

DeKalb County School District

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

First Approved: May 16, 2021

Approved: June 14, 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

In Tier I, all students receive research-based, high-quality differentiated instruction aligned to grade level Tennessee Academic Standards in English Language Arts as well as grounded in the reading science. The time in ELA block allows for students to engage with text through listening, reading, writing, and speaking with the purpose of comprehending complex text, developing academic language, and identifying and presenting evidence, and/or building knowledge. A Structured and Scaffolded Approach to the ELA block gives students opportunities to engage in texts in many ways. This approach allows for students to observe teacher-led models and demonstrations, participate in shared reading and writing experiences and direct their own application of learning through independent practice. Both of the adopted curriculums as well as foundational programs provides an explicit and systematic approach to reading.

DAILY SCHEDULE/Overarching view of how Foundational Skills are taught in the district:

Grades K-2, students spend 150 minutes in Tier I instruction. Our district's adopted state approved curriculum is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Into Reading, and we use the TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement as a supplement to the core curriculum. TN Foundational Skills uses a systematic and explicit approach to sounds-first instruction to help students gain the foundational skills necessary to become proficient readers. The HMH Curriculum and the TN Foundational Skills curriculum provide evidence-based approaches grounded in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension and aligned to the Science of Reading. The supplement to Core Curriculum- TN Foundational Skills uses a systematic and explicit approach to sounds-first instruction to help students gain the foundational skills necessary to become proficient readers. Daily Instruction follows the 150 minutes instructional block with 45 minutes of foundational skills, 10-20 minutes of whole class instruction, 45 minutes of small group instruction, 15-20 minutes of extended independent reading, and time for additional activities to build knowledge, such as but not limited to, read-aloud and/or vocabulary cards. In addition to the adopted HMH: Into Reading curriculum supplemental materials, TN Foundational Skills Phonics program is an extra 60-75 minutes of instruction.

HMH: K-2 Elementary daily schedule

- Language/Vocabulary 15 minutes
- Reading Workshop 60-75 minutes (In context Foundational skills practice)
- Writing Workshop 20-30 minutes
- TN Foundational Skills- Supplemental Phonics-60-75 minutes
- Lexia Core5 Reading digital platform (Supplemental)

Grades PreK-2: After completing the Early Reading Literacy training, information learned around early reading strategies/structures will be implemented along with the adopted curriculum.

Walk to Learn: This time is used for more targeted skills based on AimsWebPlus. Each grade level has a time in the master schedule where all teachers in the grade intervene with students based on “needed skills”. This time is used to intervene with foundational skills, accelerate content knowledge, and provide an extension of the foundational skills from Tier 1. Teachers are able to specialize support and target the needs of students with similar needs. Grades K-2 are implementing a stronger foundational skills program that includes teacher time/direct instruction vs digital platform. Students needing additional support to Tier I instruction will receive support/intervention to close the achievement/skill gap. Materials being used to accelerate learning include Lexia, 95% Group’s Phonics Core Program, TN Foundations Skills ARG (Assessment and Remediation Guide), and SRA Corrective Reading.

To ensure fidelity in Tier I, classroom learning walks are completed weekly/monthly by the school level administrators, ELA coach, and district level administrators to ensure the curriculum is being taught as expected by the curriculum designers and expectations of the district.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Grades 3-5, students spend between 120 minutes and 150 minutes in Tier I instruction. The state approved adopted curriculum is Open Up-Our Expeditionary Learning EL Education’s Grades 3–5 and is a comprehensive/ integrated literacy curriculum that offers 2 hours per day of content-based literacy.

- Module lessons (60 minutes of daily instruction): explicitly teach and formally assess all standards and strands for English Language Arts and Literacy.
- Additional Language and Literacy (ALL) Block (30-60 minutes of daily foundational skills instruction): provides additional practice and differentiated support for all students.

The module lessons and ALL Block work together to help students develop literacy skills as they build knowledge about the world. The ALL-Block portion of EL addresses five areas: independent reading; additional work with complex text; reading and speaking fluency/grammar, usage, and mechanics, writing practice, and word study/ vocabulary. Foundational skills are embedded in grades 3-5 curriculum; however, a supplement is used during small groups to target all skills. A supplemental material used to enhance and accelerate learning includes IXL, which partners with EL to create an alignment of skills in order to create prescriptive skill plans for students.

