

# Watkins Mill High School Literacy Improvement Initiative

*Working Document*  
*Short Version*  
(revised) 4/25/06

**Literacy Definition:** Being able to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential ("A First Look at the Literacy of America's Adults in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century").

**Enduring Understanding:** Students who are equipped with a variety of effective literacy strategies will be more successful academically and professionally.

**Critical Question:** What can teachers do to equip students with a variety of effective literacy strategies?

**Overarching Goal:** To become a literacy focused and literacy driven school in order to improve student achievement as measured by MSA Reading proficiency, SAT scores, and graduation rate.

**Rationale:** Adolescent literacy is necessary and the key to student success in school. Being able to read, comprehend and write is imperative for students to be able to understand the content of their classes. According to Michael Kamil, professor of psychological studies in education and learning at Stanford University, "we almost need a trauma center to take care of this problem, it's that serious for kids that can't read...It's the number-one factor standing in the way of their graduating" (Kennedy-Manzo, 2004).

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, opportunities to achieve a middle-class standard of living are dwindling. Unlike the 1950's when it was entirely possible to find a job and achieve a decent living without having a college degree, jobs in the twenty-first century place many more demands on one's level of literacy. More broadly, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, being able to read and write is essential for a successful life. If students cannot read, what will they be able to do? If students can read, what won't they be able to do?

## WMHS Statistics Proficiency in Reading MSA 2005

All 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students	61.5 %	268/436
Asian	73.2%	30/41
African Am.	45.5%	65/143
White	82.6%	123/149
Hispanic	47.0%	47/100
FARMS	42.2%	38/88
SPED	21.3%	10/47
Limited Eng	33.3%	6/18

**ENGLISH 2 HSA Statistics:** (450 Students took the test. Of the 450, 184 did not make a passing score)

<http://mdreportcard.org/menu.aspx?K=150545&WDATA=School>

	<b>59.2 %</b>	<b>of the students passed</b>	
Advanced	19.6 %		
Proficient	39.6%		
Basic	40.9%		
	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>
Asian	17.4%	47.8%	34.8%
African Am.	9.4%	34.2%	56.4%
White	36.9%	45.0%	18.1%
Hispanic	10.7%	34.0%	55.3%
	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>
Female	23.3%	39.6%	37.1%
Male	15.2%	39.5%	45.2%
	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>
SPED	2.3%	9.3%	88.4%
Reg Ed.	21.4%	42.8%	35.9%

**PSAT 2005** (454 **Sophomores** took the test) (score range from 20-80)

**Critical Reading**    **Mean score: 38.7**    **(MD mean 41.1)**    **(Natl mean 42.5)**

**Writing Skills**        **Mean score: 41.0**    **(MD mean 43.7)**    **(Natl mean 44.9)**

**PSAT 2005** (404 **Juniors** took the test) (score range from 20-80)

**Critical Reading**    **Mean score: 41.2**    **(MD mean 46.6)**    **(Natl mean 47.5)**

**Writing Skills**        **Mean score: 43.7**    **(MD mean 49.1)**    **(Natl mean 49.3)**

**STAR 2005** (of the approx 526 8<sup>th</sup> graders who took the test in spring of 2005 308 were below Grade Level in reading)

**60% below grade level in reading**

**READ 180**

**MAP-r**

**SAT 2005**    1019    (Target for 2006)    1037

## WMHS Demographics

Graduation Rate	88.9%	(Target 2006 90.4, 2007 91.8)
Attendance Rate	95%	
Female	51.1 %	
Male	48.9%	
African Am.	36%	
American In	.3%	
Asian	9.8%	
Hispanic	27.8%	
White	24%	
SPED	14%	
ESOL	12%	
FARMS	43%	

## Phase 1

### Staff goals for 2006-2007

#### All Staff

- By the end of the 2006-2007 academic year 100% of staff will have used six of the ten core strategies identified by the WM Cluster Literacy Team on at least two separate occasions.

#### Intervention Staff

- Staff will implement and monitor a program to increase the MAP-r lexile score the equivalency of one grade level for 80% of the students in their program.

### Student goal

- 5.7 % point increase of the number of students scoring proficient on the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Reading MSA in 2006-2007 (We used the 2014 AYP goal of 100% and divided it by the number of years left until 2014)
  - Asian 3.9%
  - African American 7.8%
  - White 2.5%
  - Hispanic 7.6%
  - FARMS 8.3%
  - Special Ed 11.2%
  - Limited English 9.5%

## Action Plan for Implementation of Recommendations from the Literacy Project Team and the Cluster Literacy Team

### Instruction

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Possible Resources</b>	<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Status</b>
Explore and identify for Phase 2 a consistent instructional delivery model	ILT	Ongoing	JEB Stuart Report and visits Skillful Teacher 1 and 2	Instruction	
Implement Cluster Literacy strategies in all classes	All teachers	September 06-June 07		Instruction	
Implement intervention programs	Intervention teachers	September 06-June 07		Instruction	
Continue to develop a list of core literacy strategies	Literacy coach, Cluster Literacy Team	Ongoing		Instruction	
Use a tool box of strategies to address Cluster literacy weaknesses	Cluster Literacy Team	August '06		Professional Development	In Progress
Use a tool box of strategies to address additional literacy weaknesses at WMHS	Literacy Project Team	August '06		Professional Development	

## Professional Development

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Possible Resources</b>	<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Status</b>
Staff Survey to identify how staff feel about literacy issues	Literacy Project Team and SDT	March '06	Test Pilot	Professional Development	completed
Read <u>Creating a Culture of Literacy</u>	Administrators and ILT	March '06		Professional Development	In Progress
Visit JEB Stuart High School	Members of ILT	April 27, 2006		Professional Development	April 27, 2006
Set up meeting to talk with Mel Riddle	Principal	March '06		Professional Development	
Introduce literacy focus to the faculty	SDT and Lead Literacy Teacher and members of the Literacy Project Team	April '06 faculty meeting		Professional Development	May 1 <sup>st</sup>
Develop a training plan for 06-07 school year with the administrator in charge of literacy	SDT, Literacy Coach, and SDS	June '06	Strategies identified from Cluster Literacy Team	Professional Development	
Offer specific training for how to do observations of literacy strategies	Literacy Coach	July '06		Professional Development	

### Works Cited

Manzo-Kennedy, Kathleen. "Reading Researchers Outline Elements Needed to Achieve Adolescent Literacy." *Education Week* 20 Oct., 2004 vol.24(8) Proquest Watkins Mill High School 4 Jan. 2005.

"A First Look at the Literacy of America's Adults in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." "National Assessment of Adult Literacy." *National Center for Education Statistics*. U.S. Department of Education. Dec. 2005. Accessed: 17 Feb. 2005. <<http://nces.ed.gov/NAAL/PDF/2006470.PDF>>.

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