by teachers to support all learners?
- Are there a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding?
- *How does teaching and learning promote access and support for all learners?*

The findings of the committee include:

Strengths:

K-5

- *Foundations* provides explicit, systematic, and research-aligned foundational skills instruction through multi-sensory, highly engaging routines that actively involve students in phonics, decoding, encoding, and fluency.
- Units of Study cultivate student choice in both reading and writing, fostering engagement, ownership, and intrinsic motivation.
- Structured literacy blocks create opportunities for small-group and individualized instruction, allowing educators to tailor instruction to meet diverse learning needs while promoting equitable access to grade-level content.

6-12

- Students engage in meaningful, student-centered work, from book clubs and research projects to presentations and multimedia assignments, promoting ownership and critical thinking.
- Instruction supports all learners through Tier 1 instruction and differentiated strategies. Teachers activate prior knowledge, teach key vocabulary, scaffold texts, and model comprehension strategies. Lessons incorporate universal design principles, flexible grouping, co-teaching, and leveled supports, ensuring accessibility from the start.

K-12:

- Teachers foster active learning through a wide range of strategies, including discussions (Socratic seminars, fishbowls, turn-and-talks), collaborative activities, choice-driven projects, and technology-supported tools.
- Materials are culturally responsive, build background knowledge, and reflect diverse perspectives.
- Formative assessments and individual conferences allow teachers to adjust instruction to meet students' needs.
- A variety of text formats—digital, audio, and print—ensures all students can access content. Through these practices, teaching and learning provide equitable access, active engagement, and multiple pathways for students to demonstrate understanding.

Recommendations & Actions:**K-5**

- Enhance instruction in grades 4 and 5 that intentionally incorporates phonics, grammar, morphology, and vocabulary to strengthen their reading and writing skills.
- Embed assessments and regular check-ins throughout units, allowing students to showcase understanding through oral, written, and creative responses.

6-12

- Provide discipline-specific professional learning for secondary English teachers that focuses on effective literacy instruction, active learning strategies, and differentiated instruction.
- Allocate structured collaboration time for teachers to share best practices, examine student work, analyze assessment data, and refine and expand effective instructional strategies.
- Identify guaranteed learning experiences and meaningful summative assessments across courses and grade levels to strengthen coherence while maintaining varied opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding.

K-12

- Strengthen vertical alignment of key academic vocabulary and literacy concepts to ensure consistency in instruction and expectations across all grade levels.
- Expand the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles within Tier 1 instruction to provide multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement.
- Review and refine the ELA curriculum to prioritize depth over breadth, identifying units that can be condensed or removed to allow deeper learning and improved student proficiency.
- Increase collaboration focused on supporting multilingual learners and students with IEPs, including evaluating and selecting accessible texts and instructional supports.
- Expand access to high-quality, diverse, and culturally responsive materials.
- Expand authentic learning opportunities beyond the classroom, including author visits, field trips, writing celebrations, and opportunities for students to publish their work.

Domain 3: Professional Development

Guiding Questions:

- Are department-based goals provided to staff to support success with Educator Evaluation Plans?
- Do PD opportunities serve to promote active learning and high expectations for all students?
- Do PD opportunities serve to create safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments?
- Do PD opportunities serve to prioritize the health and well-being of students and staff?
- Do all staff have access to interest-based professional learning experiences both in and out of the district?

The findings of the committee include:

Strengths:

K-12

- Department goals are clearly defined, consistently communicated, and reinforced through professional development that supports safe, inclusive, equitable learning environments and promotes best practices.
- Professional learning offers meaningful teacher choice, allowing educators to select sessions aligned with their roles, interests, and instructional goals to support growth and application.

Recommendations & Actions:

K-5

- Develop a single, comprehensive document that clearly maps department goals and skill progression across all grades, providing staff with clarity, context, and a coherent instructional framework.

6-12

- Provide additional opportunities for teachers to discuss curriculum, lesson planning, assessment design, and the instructional approach to individual texts.
- Improve access to interest-based professional learning through flexible formats and logistical support.

K-12

- Offer more professional learning opportunities tailored to subject-specific needs and/or learning goals, including follow-up time for reflection, planning, and application of strategies in the classroom.
- Broaden access to both in-district and out-of-district professional learning by offering flexible scheduling options, micro-sessions, and optional workshops to maximize participation and impact.
- Deepen ongoing professional development focused on inclusive practices, culturally responsive instruction, and safe, supportive learning environments.

Domain 4: Communication & Outreach

Guiding Questions:

- How are program goals, instructional approaches, and student learning expectations communicated to families and the broader community?
- Do community partnerships exist to support the initiatives and goals of the program?

The findings of the committee include:

Strengths:

K-12

- Annual author visits and literary events engage students and families in reading and writing.
- Nationally recognized student work showcases student writing.
- *Glastonbury Citizen* articles extend awareness of student opportunities and celebrate successes.
- Program goals, instructional approaches, and student learning expectations are communicated to families and the community through multiple channels.
- Multiple digital platforms provide timely communication to families in preferred languages.
- The department maintains a strong relationship with the Welles-Turner Memorial Library, which supports initiatives throughout the year and provides summer reading resources and programming.
- Long-standing collaborations with higher education and local organizations enhance programming, outreach, and engagement opportunities.

