

## **Grainger County Schools**

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: December 18, 2023

Approved: May 9, 2024

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**

GCS adopted HMH Into Reading for the K-2 Reading Curriculum during the 2020-21 school year. HMH was on the state-approved ELA adoption list and was approved by the Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission, and all instruction is aligned to the TN State Standards. In Grainger County, Kindergarten through 2nd graders receive a minimum of 150 minutes of core reading instruction including 45 minutes of whole group foundational skills instruction as the primary form of instruction and an additional 45-60 minutes of small group application of foundational skills. Kindergarten includes; Reading and Vocabulary 15-30 minutes, Foundational Skills: 45 minutes, and Writing Workshop: 30 minutes. Grades 1 & 2 include; Explicit Foundational Skills instruction: 45 minutes (includes vocabulary instruction), Reading Workshop: 20-30 minutes, Writing Workshop: 20-30 minutes (writing and grammar), K-2 Small Group Instruction (45-60 minutes), Small Group Reading, Word Work, Writing, IREAD (digital foundational skills work), and i-Ready (targeted foundational skills lessons). Each lesson for students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 includes foundational skills instruction. Throughout each module, students engage in daily systematic instruction to build skills in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, and spelling to develop a strong foundation for reading and writing. They also have opportunities to apply these skills to decodable texts. Following instruction in each of the strands, students engage in small-group learning based on lesson content, students' learning needs, and student data provided by Into Reading assessments and reports. HMH Into Reading's phonics lessons follow a scope and sequence based on evidence from research from the Science of Reading.

Foundational skills instruction and routines in kindergarten include:

- phonological awareness to practice identifying, blending, segmenting, and manipulating sounds in oral language.
- phonics to explicitly teach sound spellings, practice decoding using sound-by-sound blending, and spell words through dictation.
- word work to distinguish between sounds by sorting words and to practice spelling by building and changing words.

- alphabet knowledge, including letter recognition and upper- and lowercase letter forms.
- lessons to build automaticity with reading and spelling high-frequency words.
- decodable text lessons to practice reading words with learned sound spellings and high-frequency words in context.

Foundational skills instruction in grades 1 & 2 include:

- Phonological Awareness lessons to have children identify, produce, and manipulate the sounds in spoken words and syllables.
- Phonics lessons to introduce sound spellings that help children associate consonants, consonant blends, digraphs and trigraphs, short and long vowels, vowel digraphs and diphthongs, and other common vowel spellings with the sounds they represent and to read words with these sound spellings.
- Make Minutes Count options to support children in targeted small-group instruction, based on need.
- Fluency lessons to practice reading fluently with appropriate rate, intonation, phrasing, and expression and to practice self-correcting using context and decoding skills.
- Spelling lessons to help children make decoding-encoding connections and practice handwriting skills.
- Read Decodable Text lessons to practice decoding words and recognizing high-frequency words in context and to reinforce fluency skills.
- High-Frequency Words lessons to teach and practice reading, spelling, and using high-frequency sight words.

Instruction within the literacy block specifies the minutes spent on different sections like the foundational skills section. All K-5 teachers and instructional coaches attended the state-provided two-week Foundational Skills training during the initial training year. New teachers in K-5 complete the online Early Literacy Training provided by the state.

### **Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5**

GCS adopted Great Minds Wit & Wisdom for grades 3-5 during the 2020-21 school year. Wit & Wisdom was selected from the state-approved ELA adoption list and was approved by the Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Instruction is aligned to TN state standards. In Grainger County, 3rd-5th graders receive 90 minutes of integrated reading instruction with at least 30 minutes of daily embedded foundational skills instruction. Although daily instruction is not the same each day, all daily instruction includes the following components:

- Welcome (5 minutes): Students independently engage in a task that prepares them for the lessons' learning.
- Launch (3 minutes): The teacher introduces the lesson's Content Framing Question, and students interact with it in a meaningful way by unpacking terminology or making connections to the Focusing Question, Essential Question, and/or text. The teacher ensures students understand the Learning Goals.
- Learn (60 minutes): Through a variety of instructional routines and tasks, teachers support students as they engage in productive struggle as they develop skills and knowledge needed

to answer the lesson's Content Framing Question. Students listen, read, write, think, and speak about the text during the learn section of the lesson. Vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency instruction is embedded in this section of the lesson.

