

Franklin County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 25, 2021

Updated: July 21, 2023

This Foundational Literacy Skills Plan has been approved by the Tennessee Department of Education and meets the requirements of the *Tennessee Literacy Success Act*. All portions of the Foundational Literacy Skills plan were submitted to the department and approved. To view the supplemental artifacts, please contact the district directly.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades K-2

Our district uses McGraw Hill's Wonders ELA curriculum, a curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. The Wonders curriculum includes foundational skills as a primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time (60 minutes daily) for foundational skills instruction in grades K-2. Franklin County primary grades have literacy blocks that range from 120 to 180 minutes daily, with 60 minutes daily designated for foundational skills instruction. The foundational skills instruction contains activities and practices that teach the following foundational skills: phonological awareness (recognize rhyming words, blend and segment compound words, blend, segment, and count syllables, blend and segment onset-rime, blend, segment, and count phonemes, segment compound words, and isolate individual phonemes), phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, and phonics (identify individual letter sounds, decode regular words, decode words with common rime families, identify sounds for letter combinations, decode one-syllable words with letter combinations, identify common spellings for long and short vowel sounds, know and apply final -e conventions, read words with r-controlled vowels, read words with l-controlled vowels, read words with inflected endings, read words with prefixes and suffixes, read two syllable words with various syllable types, read multi-syllable words, and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis in text). During instruction, teachers explicitly teach a sound by utilizing the Word-Building Cards, the students practice the sound, the teacher models writing, then students apply the skill by writing and manipulating the sound independently.

For example, in the third nine weeks, first graders will be introduced to various spelling of Long e: e, ee, ea, ie.

Model Display the Tree Sound-Spelling Card. Teach /ē/ spelled with the letter e and the vowel digraphs ee, ea, and ie, using she, tree, meat, and field. This is the Tree Sound-Spelling Card. The sound is /ē/. This is the sound at the end of the word tree. Listen: /trēēē/, tree. The /ē/ sound can be spelled with the letter e as in she, or with the letters ee as in tree, ea as in meat, and ie as in field. I'll say /ē/ as I write the letter e, and the letters ee, ea, and ie several times.

Guided Practice/Practice Have children practice connecting the letter e and the vowel digraphs ee, ea, and ie to the sound /ē/ by writing them. Now do it with me. Say /ē/ as I write the letters e, ee, ea, and ie. Now it is your turn. Say the /ē/ sound as you write the letters that stand for the long e sound.

Students practice these skills when using decodable texts that are aligned with explicit instruction.

Instructional time also includes activities that focus on high-frequency words, spelling, handwriting, grammar, and vocabulary practice for each text set.

Improvements for next year are grounded in implementation of these materials. Teachers will be provided a designated time weekly for grade-level collaboration as they solve problems of practice and shared implementation strategies through common unit-level planning.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Our district has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our district has adopted McGraw-Hill's Wonders curriculum for these grades. This curriculum has been approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. During the integrated ELA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, students receive a minimum of 90 minutes of ELA instruction. Daily instruction includes components for knowledge-building (to build and improve the ability to comprehend complex texts and apply that knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak) for about 60 minutes per day and foundational skills instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, spelling, and writing for at least 30 minutes per day. Our adopted curriculum also engages students in work around fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These skills are not taught in isolation, but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection.

For example, our fifth graders just finished working in the Historical Fiction genre. They began work in this genre by considering the question "How do different groups contribute to a cause?". They activated prior knowledge by reading independently or aloud in on-grade level, complex text. The students then summarized the content, unpacked the most essential vocabulary ("word work"), responded to a series of scaffolded questions, and wrote a response to an inferential question that required use of evidence from the text to support their answer. Teachers also provide explicit support for vocabulary needed to access the complex text. In this unit, the following explicit support was given:

Review strategies with students, such as identifying the meaning of words with affixes. Point to the word unbreakable in paragraph eight on page 432. Ask: What word parts do you see in unbreakable? (un-, break, -able) Help students determine the meaning of each part and combine them to find the meaning of unbreakable. If necessary, review that the prefix un- means "not" and the suffix -able means "able to be."

Similar supports are given throughout and vary in skills taught. Third graders experienced support in decoding in a unit on the Earth and its neighbors as demonstrated below.

Explain - Display the Shirt Sound-Spelling Card. Discuss the spellings er, ir, ur, and ear. Explain that when a vowel is followed by r, the r changes the vowel's sound. Point to each spelling on the card and provide sample words such as her, firm, and burn. Tell students that the ear spelling is also an r-controlled vowel. Provide the sample word earth and point out the ear spelling.

