

Elementary ELAs Curriculum Review and Adoption Recommendation

HMH Into Reading

Background

LPA adopted Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) approximately seven to eight years ago, with implementation occurring in phases across grade levels. Over the past two years, Elementary Administration has spent considerable time reviewing student achievement data, meeting with teachers, and evaluating the effectiveness of this instructional program.

Throughout those conversations, a consistent concern emerged. Teachers reported that they were regularly supplementing CKLA in order to adequately address Utah State Standards and meet the needs of their students. While teacher-created resources can be beneficial, the amount of supplementation taking place raised questions about whether our core curriculum was fully supporting instruction.

At the beginning of the 2425 school year, Administration asked teachers to implement CKLA with a high level of fidelity. Before considering a curriculum change, as we felt it was important to determine whether the challenges we were experiencing were related to the curriculum itself or to inconsistent implementation. The expectation was that if the curriculum was effectively meeting student needs, improved implementation would be reflected in improved student outcomes.

Unfortunately, we did not see the growth we had hoped for. On the Utah RISE assessment, our ELA proficiency rate declined from 51% in the 2324SY, which was 1% above the state average, to 49% in the 2425SY which was 1% below the state average. While a two-point decline may not seem significant in isolation, when combined with teacher feedback regarding curriculum alignment and usability, it became clear that a deeper review was warranted.

Curriculum Review Process

Following the analysis of student achievement data, administration researched literacy programs being used by high-performing schools and districts throughout Utah. Two curricula consistently emerged as strong options for consideration:

- Wonders
- HMH Into Reading

Each curriculum was reviewed and compared to CKLA using Utah's curriculum review criteria and our school's curriculum evaluation rubric. Through this process, I found that all three programs:

- Are approved instructional resources by the state of Utah.
- Support Science of Reading practices.
- Demonstrate similar areas of weakness, particularly within phonics instruction.

We also found that two of the highest-performing districts in Utah currently use Wonders and Into Reading as their core literacy programs.

Administration invited teachers to participate in a curriculum review committee. Participation was voluntary, and sixteen teachers chose to serve on the committee. The group included representatives from every elementary level as well as Special Education.

Beginning in January 2026, the committee met six times over a four-month period. During this process:

- Vendor representatives from Wonders and Into Reading provided curriculum overviews and demonstrated instructional resources.
- Teachers reviewed materials using LPA's curriculum evaluation rubric.
- Committee members engaged in structured discussions comparing each program to CKLA.
- Teachers evaluated curriculum alignment, instructional rigor, usability, assessment systems, and support for diverse learners.

The committee's role was not simply to compare new programs, but also to carefully evaluate what was and was not working within our current curriculum and if the proposed programs would benefit or hinder student growth.

Findings

As the review progressed, the committee determined that Wonders did not adequately address one of our primary concerns. Although the program includes standards alignment, it is aligned primarily to national standards rather than Utah-specific standards. This is the same challenge we currently experience with CKLA, as teachers often spend significant time identifying which standards align to Utah's expectations and assessments. Because Wonders did not resolve this issue, the committee collectively agreed to remove it from consideration.

The committee then conducted a deeper review of Into Reading. Teachers were provided with instructional materials and asked to teach sample lessons within their classrooms. The teachers reflected on the lessons and gathered feedback from students.

What we learned:

- Students responded positively to the lessons and instructional activities.
- Teachers found the lessons to be rigorous and engaging.
- Teachers felt the curriculum provided stronger opportunities for student discussion and interaction.
- Utah State Standards are embedded directly within the curriculum, reducing the need for additional alignment work.

Following the classroom trials, committee members completed the curriculum evaluation rubric for both CKLA and INTO READING. The two programs scored very similarly overall,

with Into Reading scoring slightly higher. The largest differences were in the areas of instructional rigor and direct alignment to Utah State Standards

The curriculum review committee recommended the adoption of HMH Into Reading as Legacy Preparatory Academy's elementary ELA curriculum. The results of the review process were then shared with the full elementary faculty.

The advantages of INTO READING include:

- Direct alignment to Utah State Standards.
- Reduced need for teacher-created supplementation and standards crosswalking.
- Increased instructional rigor and student engagement opportunities.
- Embedded nationally normed assessments that can be integrated with our PANO data systems, allowing us to identify struggling students more quickly and provide targeted support.
- Additional instructional supports for English Language Learners.
- Improved data and reporting tools to guide instructional decision-making.

After reviewing student achievement data, researching alternative programs, evaluating curriculum options, and gathering extensive teacher feedback, administration believe HMH Into Reading is the best choice to support our students and teachers moving forward because we want to do better with strengthening instructional alignment, improving classroom supports, and ultimately increasing student achievement in ELA.