




# Curriculum Definitions



What you may need to know to interpret  
our data wall.

# Six Traits

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The Six Trait Writing Model helps students understand what is working well and what needs to be improved in their writing. The traits give teachers a focus for their writing instruction. The traits give all a common language for talking about and celebrating writing. The Six Trait model breaks down writing performance into a manageable group of teachable and assessable skills.

# Six Traits Continued

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**Voice:** Evidence of the writer behind the message; enthusiasm for writing; individuality, personality, charm; tailoring communication to an audience; evoking an emotional response.

**Ideas:** The main point or storyline; awareness of details; knowing what's important or interesting; clarity, focus, sense of purpose.

**Word Choice:** Evidence of precision in the use of words; awareness of language; understanding that there are different ways to say things; stretching to use new words.

**Organization:** The internal structure of the piece; beginning, middle, ending; ability to organize and group; good sense of sequence.

**Sentence Fluency:** The rhythm and flow of language, how it plays to the ear; sentence sense; an ear for language patterns; use of more complex sentences; a variety of sentence lengths.

**Conventions:** The mechanical correctness of the piece; awareness of writing conventions: spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage, paragraphing, and capitalization.

Definitions from The Move to Better Writing

# 6 + 1 Writing traits at Kaneland High School

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There are a number of ways for teachers to analyze student writing and measure how well it meets the established expectations. At Kaneland High School, the faculty has been trained in the use of the 6 + 1 Traits™ approach originated by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. We have based the writing components and assessment strategies we use on this system in our high school style guide and in our classrooms.

The six traits we at KHS look for in student writing are **ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions and presentation**. Each of these is assessed on a numerical basis of five or six points, the highest points being awarded for a strong showing in that category and the lowest for a “not there yet” demonstration of that trait.

# 6 + 1 Writing Traits at Kaneland High School

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**Ideas and content:** This trait reflects the *development* of the piece. If the written work is clear, focused, holds the reader's attention and supplies relevant details, it receives a high score.

**Organization:** This trait reflects the *structure* of the piece. If the material is arranged to highlight the main idea and move the reader through the piece in a logical, effective way that is suitable to its purpose, it receives a high score.

**Voice:** This trait reflects the *personality* of the writer or the *command* he or she has of the writing topic. If the writer speaks to the audience in a knowledgeable or compelling way, using tone that is appropriate to the purpose of the piece, then the work receives a high score.

**Word choice:** This trait reflects the *language* the writer uses to convey the message. If the words used are precise, colorful, natural, powerful and appropriate to the meaning of the piece, the work receives a high score.

**Sentence fluency:** This trait reflects *sound or rhythm* of the piece, based on syntax and sentence variety. If the writing flows smoothly, has a musical quality when read aloud and changes up grammatical openings and sentence length, the piece receives a high score.

**Conventions:** This trait reflects *mechanics*, especially spelling, grammar and punctuation. If the work is for the most part error-free and uses good paragraphing, it receives a high score.

**+1. Presentation:** This trait reflects the physical *format* of the piece. If the physical format makes the piece attractive, accessible to the audience and easy to read and comprehend, the piece receives a high score.

# Course Sequencing: College Prep Courses

Freshman year	
English	Physical Science
Algebra	Geography/App of Tech
Health/ P.E.	Fine Arts Elective
Soc. Science Elective	Elective

Junior Year	
English	American History
Algebra 2	Science Elective
P.E.	Elective
Elective	Elective

Sophomore year	
English	Biology
Geometry	Dr. Ed./ P.E.
Speech/Found. Of Democracy	Fine Arts Elective
Elective	Elective

Senior Year	
English	Government
P.E.	Economics
Elective	Elective
Elective	Elective

# KMS Course Sequence

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## 6th Grade

### Core Curriculum

Double block of L.A. daily

Double block of Physical Science every other day

Double block of Social Studies every other day

Math daily

Daily P.E. or Health

Optional Band and/or Chorus

Seven weeks of each of the following Exploratory classes

- Computer Keyboarding

- General music

- Art

- World Cultures – Geography and world cultures studies

- Information Literacy – Library skills, Internet searches, research skills, Validation of sources, etc.

# KMS Course Sequence Continued

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## 7th Grade

### Core Curriculum

Daily Math

Daily Life science

Daily U.S. History post- Civil War

Daily Literature

Daily Communication Skills/Grammar/Writing

Daily P.E

Optional Band and/or Chorus

Seven Weeks of each of the following Exploratory courses

Art

General Music

Computers

Industrial Arts

Health

# KMS Course Sequence Continued

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## **8th Grade**

### **Core Curriculum**

Daily Math – pre-Algebra

Daily Earth science

Daily Civics and Economics

Daily double block of Language Arts – Literature and Communication Skills

Daily P.E. or Health

Optional Band and/or Chorus

### Electives

Music Appreciation

Music Theory and Composition

Multimedia

Microsoft Office

Construction

Drafting

Advanced Non-ceramic Art

Ceramic and 3-Dimensional Art

Personal Fitness

Drama

# KMS Course Sequence Continued

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## **Reading**

All levels have access to fundamental reading instruction

## **Math Classes offered**

Life Skills Math, Basic 6th and 7th grade math, Pre-algebra, Algebra, and Geometry. (Students are placed in advanced courses based on parental request, teacher recommendation, test scores, gifted assessment, or strong student interest. The student must maintain at least a B average to remain in the advanced placement class.)

