

Curriculum Department Report to the Board of Education
Curriculum Department Highlights
March 26, 2025

To: Mr. Watts, Superintendent
Ms. Malone, Chairperson of the Board
Members of the Board of Education

Newport Curriculum Department Vision:

We envision a day when **all leaders** of Newport Independent Schools exhibit high expectations and guarantee excellence of instruction, ensure equitable opportunities, and leverage all high-quality resources so that students, staff, and leaders will **maximize** their fullest potential.

CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER
DIRECTOR DISTRICT WIDE SERVICES

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION: Teacher Practice Two Implementation

Lesson Summary: Vocabulary Development through Curriculum-Driven Opportunities (Modeled by Dr. Dickey's - Practice 2)

Lessons are grounded in **Practice 2: Curriculum-Driven Opportunities for Students to Determine the Meaning of General and Domain-Specific Words and Phrases (Before and During Reading)**. The instructional approach emphasizes intentional, embedded vocabulary instruction across content areas and grade levels (K–12). Teachers implement strategies that encourage students to interact with academic language authentically and consistently as they read, write, and discuss grade-level content.

Key strategies modeled in the lessons included:

1. **Point of Use Annotation of Performance-Based Objectives**
2. **Universal Language of Literacy**
3. **Word-and-Definition Word Walls**
4. **Word Parts (Prefixes, Suffixes, Roots)**
5. **Context Clues**
6. **Point of Use Annotation in Texts (In Real Time)**

7. Sight Words/High Frequency Words (PreK–9)

These strategies work synergistically to develop students' vocabulary knowledge as a **natural and necessary component** of their content learning, supporting comprehension, academic discourse, and overall literacy achievement.

Implementation Report: Practice 2 – Vocabulary Instruction through Curriculum-Driven Opportunities

Overview

Following 3 model lessons (1 at each level - NPS, NIS, NHS) by Dr. Donyall Dickey, two ELA teachers from **Newport Primary School** implemented **Practice 2: Curriculum-Driven Opportunities for Students to Determine the Meaning of General and Domain-Specific Words and Phrases (Before and During Reading)**. Their implementation served as an early action step toward building a schoolwide culture of vocabulary-rich instruction. These two teachers were video recorded during instruction and received targeted feedback from the Chief Academic Officer, Director of District Wide Services, and Instructional Coach to refine and deepen their practice.

The success and insight gained from this initial implementation prompted a broader rollout. **Seven additional teachers** at Newport Intermediate School followed suit, embedding Practice 2 strategies in their classrooms, also capturing their lessons via video, and receiving personalized feedback from the same leadership team.

Key Components of Practice 2 Implementation

All teachers focused on embedding high-leverage vocabulary strategies before and during reading to support comprehension and content mastery. The following strategies modeled in Dr. Dickey's lesson were adapted and implemented:

- **Point of Use Annotation of Performance-Based Objectives**
Students were taught to identify and underline key vocabulary within learning objectives, establishing clarity of purpose and focus from the beginning of each lesson.
- **Universal Language of Literacy**
Academic language (e.g., compare, contrast, infer, explain) was highlighted consistently, supporting metacognition and alignment across grade levels.
- **Word-and-Definition Word Walls**
Teachers maintained interactive word walls featuring tiered vocabulary with student-friendly definitions and visuals, which were routinely referenced during lessons.

- **Word Parts & Context Clues**
Students practiced decoding unfamiliar words using prefixes, suffixes, and root words, as well as deriving meaning through contextual analysis during guided and independent reading.
- **Real-Time Annotation of Texts**
Students engaged in active reading by annotating vocabulary in context, discussing meaning with peers, and applying strategies in real-time.
- **Sight Word Integration (PreK–3)**
Early-grade teachers explicitly taught high-frequency words, reinforcing automaticity and fluency.

Video Observations and Feedback Process

Each teacher was video-recorded during a lesson that incorporated Practice 2 strategies. These recordings were reviewed collaboratively by:

- **Chief Academic Officer**
- **Director of District Wide Services**
- **Instructional Coach**

Following video review, each teacher will participate in a reflective feedback session, which includes:

- Recognition of effective strategy implementation.
- Targeted suggestions for deeper student engagement and language ownership.
- Recommendations for increased opportunities for student-led vocabulary discussion.
- Alignment of vocabulary strategies with reading standards and content-specific objectives.

