



# ELA Department Reading Philosophy

Dear Wildcats,

As an ELA Department we are dedicated to creating and maintaining a community of readers. Research has shown that there are essential components in a successful reading program, and we are excited to provide this opportunity to our students and celebrate their reading throughout the year.

## **Time**

Students need time to read in class in order to create a habit of reading and to build stamina. In addition, students need time to discuss choices with classmates, time to analyze their progress, and time to practice fluency & comprehension strategies under the direction of the teacher.

## **Choice**

Students need to make choices in reading that reflect their interests because interest drives engagement. Students should challenge themselves to read books of increasing complexity from a range of genres.

## **Response**

Students will reflect on reading in writing (themed notebooks & writing notebooks), facilitate discussions in small groups and respond regularly to other readers.

## **Vision**

Classroom book talks present a wide range of voices, styles of text, categories of interest, etc. and are essential for helping students develop their own 'to read next' lists. We must commit to helping students define themselves as readers.

## **Expectations**

All readers will develop the stamina to read longer and with greater fluency with daily practice. In order for this practice to take place, students should come prepared with something to read each day in class. All readers will set goals and read regularly each week, both in class and at home.

The inspiration for our philosophy is best explained by nationally recognized teacher, literacy coach, and author Penny Kittle:

***“There is a strong correlation between reading regularly for pleasure (any reading...really, ANY reading, as long as it’s a habit) and academic success, including building vocabulary, an understanding of sentence structure, and an increase in stamina for reading harder texts. It is also clear that the more you read, the better you write” (Kittle 2014).***

# Reading makes a difference...



20 minutes/day-- 1,823,000 words/yr--90% ranking



5 minutes/day--282,000 words/yr--50% ranking



1 minute/day-- 8,000 words/yr--10% ranking

## -- beyond test scores.

1. Reading is social and emotional learning. It **IMPROVES RELATIONSHIPS**. Reading together helps parents and kids connect, but it also help teens navigate their peer relationships. Reading **FICTION INCREASES EMPATHY** for others.
2. Reading helps **DEVELOP CONCENTRATION**. Many students avoid reading because they can't concentrate, then they never get better. Start out small and work up 5 minutes at a time. It doesn't happen overnight. Don't be afraid to use audio **WITH** the text.
3. Reading **BUILDS NEURAL PATHWAYS IN THE BRAIN**, which make a healthier brain and can raise IQ levels. Reading is your brain's exercise. It actually changes a the way a brain is structured and how a person connects information. Reading builds bridges in the brain; this can happen at any age. This can help if a person recover in the future more quickly from an injury or brain disease. **READING IS PREVENTATIVE CARE**.
4. Reading **TEACHES LANGUAGE AND WRITING**. There is a high correlation between strong readers and strong writers. A person's ability to communicate grows as reading grows.
5. Reading naturally **DEVELOPS CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS**. Readers try to solve problems and make connections while they read. Being able to process and synthesize information from multiples sources is what employers are looking for-- they are also the happiest employees.