Students use this knowledge as they engage in reading, group discussion and writing activities. Spelling, dictionary skills, grammar, and morphology skills are integrated within reading selections that support an understanding of the essential question of the unit. Therefore, foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of this 90-minute block. This plan is dedicated to developing students' holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension as recommended by research.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

McGraw Hill - K-5 Wonders

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

McGraw Hill - K-5 Wonders

Additional Information about Instructional Materials

Our district has adopted an approved curriculum for ELA instruction; however, we have chosen to supplement in several ways. Our district will use the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement to further address foundational skills in daily instruction. This supplement allows us to focus more deeply on the phonological awareness and advanced phonemic awareness skills that are crucial for success all the way through second grade. Students may also have an extra set of "at-home" decodables. We encouraged our families to order the "at-home decodables" through the state's free ordering website.

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5. This screener complies with RTI² and Say Dyslexia requirements.

The Tennessee Universal Reading Screener is used for our students in grades K-5 and is given three times per year. The TN URS (AIMSweb) complies with RTI² and Say Dyslexia.

Intervention Structure and Supports

All PK-5 students will be given The Tennessee Universal Screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk" by scoring between the 0-25th percentile. Our grade-level teachers, RTI coordinator, and

principals review initial Universal screening data. Those students are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction and are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits in order to assign students to a small group utilizing an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. Students who are placed in Tier III receive intensive intervention daily for at least 45 minutes and are progress monitored weekly. Students who are placed in Tier II receive intervention daily for 30 minutes and are progress monitored every other week in their deficit area.

Research-based options for reading intervention support are available to students who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our Wonders ELA curriculum contains an assessment and remediation guide in which teachers can find activities that directly address skill deficits and can be tailored to the needs of RTI students. If that intervention is not effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions using the Wonderworks program become an option. RTI Data teams meet every 4 ½ weeks to determine if a change in the intervention program or person providing the intervention is warranted. Progress monitoring data, as well as classroom performance, prior intervention outcomes, and teacher observation data is reviewed to determine continued placement, intensity, and scheduling of students into Tier III, Tier II, and Remediation, or Enrichment.

Students receiving Tier II and Tier III interventions are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law's requirements. Our district uses the McGraw Hill Wonders Foundational Skills program as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that this program is being used to support those students because it is based on the Science of Reading approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for those students.

Intervention takes place daily during a grade-level time designated for RTI. Students work on activities and assignments that help improve a specific skill. For example, students who need instruction in comprehension may read a new text and answer scaffolded questions, all related to the knowledge-building unit they are studying in Tier I instruction. Students who need this type of support receive intervention using the McGraw Hill Wonderworks program. Older students who need fluency support may work with the 95% Group Multisyllable Routine.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Our district notifies parents in grades K-5 if their child is “at-risk” for or has a significant reading deficiency as evidenced by students scoring in the 0-25th percentile immediately after the district’s schools complete the fall universal screening. Students’ scores are communicated in parent-friendly language that provides a clear explanation of student skill gaps and the depth and extent of student needs. The parents are told what intervention their student will receive and the amount of time each day the student will receive services. This is coupled with a description of the importance of being able to read by the end of 3rd grade.

The district defines how students are assessed and what a “significant reading deficit” means. Parents are notified of their child’s progress, or lack of progress, after each 4 ½ week data team meeting. In the parent notification/communication, data teams note any changes being made to the

intervention plan if sufficient growth is not demonstrated as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screening data as well as recommended free activities that will support students in the specific area of deficit. These communications go out to parents with students in grades K-3 three times annually and are shared in grades 4 and 5 annually.

Additionally, the ELA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip parents to work with the child. Families can better understand how to support their student(s) through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their child(ren) are learning.

Professional Development Plan

K-5 teachers in Franklin County Schools will participate in the free and optional Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Our plan for providing PD for all K-5 teachers is as follows:

Spring 2021 – All K-2 teachers will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series, asynchronously. This training is also offered to all 3-5 ELA, RTI, and SPED teachers. This training focuses on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. We will ensure that participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to starting Week 2 work in June.

June 2021 – Our district has registered for the cohort-based in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all teachers in grades K-2. The participating teachers will also include PK, 3-5 teachers, interventionists, special education teachers, and elementary instructional leaders. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics fluency, and vocabulary.

In conjunction with the 360 Early Literacy Training series, PreK-5th grade teachers will receive the following literacy professional development:

PLCs led by our newly formed district literacy team, Coaching Cycles, focused Professional Development from district and vendor partners as part of the PK-12 Literacy Implementation Network, and Academic Walks using the IPG.

Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

As a part of the TDOE's Reading 360 Initiative, the Franklin County School District has been chosen to participate in the PK-12 Literacy Implementation Network and also the Early Literacy Network.