- Land (10 minutes): The teacher facilitates student reflections on how they met lesson goals and answered the Content Framing Question.
- Wrap (2 minutes): Closing activities.
- Deep Dive (15 minutes): The teacher explicitly teaches vocabulary, morphology, spelling, writing, and grammar.

Fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills are not taught in isolation but are embedded within the lesson to ensure connection. As a text-based curriculum, Wit & Wisdom teaches vocabulary both implicitly and explicitly using words in the core and supplementary texts. Through repeated readings of complex, knowledge-building texts, students learn many new vocabulary words including content-specific, academic, and text-critical vocabulary. Wit & Wisdom reinforces learned foundational skills in a lesson's reading or writing tasks about complex text. For example, some writing lessons have teachers review previously taught sound-spelling patterns that students frequently misspell, then give students time to edit their text-based writing based on those patterns. Wit & Wisdom provides fluency practice with selected passages from core texts. Students learn to read grade-level complex text through repeatedly reading short text excerpts from module texts which helps students to understand the texts and communicate more effectively about them. Deep Dives explicitly instruct language skills including conventions of English, language and style, and vocabulary. Foundational skills are embedded throughout the curriculum based on consideration of the language demands of the major module writing tasks and the language found in the core texts.

GCS started using Quill during the 2022-23 school year to supplement the grammar and writing available in Wit and Wisdom. Quill is an interactive grammar and writing program. Data from the implementation year showed an increase in grammar and writing scores on TCAP, so the program will continue to supplement grammar and writing in grades 3-5.

### **Additional Supports**

Schools that have a low level of effectiveness have and will continue to receive extra support from NIET to increase student and engagement in all classrooms including ELA classrooms. The district will continue to support these schools with specific professional development throughout the school year, and plan learning walks to identify needs and next steps.

To better support lower performing subgroups, the district included goals, strategies, and action steps for SWD and EL subgroups on the district's literacy plan. Part of this plan is to include EL and special education teachers in all ELA training and discussions about data.

### **Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2**

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt into Reading

### **Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5**

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom

## Supplemental Instructional Materials

In 2022-23 GCS used i-Ready for 2nd and 3rd grades tutoring groups. Based on the success with i-Ready, GCS purchased i-Ready for all K-5 grade levels for the 2023-24 school year. 2023-24 i-Ready data shows overall student growth in all literacy domains, especially the foundational skills domains. i-Ready is being used during RTI time, flex classes, small groups, and high-dosage low ratio tutoring sessions. GCS recommends that each student in K-5 use i-Ready for 45 minutes per week with a 70% pass rate on assignments as recommended by i-Ready.

i-Ready is:

- an online program for reading that helps determine students' needs, personalize their learning, and monitor progress throughout the school year.
- personalizes instruction to provide students with lessons based on their skill level and needs.
- includes each major domain of reading. Instruction starts with the lowest domain and builds as students progress.

During the 2020-21 textbook adoption year, GCS purchased two supplemental products for K-2 that accompanied the HMH curriculum: iRead and Amira. These two foundational skills products can be used in literacy stations or for extra practice at home. Students use iRead to:

- Build foundational skills at an independent digital center.
- Reinforce foundational skills during whole or small-group instruction by interacting with iRead Interactive Learning Tools
- Apply foundational skills to printable Decodable Books during small-group instruction, independent reading, or at home.

GCS also purchased another digital tool, Amira, for all K-2 classrooms. Amira provides 1:1 reading practice and administers both an oral reading fluency assessment and dyslexia screeners. Not only does Amira assist teachers with assessing foundational reading skills, but it also provides students with 1:1 tutoring. Amira employs more than 25 different micro-interventions backed by the science of reading.

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

GCS administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, aimswebPlus, to our students in grades K-3 and the iReady Suite of assessments for students in grades 4-5 as the primary screeners. We also use iReady for students in K-3.

## Intervention Structure and Supports

After a school-based team has reviewed multiple sources of data in the screening process and identifies reading skill deficits in need of intervention, parents will be notified of the student's performance and the need for intervention. Parents will also be notified when a student is found to have a characteristic of dyslexia, a skill deficit in one or more of the basic reading areas (phonemic

awareness, phonics, fluency, written expression), and are placed in a Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading intervention group for basic reading skills. As with all students who are placed in intervention, a Student Intervention Plan will be sent home, progress monitoring will take place, and parents will receive information about progress every 4.5 weeks. Information about dyslexia will be sent with the initial notification letter.