## **Gifted Language Arts**

Offered at all grade levels

## **Targeted ELL/Bi-lingual Study Halls**

Offered at each grade level – Staffed by a bi-lingual (Spanish) L.A./Social Studies teacher. This study is also an assigned placement for students that don't qualify for ELL but have language and/or cultural problems that would benefit from such a resource period.

# Languages Spoken at Kaneland

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As of this date, twenty-seven languages are represented as spoken by students in our K-12 population via Home Language Surveys. The primary language of this population is Spanish. The other languages spoken are as follows:

Afrikaans  
Albanian  
Arabic  
Bulgarian  
Cambodian  
Chinese  
Dutch  
German  
Greek

Hindi  
Hmong  
Ilocano/Tagalog  
Italian  
Japanese  
Lithuanian  
Malagasy  
Pilipino (Filipino)  
Polish  
Punjabi  
Russian  
Spanish  
Tayari  
Turkish  
Urdu  
Vietnamese  
Visayan  
Yupik

# Post High School Experience Survey Data

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- We survey our students when they leave the building and again five years later.
- Topics surveyed include:
  - Education pursued after graduating KHS
  - Learning environment at KHS
  - Support of KHS staff
  - Interests and standards at KHS

# NCA: North Central Accreditation

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## **What is NCA?**

Non-profit organization which accredits 9000 schools a year in 19 different states

An accreditation, evaluation and school improvement organization

A voluntary association that requires schools to strive for continuous improvement in student performance.

# Kaneland's NCA Process

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## **What does it mean to engage in an NCA evaluation?**

Deciding to be NCA endorsed requires a 5-6 year commitment for each NCA cycle.

The process requires a school to conduct a self-study and to adopt a school-wide, school improvement plan that focuses on increased student performance and is based on extensive data analysis.

It involves the commitment and involvement of the entire high school staff.

It also involves an evaluation of our school's success by an outside team of experts.

# Kaneland's NCA Goals

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## **What performance goals did we choose for our students?**

**READING:** All students, across the curriculum and in a variety of contexts, will demonstrate competence in the skills and strategies needed to effectively read a variety of mediums.

**WRITING:** All students across the curriculum will demonstrate the skills and strategies needed to write effectively in a variety of contexts.

# ISAT and PSAE

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These are standardized tests taken in grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade.

The following pages will further describe each grade level's tests and focus content area being tested.

# What is the PLAN Test

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A test taken by all Sophomores

The PLAN is developed by ACT to help Sophomores start the process of shaping their future school and career goals

The PLAN test includes:

- Academic testing in English, Math, Reading, and Science

- An interest survey in careers

- Questions on students' future plans

- Information about educational aid programs and scholarships

# Middle School Concept

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## What's the Difference?

### Middle School

Student centered

Emphasizes both affective and cognitive development of student

Allows for flexible scheduling

### Junior High

Subject centered

Emphasizes only cognitive development

Fosters competition and empowerment

# What's the Difference?

## Continued

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### Middle School

Allows for flexible scheduling

Varies length of time students are in courses

Organizes teachers into interdisciplinary teams with common planning period

High level of interaction among students and teachers

### Junior High

Requires a set schedule with little or no flexibility

Offers subject for one semester or one year

Organizes teachers in department with no common planning period

Highly structured with difficulty to access teachers

# KHS Graduation Requirements

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29 credits needed

3.5 credits in English and Speech

3 credits in Math (starting with 2009 grads)

3 credits in Science (starting with 2009 grads)

1 credit in U.S. History

.5 credits in Government

.5 credits in Economics (Class of 2008 and up)

.5 credits in Geography

.5 credits in Applications of Technology

3.25 credits in Physical Education

.5 credits in Health

.25 credits in Driver's Education

.5 Foundations of Democracy

# Elective Courses vs. Core Courses

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Core classes: English, Math, Science, and Social Studies classes that are required for graduation.

Elective Classes: Additional classes taken in order to obtain 29 credits for graduation.

# Math Spiraling

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This is the process of coming back to a particular concept numerous times throughout a course, or sequence of courses, each time adding more depth to the topic. This increase in applications of the same material leads to a better understanding of the material.

# Curriculum Mapping

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Curriculum maps are...

- communication tools

- calendar-based planning tools with core concepts, skills, and assessments for each course and/or grade levels

- collections of data about what is being taught

- tools to examine data

We use maps to.....

- identify gaps and repetitions both horizontally and vertically

- build smooth transitions between all education level

- create the “big-picture” for curriculum decision-making

- acquaint educators with the entire curriculum at the district level

# For More Information on Curriculum Terms or Questions

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Feel free to contact Sarah Mumm at  
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