d　　　　　　**Taylor County Middle School Writing/Communications Plan**

"At Taylor County Middle School we will follow a writing/communications plan that will ensure our students will be proficient writers and communicators in the 21st century."

SBDM Council

SB 1 (2017) states that the policy must provide:

- Multiple opportunities for students to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes.
- A variety of language resources embedded within writing instruction.
- A variety of technological tools used in the writing process.

The SBDM council will be responsible for reviewing and approving the implementation of the writing/communications plan in order to create a school policy for the program. The policy will require the school to develop a program in which all students have multiple opportunities to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes. Other areas of focus will be school teams which are responsible for leading in the development, implementation, monitoring, and review of the program. Additional components will include the following:

- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Feedback
- Formative and summative assessments
- School portfolio system
- Technology
- Language resources
- Annual review
- Professional development
- Administrative support and monitoring
- Communication with parents and the community

School Writing/Communications Team

It is the responsibility of the School Writing/Communications Team as a whole to discuss the current plan, notes the weaknesses, and implement the changes discussed. The School Writing/Communications Team is made up of the following:

- Instructional Supervisor
- Administrator
- Lead teachers

It will be the responsibility of the Instructional Supervisor to monitor the progression and implementation of the program. It will be the administrator's responsibility to oversee the implementation of the program throughout his/her school, working with the lead teacher and department heads. The lead teachers will be responsible for writing/updating the new program, presenting the program to the SBDM council, implementation of the program throughout the school, implementing the changes and monitoring the progress his or her department is making with the program.

Developing Students' Communication Skills: Curriculum and Instruction

"The writing program shall incorporate a variety of language resources, technological tools, and multiple opportunities for students to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes." Sec (7)(c)(2)

***Schools provide multiple opportunities for students to develop complex communications skills for a variety of purposes.

1. Cross-curricular writing and communication instruction at all grade levels shall be focused on ensuring students are writing to learn, writing to demonstrate learning to the teacher and writing for publication by engaging in the following ways:
    a. English and social studies instructors will begin to work in a cross-curricular manner on history and literature units. Examples could include the Revolutionary War in social studies units being combined with literature such as *Johnny Tremain* by Esther Forbes which in turn, could lead to personal memoirs by the English student as well. Other examples could include the use of feature articles focusing on aspects of health covered in a personal fitness class. Art and music reviews could be used in both English and Arts and Humanities courses, and research papers could be written focusing on topics covered in childcare or science, among many other subjects.
2. Opportunities within the instructional day shall be provided for students at all levels and across the curriculum to build oral and written communication skills in a variety of forms, and contexts shall be focused on in the following ways:
    a. Oral communications will begin to be more of a focus in many subject areas, but especially throughout each grade level of English classes.
    b. Oral communication skills will continue to be a component of several rotation classes such as art, music, world language, as well as clubs and organizations.
    c. All students will be expected to have a public speaking component on their digital portfolio by his or her eighth-grade year of middle school.

Use of Technology to Help Students Develop Communication Skills

"Schools provide technological tools to assist students in being creative and innovative members of a global society." --Partnership for 21st-Century Skills Framework

1. Teachers and students shall use a variety of technological tools to assist students in being creative and innovative members of a global society and will be portrayed in the following ways:
   a. Lenovo Laptops will continue to be accessible in the classroom on a daily basis.
   b. Students will have multiple opportunities to create, analyze, and evaluate multi-media texts through the use of said laptops.
2. Teachers will begin to encourage the proper use of digital technologies, communication/networking tools, and social networks appropriately to access, manage, evaluate, and create information.
   a. Each teacher in the school has a Quomo board, a document camera, and speakers in his/her classroom and will utilize these technologies as often as possible in order to encourage students in the proper use of technology.
   b. Use of these technologies will better prepare students for the college-career readiness standards adopted by the state in order to better prepare students for life after secondary education.
   c. Several examples of the use of technology will be presented by the student in his/her digital portfolio. Some of the examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
      i. Speech (7th grade 4-H)
      ii. Debate (current real-world topics)/ Socratic Seminars
      iii. Book Talks
      iv. PSA's (Public Service Announcements)
      v. Various presentations, including, but not limited to powerpoint presentations and Prezi presentations over the student's four years of high school.

School Writing/Communications Portfolio

Schools support teachers in developing themselves as teachers of writing and create procedures for developing and monitoring portfolios consisting of samples of individual student work that represent the interests and growth of the student over time.

