

# Core Literacy Adoption, Grades 6-12

**Dr. Chandra Hayes, Assistant Superintendent**



# The Virginia Literacy Act and the Middle Grades

- **VALLSS testing** extends to grades 6-8, providing teachers with information on code based skills and language-based skills.
- **Students who fail the SOL** participate in grades 4-8 VALLS testing and require a Student Reading Plan (SRP).
- **Every student in grade six through grade eight** receives additional evidence-based supplemental instruction and intervention if they do not meet literacy benchmarks.
- Families have access to online resources and are encouraged to participate in the writing of a Student Reading Plan (SRP).

# Current State

- The last adoption for grades 6-12 took place in 2007.
- Current instructional materials include the [ACPS Approved Title List](#) and the previously adopted textbook resource.
- [VA HB2777](#) requires all schools to have High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) for all subjects by July 2026.

## 6-12 Teacher Feedback - Reading

- Engaging texts and literature (6–12): short stories with scaffolds (6–8); balance of high-interest texts and classics (9–12)
- Diverse authorship (6–12)
- Thematic, chronological, or genre-based units (6–12)
- Rich, front-loaded vocabulary (6–12)
- Social, cultural, and historical context with texts (9–12)
- Reading guides, scaffolds, and supplemental interventions (6–8)
- Scaffolded, SOL-aligned assessments (6–12)
- Digital and audio resources for access and readability (6–12)

## 6-12 Teacher Feedback - Writing

- Mentor texts (6–12)
- Single-point rubrics and consistent models (6–8)
- Vertical consistency in writing models and language (9–12)
- Integrated, evidence-based grammar instruction (6–12)
- Grammar, spelling, and morphology resources (6–8)
- Universal/customizable graphic organizers (6–12)
- Digital tools with feedback and self-paced tutorials (6–12)
- SOL-style practice questions (6–8)

# Purpose of the Review Committee

**ACPS follows a fair and transparent process to adopt a new ELA program for grades 6-12 across the division.**

In the review of secondary English Language Arts materials, our goal is to follow a process that is:

- Transparent to parents/guardian and community members, staff, and the School Board;
- Inclusive - working to hear all voices;
- Thoughtful - thinking about today's learners and the learners who are coming to us in the future; and
- Focused on clear instructional criteria.

# Division Review Committee

- 16 Teachers
- 1 Administrator
- 6 Reading Specialists
- 4 English Language Specialists
- 4 Special Education Teachers
- 1 Library Media Specialist
- 3 Instructional Coach/LTI
- 2 Parents

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## 37 Participants

**\*Participants were initially divided into a middle school committee and high school committee.**

# Decision-Making Process

10/01



10/22



11/05

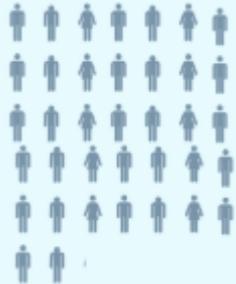


12/17



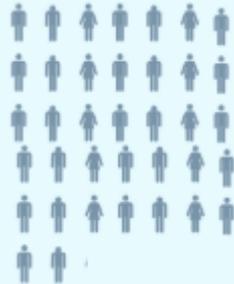
01/08

Adoption Committee Meeting 1  
(37 participants)



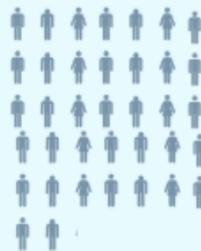
- 5 middle school state-approved options
- 4 high school options

Adoption Committee Meeting 2



- Middle and HS committees endorsed the same three options

Adoption Committee Meeting 3



Teachers & Caregivers

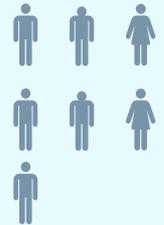
- Three vendor presentations
- Materials made available to teachers at each school site
- Materials available at COB for caregivers with all digital links

Adoption Committee Meeting 4



- Survey feedback provided
- Discussion & alignment between committee thoughts and survey data

School Board  
7 members



- Resources open for public review for 30 days at COB.