The ELA block allows for:

- Deep, meaningful standards-based instruction,

- Adequate time for interactive read aloud and shared reading experiences,
- Approximately 60 minutes for small group instruction where the teacher will meet in small group daily to address individual/group needs. Foundational Skills instruction is part of this time as well as the embedded foundational skills found in Tier I-whole group instruction,
- Opportunities for multiple daily writing lessons, writing in response to text as well as extend student-directed composition of narrative, opinion, and informational artifacts,
- Daily independent reading and reading conferences,
- All Block--Systematic and explicit instruction of foundation skills and frequent application of foundational skills to connected texts. These skills include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and
- Lexia Core5 Reading digital platform Walk to Learn: This time is used for more targeted skills based on AimsWeb Plus or MAP data.

Each grade level has a time in the master schedule where all teachers in the grade intervene with students based on “needed skills”. This time is used to intervene with foundational skills, accelerate content knowledge, and allows for foundational skills extensions of the Tier I classroom. Teachers are able to specialize support and target the needs of students with similar needs. Grades 3-5 are implementing a stronger foundational skills program that includes teacher time/direct instruction vs digital platform.

Students needing additional support to Tier I instruction will receive support/intervention to close the achievement/skill gap. Materials being used to accelerate learning include Lexia, Rewards (Voyager Sopris), and IXL which provides skill alignment with EL modules and TN Foundations Skills ARG (Assessment and Remediation Guide).

Grades 3-5:

After completion of the Early Reading Literacy training, information learned around early reading strategies/structures will be implemented in addition to the adopted curriculum. To ensure fidelity in the Tier I classroom, learning walks are completed weekly/monthly by the school level administrators, ELA coach, and district level administrators to ensure the curriculum is being taught as expected by the curriculum designers and expectations of the district.

Additional Information

- ELA Coach's schedule will be more intentional with scheduling of high needs schools with building level administrator and goal setting.
- Pearson training- AimsWeb Plus data mining and reading reports for planning purposes.
- Monthly PLC meeting with K-5 principals.
- Analysis of benchmark data at the district, school, and classroom levels.
- Special Education has monthly PLC meetings with staff.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Reading

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Open Up OUR Expeditionary Learning

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum

Lexia Core 5

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) K-3

Our district administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to students in third grade for the Spring Benchmark.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Suite 4-5

Intervention Structure and Supports

DeKalb County's structure and support for students "at risk" follows the Response to Instruction and Intervention Framework as provided by the Tennessee Department of Education. Each K-5 school in the district implements aimswebPlus in K-3 and NWEA Map Growth in grades 4 and 5 as the universal screener which is administered 3 times a year. After each assessment, data meetings convene analyzing the most recent data of all students; however, an emphasis is given to students that fall below the grade level benchmark and/or are deemed at-risk based on the current assessment or a prior assessment. The goal of our RTI program is to serve students scoring at or below the 40th percentile. Data is analyzed for the skills/needs of each student. Students are then placed in a Tiered intervention based on need in order to receive a high-quality intervention that is a researched/evidence-based program that is explicit and systemic to the student's need. Once the data (survey level assessment) is analyzed for missing skills, the next step is to determine if the student falls into the Tier II or Tier III category to determine the amount of intervention time needed. A decision-making process allows consistency for all three tiers to be used as a guide. Tier II and Tier III students are progress monitored on specific skill gaps every 10 days to see if the intervention is building skill level. Data is tracked and analyzed every 4.5 weeks during RTI meetings. The team will analyze data, measure the effectiveness of interventions and check student progress toward goals. If a student is progressing at the expected ROI, continue the student's plan as written in previous meeting. If the student is not progressing a change may be necessary. The following changes are considered as well as data collected:

- Increasing frequency of intervention sessions
- Change intervention program
- Change the intervention teacher
- Change the time-of-day intervention is delivered School level RTI teams will decide to change to Tier III, depending on the data points collected (based on progress monitoring every 10 days).