1. The use of the portfolio as a collection of an individual student's work that reflects his or her interests and growth over time while demonstrating the ability to communicate to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes.
   a. A digital portfolio (Google Sites) will be used to collect various samples for each grade level of student work, including the following:
      i. Narrative text
      ii. Informative/Explanatory Text
      iii. Argumentative Text (which supports a claim)
      iv. Content-Related Work
      v. Multi-media work (Includes a combination of different content forms such as text, audio, images, animations, video, and interactive content.)
      vi. Work completed using technology
      vii. Work-based on inquiry/research
      viii. Work connected to reading, speaking, listening, observing
      ix. Oral communication

          x.   Writing to learn
          xi.   Writing to demonstrate learning (e.g., extended response, writing relevant to the on-demand writing test, exam essay, etc.
          xii.   Work that has been taken through a full writing process, including feedback

2. The portfolio collections will be analyzed to inform whole class and whole school instructional strengths and areas of need for the writing program in the following ways:
    a. All teachers will be aware of required portfolio submissions at all grade levels.
    b. Teachers will be directed on how to properly instruct students with submitting pieces of work to the collection, whether it be written or technology-driven (speech, debate, sound byte, etc.).
    c. Assessment of collections of work will be consistent throughout the entire school. Each teacher will be made aware of his/her responsibilities concerning the portfolio.
3. The collection and management of student portfolios, whether paper or digital, for all grades within the school as well as between the schools will be managed according to the approved school plan in the following ways:
    a. It will be the responsibility of the reading, writing, and career prep teachers to maintain student progress of the contents within the digital portfolio.
    b. The contents of the portfolio will be reviewed a minimum of one time per year, per student.
    c. Students must update portions of his/her portfolio according each year.
    d. There will be active participation by students in decisions made about what to include and what to remove from their portfolios, in order to ensure portfolios maintain an authentic reflection of student growth and interest.
    e. Students will gauge the contents of their portfolio by the exposures of various career options and goals to be transition ready for Taylor County High School.

Use of Feedback on Writing and Communications

Schools develop a system for providing descriptive feedback to students regarding the writing and communication skills demonstrated in their portfolio.

"Descriptive feedback can focus on strengths or weaknesses; feedback is most effective when it points out strengths in the work as well as areas needing improvement."—*Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing it right-using it well.* Rick Stiggins et al.

"When we use assessment to meet students' informational needs while there is still time for them to take action on the information to influence the final grade, we increase students' motivation to achieve."—Rick Stiggins, et al.

1. Teachers shall provide students feedback to communication skills, including descriptive feedback students will use to improve their work and learn. The use of descriptive feedback by teachers and students to improve student learning shall be exhibited in the following ways:
    a. Descriptive feedback on open-response and on-demand common assessments throughout the year.
    b. Descriptive feedback on writing that is submitted. (Not simply giving a grade, but explaining what could be done to improve.)

     c.   Conferencing with the students on a one-on-one basis at some point concerning their writing and/or examples of communication.

2. Opportunities for students to use feedback to reflect on their writing/communication and their progress as communicators will be exhibited by the following:
   a. Required rough drafts.
   b. Required rehearsals of speeches, debates, etc.
   c. One-on-One conferencing with teachers.
   d. Examples of proficient and distinguished work being displayed and discussed in order to be used as an example to the student.
   e. Feedback from teachers electronically.
3. Opportunities for students to self-assess and to provide feedback on the work of others will be exhibited by the following:
   a. Anonymous and selected peer editing
   b. Compare/contrast papers/work from various levels.
   c. The use of college students to serve as peer tutors to struggling students.
   d. Sites that can exhibit work anonymously, therefore gaining authentic feedback from both teachers and peers.

Professional Development

1. The school's (and district's) curriculum continues to be aligned to the Kentucky Core Academic Standards.
2. Future professional development workshops focusing on writing across the content area would be an asset to our staff and will hopefully be scheduled.
3. Individual content area teachers are exposed to many opportunities throughout the year to attend workshops focusing on writing across the content areas.
4. Staff shall be given time during our PLC sessions in order to contribute to the implementation of the writing program and to receive assistance from staff and administrators on implementing writing instruction and contribution to the writing portfolio.

Administrative Support and Monitoring

The school and district administration shall support the school's writing/communications program in the following ways:

1. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent are supportive of staff awareness and implementation of the Kentucky Core Academic Standards, as well as the implementation of the writing/communications plan/program.
2. The Instructional Supervisor is attentive to the needs and concerns of staff and administration concerning the writing /communications plan/ program. He/she is also available to answer any questions concerning the program. He/she is supportive of teachers' needs and works with the administration and lead teacher in implementing the program.
3. The administration is supportive and willing to aid the lead teacher in every possible way to implement the writing/communications plan/program. Additional help and resources are always available.
4. The lead teacher is willing to work with the administration, both at the district and school level, on implementing and monitoring the plan/program. The lead teacher will also work closely with department chairs, assuring all aspects of the program are being monitored and addressed appropriately.
5. Department chairs and individual teachers will work together to aid the students in the completion of the digital student portfolio, which will directly address all aspects of the writing/communications program.

 ***Timetable for pieces submitted/departmental responsibilities will be established at a later time.

***The digital platform design and the specific contents required for each grade level will be determined at a later time.