# ELA Adoption Committee Recommendation



[Link to HMH Homepage](#)  
[VDOE List of Approved Textbooks](#)

# Teacher Feedback and Committee Highlights

- Vertical alignment
  - Students and caregivers will be familiar with a uniform platform from middle to high
- Reading is more accessible
  - Scaffolds like *The Six Signposts*, explicit annotation tools
  - EL resources with strong visual supports and academic vocabulary
  - Tier 2 and 3 supports
- A *Writable* feature (was once an intervention tool) is now included in their suite with plentiful graphic organizers
- Grammar is incorporated into readings; consumable materials for extended practice offered
- Multiple texts under each unit contribute to choice and differentiation
- High-yield, low prep teacher materials
- Substantial intervention materials overall
- Unit assessments aligned to 2024 SOL standards
- Six units all centered around asking a central question or theme
- Test questions aligned to 2024 VA SOLs with 6 units tests.

# Teacher Feedback and Committee Highlights (continued)

- AI tools for developing lesson plans/unit plans
- AI feedback on student writing (similar to some high stakes exams)
- Easily interfaces with the secondary Learning Management System (LMS) - Schoology
- Mini grammar units following each text and independent practice called “Watch Your Language”
- Variety of materials and diverse literature selections
- Full novels and plays are contained within the textbook
- Offers scaffolds sorted as: light, moderate, and substantial.
  - Example: 4 response levels: (1) open-ended question; (2) question with sentence starters; (3) question with sentence starters and mouse over tips; and (4) summary of reading with a question, sentence starters and mouse over tips.
  - Online professional development and in-person learning is available
- Family room resources with access to student work and letters to families in multiple languages
- Audio and translation capability
- Editable slides, peer coach videos, interactive grammar lessons, and diagnostic screening.

# Considerations

- Some limitations surrounding depth of vocabulary and lessons on morphology
- Majority of writing tools are digital and may require printing
- Some writing prompts may need adjustment to increase rigor and critical thinking
- Nearly all committee members preferred a physical text as opposed to a curriculum package with only a digital platform
- Teachers will need training and time to work together with the program
- Pre-service week training should include a balance between training and time to plan with peers
- Opportunities to use a small group training model that focuses on instructional role (i.e. SPED, EL, etc.)
- Clear expectations around implementation—intersection between using this program, your professionalism, creativity, art of teaching
- Website may be difficult to navigate for some—so many resources—training on the digital platform is imperative
- Phased rollout and different expectations from the level of fidelity required at elementary because secondary ELA instruction moves beyond foundational skills to include more novels and plays

\*The use of a particular textbook is not mandated by state law, as it was with the elementary grades.

# ELA Adoption Committee Alternate Recommendation



[Link to Savvas Homepage](#)  
[VDOE List of Approved Textbooks](#)

# Teacher Feedback and Committee Highlights

- Rigorous instruction
- Materials include scaffolds
- Student-centered tasks
- Diversity of texts
- Collaborative experiences
- Speaking and listening experiences including (i.e. built-in podcasts)
- Teacher choice is embedded throughout the resource with structured units that include: whole class, group work, then individual tasks
- Editable resources

# Considerations

- Savvas is not vertically aligned to the elementary school experience
  - How do we ensure a cohesive experience for students?
- Teacher scores were not as high for this resource
  - How do we ensure teachers are excited about a curriculum that they are expected to implement?
- Teachers voice needs to be centered in the creation of pacing and alignment to a new resource

# Anticipated Next Steps

- Solicit feedback from secondary ELA PLCs regarding current pacing and resource alignment
- Work with the Content Advisory Team (CAT) to consolidate feedback from PLCs and begin working on pacing and curriculum framework updates
- Develop a Professional Learning Plan that includes a spring learning opportunity, summer professional learning drop-in dates and pre-service week training for all ELA teachers and collaborative partners
- Ongoing support throughout the 2026 - 2027 academic year and professional learning by HMH (dates to be determined)

# Questions/Discussion