Findings and Highlights

- **Increased Student Engagement:** In both initial and expanded implementations, students showed heightened engagement when vocabulary was introduced through context and purpose—not isolation.
- **Improved Teacher Clarity:** Teachers reported increased confidence and clarity in integrating vocabulary instruction directly into reading and content instruction, rather than as a separate component.

- **Consistency Across Classrooms:** Common strategies, language, and structures (e.g., annotated objectives, vocabulary routines) created coherence across classrooms, benefiting students and staff alike.
- **Responsive Support:** Feedback from district leaders was instrumental in helping teachers adjust pacing, increase academic discourse, and refine instructional delivery.

Next Steps

- **Sustainability and Expansion:** Continue supporting Practice 2 schoolwide through additional video modeling, peer observation, and PLC discussions.
- **Professional Learning:** Offer follow-up sessions focused on differentiating vocabulary instruction for English Learners and students with diverse language needs.
- **Monitoring Impact:** Use student work samples, reading assessments, and walkthrough data to measure the impact of vocabulary strategies on reading comprehension and content achievement.

The implementation of Practice 2 at Newport Primary School and Newport Intermediate School has demonstrated that intentional, embedded vocabulary instruction is both practical and impactful. Through modeling, reflection, and responsive coaching, teachers have begun to transform vocabulary instruction into a seamless and powerful component of daily teaching. With continued support, this practice has strong potential to elevate student outcomes and build long-term instructional coherence across the school.

GRANT WRITING:

Newport Schools is leveraging two competitive grant opportunities from the Kentucky Department of Education to enhance academic outcomes in both Reading and Math.

Numeracy Grant:

This grant is designed to boost student performance in mathematics by funding targeted initiatives that include curriculum enhancements, teacher professional development, and evidence-based intervention programs. For Newport Schools, the Numeracy Grant will provide critical resources to strengthen math instruction integrating updated teaching materials, focused training sessions, and data-driven assessments so that students build strong numeracy skills alongside their literacy development.

FY25 Kentucky Numeracy Counts Grant
Grant applications due: March 6, 2025, 4 PM ET
Award Amount: \$70,000 per awarded district
Matching Funds Requirement: No

The Kentucky Numeracy Counts Fund grant shall only be used to purchase approved high-quality research and evidence-based curriculum aligned to kindergarten through grade three (3) academic standards in mathematics and expenditures for curriculum-based professional learning to implement a new curriculum.

Literacy Grant: NEWPORT IS A RECIPIENT OF THE Kentucky Comprehensive Literacy (KyCL25)! (“Welcome to the grant” meeting to be held this month with KDE)

The **Kentucky Literacy Grant** is a statewide initiative designed to improve reading and writing outcomes for students from early childhood through high school. Funded through federal and state resources—most notably the **Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Grant**—the program supports districts and schools in implementing evidence-based literacy practices aligned with Kentucky Academic Standards.

The grant emphasizes a **comprehensive approach to literacy** that includes:

- High-quality instructional materials
- Professional learning for teachers and leaders
- Strong family and community engagement
- Early learning and intervention strategies
- Data-informed decision making

Targeting literacy improvement at **every grade level**, the Kentucky Literacy Grant aims to ensure that all students, including those in high-need schools and vulnerable populations, have equitable access to effective literacy instruction.

Districts awarded the grant receive funding and support to implement a **Literacy Plan** that includes measurable goals, alignment with the science of reading, and collaboration across grade bands. The grant fosters **sustainability** through leadership development, coaching models, and the integration of literacy instruction across content areas.

Ultimately, the Kentucky Literacy Grant reflects the state’s commitment to ensuring that every student is **reading proficiently by the end of third grade**, and continuing to develop literacy skills that are essential for academic success and lifelong learning.

Together, these grants not only reinforce Newport Schools’ mission to deliver high-quality education but also align with broader state priorities by enhancing instructional effectiveness.

Upcoming Grant Opportunities:

FY25 KYILN Travel Grant

- Grant applications due: April 24, 2025, 4 PM ET

- Award Amount: Up to \$3,000.00
- Matching Funds Requirement: No

The Kentucky Innovative Learning Network (KY-ILN) Travel Grant is intended to support travel to model schools and/or exemplary conferences that promote and concern learner-centered and innovative practices at their programmatic core.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katina Brown

Director of District-Wide Services

Darla Payne

Chief Academic Officer