

To: Principals and Teachers

From: Oneida Fox Roye, Director of ELA/Literacy & Kavita Venkatesh, Executive Director of Instructional Research and Development

Date: April 9, 2015

Re: Introduction to the Core Aligned Literacy Modules (CALM) from Expeditionary Learning (EL)

Last year, after a literature review, the Department of English Language Arts and Literacy piloted the Core Aligned Literacy Modules (CALM) from Expeditionary Learning (EL) in 30 schools in grades 3-5. Due to its success, we are extending an invitation to every elementary and K-8 school leader in the district to participate in these units of study. We are excited to work with your school team to launch CALM (EL) this fall. Please note that this is part of a larger shift towards a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction. CALM (EL) provides us with new tools to transform how teachers and students engage with content in classrooms. This memo will provide an overview of CALM (EL), the materials we will order, and our tentative professional development plan.

Background on Core Aligned Literacy Modules (CALM)

CALM (EL) consist of 3 modules per grade (and will introduce a fourth module in the second year of implementation) with core texts. Each module is approximately 8 weeks of instruction broken into 3 units. Each unit is made up of a sequence of between 5-20 lessons. Below is the list of modules we adopted.

EL Modules	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4 (introduced in year 2)
Grade 3	Module 1 (3rd): My Librarian Is A Camel: How Books Are Brought to Children Around the World	Module 2B (3rd): Connecting Literary And Informational Texts to Study Culture "Then and Now"	Module 3B (3rd): Wolves: Fact and Fiction	Module 3B(4th): Perspectives on the American Revolution
Grade 4	Module 1B(4th): Poetry, Biography, and Writer's Identify	Module 2B(4th): Animal Defense Mechanisms	Module 4 (4th): Susan B. Anthony, the Suffrage Movement and the Importance of Voting Module 4(4th)	Module 3A (4th): Simple Machines: Force and Motion
Grade 5	Module 1 (5th): Stories of Human Rights	Module 2B (5th): Inventions that Changed Peoples Lives	Module 3A(5th): Sports and Athletes' Impact on Culture	Module 2A (6th): Analyzing Structure and Communicating Theme in Literature

Materials for CALM:

1. *Curriculum:* We leverage EL's [open source curriculum](#) for teachers and students
2. *Core Texts:* Each module includes books that accompany the curriculum. The English Language Arts and Literacy Department will order and deliver the texts to each school in

the first year of implementation. Depending on the text, the teacher may read-aloud (1 copy per classroom) or each child may read individually (1 copy per student)

3. *Research Collections* (supplementary texts): These are a curated set of books that build on the content area at a grade appropriate level. The ELA and Literacy Department will order and deliver the texts to each school in the first year of implementation. We anticipate that these books may be shared across several classrooms in a grade.
4. *Professional Development*: We will use only the most effective PD modules from Expeditionary Learning and will leverage our ELA and Literacy staff and excellent teachers from our first cohort of schools to provide more intensive PD opportunities.

Tentative Professional Development Plan with Expeditionary Learning:

Session Title	Participants	Proposed Timeframe	Session Description
Institute: Intro to the Modules & Planning to Teach	Lead Teachers and Principals	July	Introduction to the EL 3-5 Modules & their alignment with the key shifts of the Common Core. Includes experiencing sample lessons; exploring the foundational research and pedagogical strategies; and getting ready to teach Unit 1 and the first week of school.
Institute: Differentiation and Adaptation	Lead Teachers and Principals	October	An introduction to differentiating the tasks in the modules to meet the needs of all learners. Teachers will learn strategies for tiered tasks while keeping all students in complex texts. They will also learn guidelines for adapting lessons to meet the individual needs of learners in their classrooms.
Institute: Power of Speaking & Listening	Lead Teachers and Principals	TBD	An in-depth exploration of oral literacy in the modules including the research that supports it; learning strategies to support productive small group work; and gaining proficiency in various protocols from the modules.
Institute: Strengthening Writing through Student-Engaged Assessment	Lead Teachers and Principals	October, January, May TBD	Participants will become familiar with EL's approach for strengthening writing through providing specific models, supporting student-led critique, and giving specific, descriptive
Coaching Days	Lead Teachers and Principals	20 days, TBD	Building and Network Level support for monitoring progress in systematic and sustainable ways and coaching for deepened and consistent implementation Includes learning walks, looking at student work protocols, and other coaching support for cohorts of literacy leads & administrators.
Technical Support/Consulting	Lead Teachers and Principals	TBD	Quarterly or strategically timed dates for progress tracking, alignment across networks, teams and initiatives, adjustments to support effective implementation and turnkey strategies.

We are excited about this opportunity to work with you and your students to engage in these units of study. We look forward to your participation and feedback throughout implementation.

Thank you,
Kavita Venkatesh and Oneida Fox Roye