Recommendations & Actions:

K-12

- Revise the K–5 report card in English Language Arts to a standards-based format, ensuring that student progress is clearly aligned with grade-level ELA standards.
- Review and update secondary report card comments to ensure clarity, consistency, and meaningful communication of student progress.
- Continue to provide families with resources that highlight essential concepts from the Science of Reading to actively engage parents in reinforcing skills at home and strengthen the home–school partnership.
- Increase opportunities for parents to participate in school-based activities, such as writing celebrations and student showcases.
- Expand community partnerships to enhance student learning and family engagement.

Domain 5: Operations

Guiding Questions:

- Are learning environments safe, supportive, and inclusive?
- Does staffing support the intended outcomes of the curriculum?
- Does the allotted time (e.g., daily schedule) support instructional outcomes of the curriculum?
- Do the instructional spaces support the intended outcomes of the curriculum?

The findings of the committee include:

Strengths:

K-5

- Literacy coaches, reading teachers, interventionists, and MTSS team members effectively support structured literacy, differentiated instruction, and data-driven interventions.
- Classrooms and shared spaces support whole-group, small-group, and independent learning with manipulatives, technology, anchor charts, and accessible materials to promote hands-on, multimodal instruction.
- Dedicated small-group instruction (SGI) blocks allow Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to be delivered effectively within classrooms and intervention settings, providing targeted support without disrupting overall learning.

6-12

- Extended ELA periods and block scheduling provide time for in-depth discussion, writing, and Socratic Seminars.
- Multiple instructional spaces, including the GHS Reading & Writing Center (RWC), the Library Media Centers, the reading support rooms, and the GHS C3 Multimedia Lab support curriculum outcomes.

K-12

- Classrooms are safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments.
- Classrooms provide access to a wide variety of texts at multiple reading levels to support diverse learners.
- Staff and supplemental supports, including graduate student interns, enhance individualized learning and curriculum delivery.
- Collaboration between special education, special area, and general education teachers ensures curriculum is supported for all learners.

Recommendations & Actions:

K-5

- Protect and extend uninterrupted instructional time for literacy, foundational skills, and small-group instruction to allow deeper engagement and targeted support.

6-12

- Expand instructional spaces, such as the GHS RWC and the new C3 Multimedia Lab, to support enrichment and student learning needs; procure additional materials, equipment, and staff to enhance student learning experiences.
- Increase access to physical texts, including print materials with visual elements (e.g., graphic novels) to accommodate diverse learners.

K-12

- Provide dedicated collaboration time for special education and general education teachers to strengthen differentiated instruction.
- Explore improved scheduling procedures to better balance ratios of students with diverse learning needs (MLL, IEP, 504, MTSS) and support more individualized instruction.
- Explore additional flexible classroom seating and instructional spaces (standing desks, tables, whiteboard desks, creative classroom designs) to better support learning and student engagement.

Appendices

E.g., Vertical Articulation Guide (and any other department specific guidelines)

Department	<i>English Language Arts</i>
Courses / At-A-Glance Guides (Teacher Facing) <i>List all of the courses and hyperlink the At-A-Glance Guides. Modify as needed based on departmental offerings.</i>	
Kindergarten	Reading: We are Readers, Superpowers, Bigger Books Writing: Show & Tell Unit, How-To Books, Persuasive Writing Phonics: Foundations
First Grade	Reading: Building Good Reading Habits, Learning About the World, Meeting Characters Writing: Small Moments, Nonfiction Chapter Books, Writing Reviews Phonics: Foundations
Second Grade	Reading: Reading Growth Spurt, Becoming Experts of Reading Nonfiction, Series Book Clubs Writing: Lessons from the Masters, How to Guide for Nonfiction, Writing About Reading Phonics: Foundations
Third Grade	Reading: Mystery, Reading to Learn, Character Study Writing: Crafting True Stories, Art of Information Writing, Changing the World Phonics: Foundations
Fourth Grade	Reading: Interpreting Characters, Reading the Weather, Social Awareness, Historical Fiction Book Clubs Writing: The Arc of the Story, Information Writing: Boxes/Bullets and Historical Fiction Phonics: Foundations
Fifth Grade	Reading: Interpretation Book Clubs, Tackling Text Complexity, Fantasy Book Clubs, Historical Fiction Writing: Narrative Craft, Lens of History, Fantasy, Research-Based Argument Essay

Sixth Grade	
English 6	
Seventh Grade	
- English 7, Level 1 and Level 2 - Reading Strategies - Writing Strategies	
Eighth Grade	
- English 8, Level 1 and Level 2 - Reading Strategies - Writing Strategies	
High School	
Grade Level(s)	Course(s)
Ninth Grade	English 9, Level 1 and Level 2
Tenth Grade	English 10, Level 1 and Level 2
Eleventh Grade	English 11, Level 1 ECE and Level 2
	AP English Language and Composition
Twelfth Grade	The American Paradox, Level 1 and Level 2
	Youth in the Modern World, Level 1 and Level 2
	World Expressions of the Human Story, Level 1 and Level 2
	Global Perspectives and Citizenship, Level 1 and Level 2
	Critically Understanding Mass Media, Level 1 and Level 2
	Verse and Voice in Poetry, Level 1 and Level 2

	<i>AP English Literature and Composition</i>
Electives	<i>Creative Writing, Level 1 and Level 2</i>
	<i>Drama 1, Level 2</i>
	<i>Film Study, Level 1</i>
	<i>SAT Prep (in conjunction with Math)</i>
Post-Graduate N/A	