Interventions are evidence based and address student specific skill gaps. School RTI2 data teams meet every 4.5 weeks to monitor/review/discuss student progress, and adjustments are made as needed (change in intervention, RTI2 instructor, or time). The RTI2 data team uses multiple sources of data including progress monitoring data, fidelity checks data, and attendance records to help guide the decision-making process. Tier II students are progress monitored every other week and Tier III students are progress monitored every week or every other week. Students are progress monitored using a probe that matches their greatest area of need in reading.

Students receive 30-60 minutes of reading-tiered intervention per day to address their area of greatest skill deficit (Tier II-30 minutes minimum, Tier III- 45 minutes minimum). Intervention times are scheduled in each school to meet the grade level/tier guidelines in the state RTI<sup>2</sup> manual. This time is in addition to core reading instruction.

Grainger County uses reading interventions that are researched based for RTI<sup>2</sup> small group instruction. We provide tiered intervention in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and written expression and encoding. Examples of Intervention programs used with students who have reading skill deficits include:

- Sound Sensible: provides instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and sound-symbol recognition.
- S.P.I.R.E. (Orton-Gillingham-based program used primarily with students with characteristics of dyslexia) provides instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabetic knowledge, sound-symbol recognition, decoding, encoding).
- Linda-Mood Bell: addresses phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabetic knowledge, sound-symbol recognition, decoding, and encoding
- Souday System: offers structured, systematic, multisensory reading intervention for readers at the beginning stages of reading through the end of the 2nd-grade reading level. Each lesson plan uses proven Orton-Gillingham methods to provide effective intervention in small-group settings.
- Corrective Reading Decoding: provides intensive and accelerated reading intervention. The Direct Instruction program delivers tightly sequenced, carefully planned lessons that give struggling students the structure and practice necessary to become skilled, fluent readers.
- WonderWorks: Provides instruction in fluency and comprehension

### **Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports**

After a school-based team has reviewed multiple sources of data in the screening process and identified reading skill deficit(s) in need of intervention, parents are notified of the student's performance and the need for intervention. A report that details the student's performance on the screener is sent home with every student in family friendly language. The letter provides no cost activities for families to support learning at home and information on the importance of 3rd grade reading proficiency. We also include information on the pathways to 4th grade.

Parents of students who are placed in a Tier 2 or 3 group are also provided with a copy of the Student Intervention Plan that details specific area of concern, data- based decision tier placement, prescribed intervention program, name of interventionist, length of daily intervention instruction, and list of RTI2 team involved in making the plan. Parents are notified when a student is found to have a characteristic of dyslexia, a skill deficit in one or more of the basic reading areas (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, written expression), and are placed in a Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading intervention group for basic reading skills. Information about dyslexia will be sent with the initial notification letter. This parent notification process is repeated with each benchmark screening (3 times a year) for students in K-5.

Progress monitoring data and information about student progress are sent to parents every 4.5 weeks. Data teams notify parents of changes made in a student's RTI<sup>2</sup> placement.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Grainger County teachers in grades PreK-5 and instructional coaches will participate in the state's Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series. Our plan includes:

Spring: All GCS PreK-6 teachers, Instructional Coaches, Interventionists, Special Education teachers, and ESL teachers who have not completed the training will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training, asynchronously. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction that is grounded in a phonics-based approach. The district will require participating educators to earn a completion certificate before attending week 2 of training.

July: Reading 360 Early Literacy Week 1 Certificate must be submitted to Lisa Setsor, GCS Curriculum Supervisor

July: Grainger County new teachers engage in Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training for county PreK-6 teachers, Instructional Coaches, Interventionists, Special Education teachers, and ESL teachers. Week 2 emphasizes practical application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

2024-25 Grade Level Collaborative Planning Sessions: Reinforce Foundational Skills Practices, Common Planning around adopted ELA Curriculum including Foundational Skills Lessons, Analyzing Student Work Products including Writing Samples, Grade Level Data Review to look for trends, concerns, and next steps, and Increasing Student Ownership and Engagement in the ELA Classroom.