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Feedback on the **Spanish Language Arts and Reading**

**Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**

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It is not clear if the intent of the "Composition and Presentation" strand is to focus on both, writing and presentation skills. The first grade objectives included under this strand for example focus mainly on conventions of language (Only the 1.11 (X, Y, Y, and Z) make reference

time” and “listen attentively by facing speakers and asking questions to clarify information”.

In other words, the expectation to participate productively is not that explicit. If we compare this strand (**Collaboration**) in the Spanish Language Arts and Reading TEKS with the same strand in the English Language Arts and Reading TEKS for grades Kindergarten and First grade for example, one will notice that the strand in Spanish only includes 2 expectations while the same strand in the English TEKS for the same grade levels includes at least 4 expectations.

**4. Are the student expectations (SEs) clear and specific?**

One of the strands: COMPREHENSION for 3rd grade includes many more expectations when compared to the other grade levels. Under “Comprehension: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Thinking” (LSE) in the English Language Arts and Reading TEKS for 3rd grade, there are 14 expectations, while in Spanish Language Arts and Reading TEKS for 3rd grade, there are only 2 expectations.

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The Collaboration strand could be modified to reflect an emphasis on “productive participation” or “collaborative task completion or collaborative problem solving”. The literature refers to this as “collaborative languaging” a term that may be appropriate for the purposes of this strand. In its current state, this strand includes some expectations such as 3.4 (A), and (C) which state:

- (A) use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings;
- (B) listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments;
- (C) follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action;
- (D) use conventions of language such as speaking coherently about the topic under discussion, employing eye contact, speaking rate, volume, enunciation to communicate ideas effectively;

For example, only one of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level expectations in the Collaboration strand directly addresses “productive participation”: 3.4 E “work productively with others in teams, participate in teacher- and student-led discussions by posing and answering questions with appropriate detail and by providing suggestions that build upon the ideas of others.”

**9. Are the College and Career Readiness Standards adequately and appropriately addressed throughout the TEKS?**

Yes

**10. Do you have any other suggestions for ways in which the English language arts and reading TEKS can be improved?**

**Suggestion:** Rewrite expectation 3.1 F:

Current: “write words that have a prosodic or orthographic accent, palabras agudas, such as feliz and canción, y graves such as casa and árbol;”

Proposed: “write words that have a prosodic or orthographic accent, palabras agudas, such as feliz and canción, and palabras graves such as casa and árbol;

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**In grades 3-6. the following strand: Composition and Presentation includes the following expectation:** C) use the complete subject and predicate in a sentence to form simple, complex, and compound sentences with correct subject-verb agreement;

**Suggestion:** Include an expectation that acknowledges that use of “tacit subject” in the Spanish language. For example, it is common to use expressions such as: “Salimos tarde”, comimos cabrito, etc. which are grammatically correct even though they omit the subject.

**Suggestion:** Change 3.7 from “write about important personal experiences;” to “write about experiences of personal significance”

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Letters “b” and “v”

According to La Real Academia Española (see <http://www.rae.es/diccionario-panhispanico-de-dudas/representacion-de-sonidos>), both letters “b” and “v” are represented by the same sound: /b/. The proposed TEKS, however, include an expectation in Kindergarten: 1 (P) “Use phonological knowledge to match sounds to individual letters or syllables such as “b” and “v”. This implies that “b” and “v” have different sounds in Spanish, when in fact they don’t.

In the current TEKS (or the ones soon to be old), there is an objective that actually includes “b” and “v” as part of words that have “same sounds represented by different letters”. **What would be the reasons for this being change?**

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### **Digraph “rr”**

In the revised first grade TEKS the digraph “rr” is sometimes referred to as a “letter”. La Real Academia Española makes a distinction between letters and digraphs. In Spanish, there are 27 letters and “rr” is not one of them.

One more example of the use of ‘rr’ in the revised TEKS Objective 3.1 (J) which indicates that the student is expected to: “develop automatic recognition, monitor accuracy, and spell to mastery words that have the same sounds represented by different letters including “r” and “rr,” as in ratón and perro.

### **Additional feedback based on comments from colleagues and bilingual educators:**

#### **Difference between English and Spanish TEKS**

- x The verbiage used in the English TEKS and the Spanish TEKS seems to differ. The verbiage used in the English TEKS appears to be at a higher level than what is used in the Spanish TEKS. For example, why are the verbs used in the English version that relate to comprehension, response, author's purpose etc. at a higher blooms level than the Spanish?

### **Compound words**

Spanish has few compound words that are part of students' everyday language. The emphasis on compound words should be moved to a different grade level.

### **Upper and lower case letters**

The kinder Spanish LA has students identifying upper and lowercase letters, but we know research shows they need to know the letter sounds, and teaching letter identification can inhibit Spanish literacy in early elementary.

### **Phonological Awareness**

KS 1 and 2 need to follow more closely the way literacy in Spanish is developed. We know from Escamilla, 2009 that phonological awareness in Spanish is best developed through writing and analysis of written language. As children write and reflect on their writing they analyze speech. This is not emphasized enough in KS 1 and 2. Many of the SEs are repeated within the two strands.

### **Redundancy**

Divide the standards into three blocks: Word Study, Reading and Writing. All standards fall into these three categories. By taking the strands and having the teachers place them under the appropriate category teachers have been able to see where the redundancy lies within their State standards. For example, in first grade where most of the redundant TEKS are found, teachers were able to see that the exact same standard we saw in phonics, may be found under phonic awareness, then again in spelling and yet again in conventions. This is one reason they are feeling overwhelmed. The exact same standard is repeated four times.

### **Adjectives**

5th grade, (7) adjectives - they suggest the "más mejor" example... Not correct. It is redundant. The correct form is "mucho mejor o simplemente mejor".

### **Syllables and phonemes**

There is an emphasis on separating syllables into phonemes.

For example, on p 5 the TEKS indicate that students:

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item, the digraph “ll” is mentioned, but the students are supposed to “understand the concept that “ll” and “y” have the same sound.

p. 5

Understand the digraphs /ch/, /rr/ such as chico, chile, perro, carro ;

### **Why get rid of the CV, VC, CVC, CVCV, and CVC?**

pp. 5-6, 15

use knowledge of consonant/vowel sound relationships to decode syllables and words in text and independent of content (e.g., ~~CV, VC, CVC, CVCV~~ words); and

i) ~~open~~-by syllable such as mes, sol, el, ma-no, bo-ca, co-ci-na,

ii) ~~closed syllable (CVC) such as;~~

### **Familias de Palabras**

Include familias de palabras (zapato, zapatero, zapatería, etc.) as mentioned in Darla’s comment in discussion forum.

### **Use of dash**

In 1<sup>st</sup> grade the dash is identified as simply a dash (guión). In subsequent grades, it’s

identified as the em idTj0.0§1-1(imp)2(0uf(m)2(1)100(y)122.6dL80 Tw 1.8wn(d(s)102 Tj0.242184TT2-74