

Superintendent's Message January 2018

Dr. Carol Hansen, OVSD

Our Authentic Literacy Program Is More Than Just Reading and Writing

Welcome back to the school year! We are all feeling rejuvenated as we ring in 2018 and share our enthusiasm for learning with our students and families. I am incredibly grateful for all of you. You are a critical part of our Ocean View family. As you may know, my goals as your Superintendent are directly linked to our District's goals, which include the achievement of all students, transparent communication and engagement with you, our families and community. I work each day to be purposeful in my actions and words, devoting careful attention to these goals. In order for Ocean View to continue on its successful path, we must have a laser-like focus on student achievement.

You may hear me, or members of our team, speak about Authentic Literacy. What is it? Authentic Literacy is an instructional priority for Ocean View, which we believe is essential to addressing student achievement. Authentic literacy is defined as an instructional practice in which teachers structure effective lessons and activities, which guide *students to read, write and speak with purpose across all content areas each school day*. It is the lens we use in teaching all subject areas for all students, from Transitional Kindergarten through grade 8. Students are delving deeper into each content area—English, math, science, and social studies—demonstrating their learning through reading, writing and speaking.

Our state content standards require that students be able to solve real-world problems, develop life skills, be critical thinkers, and make informed decisions. Authentic Literacy is a powerful and efficient approach used to help students reach these standards. For example, our students are learning and practicing expository writing in various content areas. They are researching and collaborating as part of project-based learning in science and social studies. While visiting classrooms, you will see students working in small groups, speaking to each other about a particular topic, using relevant language and citing evidence to communicate their understanding and opinions.

Authentic Literacy is a priority at all of our schools. Its practices and methodologies are embedded in our Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and School Site Plans. The actions steps our schools determine are based on the needs of individual students. Authentic Literacy challenges our high achieving students and helps them to write with purpose, support their claims with rich evidence, and speak with confidence. Students who may need more assistance can quickly build basic skills and academic vocabulary through Authentic Literacy. This can boost the success of our English Learner students and socio-economically disadvantaged students, and ultimately help to close the achievement gap. In Ocean View, we assess our results using multiple measures at the District, school and grade levels, which helps us revise and reinforce our work as we go.

The new year brings many opportunities for success and growth. I believe our work in Authentic Literacy on behalf of all students will propel them to new levels of achievement.