Teams will decide the best placement for students whether it be Tier II or Tier III. Tier III must be more intense. Intensity can be increased through student to teacher ratio, length, frequency, and

duration of implementation and a change in the curriculum. Fidelity of the program follows the Direct and Indirect Fidelity checks as recommended in the RTI Framework as provided by Tennessee Department of Education. An integrity of at least 80% or greater is expected of the interventionist. If needed, additional support/training will be provided. Before purchasing resources for the RTI program, supervisors and principals consult the following sites for research/evidence of quality programs such as the WWC and Evidence for ESSA websites to research the success of the programs. Programs must track specific skills and monitor progress for the RTI program as well as meet the requirements for the dyslexia law.

Tier II Resources:

- Smithville Elementary- Lexia Corrective Reading 95% Phonics Core Program DeKalb West-SRA Reading Labs Lexia TN State Phonics ARG
- Northside Elementary- Classroom support Lexia EL All Block

Tier III Resources:

- Smithville Elementary- Sunday -System Orton Gillingham Based Intervention Heggerty Program to develop phonemic and phonological awareness and build vocabulary
- DeKalb West- SRA Reading Labs
- Northside Elementary- SRA Corrective Reading and Reward Voyager Sopris

DeKalb County also has the LEAPs grant for afterschool; “at risk” students are invited to the program for homework help, tutoring, and fun.

High Dose Low Ratio tutoring in grades K-5

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 0-40th percentile) immediately after the district’s schools complete the fall, winter, and spring universal screening test. 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 letter shares with parents the 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 and information about the pathways to 4th grade.

The district defines for parents how students are assessed and what a “significant reading deficiency” means. Parents are subsequently notified of their child’s progress, or lack of progress, after the 4 ½ week data team meetings. In the parent notifications/communication, data teams note any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screening data as well as recommended activities (that do not require purchased resources) that will support students in the area(s) of deficit (activities are not tailored by child but tailored by skill deficit generally). These communications go out to parents with students in grades K-5 three times 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 is learning.

Professional Development Plan

In order to meet the state requirements for literacy training, DeKalb will participate in the Tennessee Department of Education's free and optional Early Literacy courses provided each year. Knowledge gained from these trainings will be ongoing throughout the year during PLC planning for the ELA block. Teachers, administration, and district staff will participate in staff development emphasizing research based best practices in literacy instruction. Staff development opportunities will be offered in research-based literacy instruction and/or study groups to read and discuss current research. All teachers in grades K-5 will be given the opportunity to participate in Week 1 of the Early Literacy training series. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. We will continue to promote Week 1 training and collect certificates of completion prior to attending Week 2 training. Our district has participants in the Week 2 Early Literacy training series for all teachers in grades K-5 that completed Week 1 training.

In order to be data driven decision makers, teachers will receive PD on interpreting test scores.

Grades 3-5 Standards Guides on demand training will be attended by District and School level administration as well as the ELA Coach to gain information. This session will be an introductory to the standards guides and how they can be used to support adopted ELA curriculum.

Monthly PLCs Lead by Administration, ELA Coach and/or Grade level teacher leader

Course III TN Early Reading Training Course: Advanced Literacy Modules (PLC topics)

Grade level collaboration in Reading, Progress monitoring data and current interventions being used. Teachers meet in PLC times to Unit Prep and Lesson Prep. Adapted Unit Prep/Lesson Prep document provided by the state.

ELA Coach provides job embedded professional development using TN Foundational Skills and supporting teachers with implementing the science of reading with researched-based programs.

Additional support with implemented HQIM as needed with newly employed teachers to our district.

School level Academic coaches assist/mentor teachers in the ELA AimsWeb Plus Assessment training.

Course III TN Early Reading Training Course: Advanced Literacy Modules ELA Coach providing support—Our ELA coach has 25 years of experience in education. Her years of experience has been in an elementary setting teaching children to read or intervening/accelerating student's learning. She has consistently had a Level of Effectiveness score of Level 5. During her 25 years in education 17 of these years she has spent as a Lead teacher prior to becoming an ELA Coach. Before moving to DeKalb County, she was a school-level administrator (10 years before moving to Tennessee). Our coach has attended many professional development activities, worked with SchoolKit, ELA vendor, as well as NIET to build her capacity in her leadership role. She has participated in Regional PLCs and



book studies with colleagues. Learning Walks will be conducted to collect data for effectiveness of professional development as well as to ensure teachers are implementing strategies that supports the Science of Reading.