

## **Bradford Special School District**

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: May 13, 2021

Approved: May 24, 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**

Bradford Special School District uses a foundational skills curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. This year, we have continued implementing the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement (TNFSCS) from Tennessee. In grades K-2, 60 minutes of time is devoted to teaching foundational literacy skills, which is our primary form of instruction. This time includes phonics lessons with an instructional focus in phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. Our reading instruction continues with Benchmark Advance which also has a designated block of time for knowledge building (60 minutes). This instruction builds on our phonics curriculum to increase fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary work.

All of our instruction in grades K-2 hinges on our work from the TNFSCS curriculum. All other methods are used as additions to our work in phonics and phonemic awareness. We use this instruction in all areas of our day.

Both of our programs, TNFSCS and Benchmark Advance, utilize explicit instruction to teach foundational skills in reading. Students are given multiple opportunities to practice and develop a mastery of these skills. Small group instruction is facilitated daily to provide opportunities for practice and mastery in foundational skills and vocabulary and comprehension. Each grade level in K-2 is allotted 75 minutes of small group instruction. This time is utilized to provide additional support in foundational skills through RTI services, as well as provide time for teachers to practice skills with students in small numbers to further mastery in reading.

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

Our district has an integrated literacy block for grades three (3) through five (5) grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials are selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. During the integrated ELA block (90 minutes), our students spend time on foundational skills (a minimum of 30 minutes) and moving into knowledge building and comprehension tasks. In addition to this

comprehension work our students continue to work in fluency, writing, grammar, and morphology. During this 90-minute block, our teachers facilitate instruction using Benchmark Advance.

Our curriculum includes vertical progression of knowledge-building unit topics. These topics begin in kindergarten and continue through our 5th grade curriculum. All knowledge strands are grounded in science and social studies topics embedded in the reading comprehension curriculum.

The continued education and collaboration for our teachers to refine and develop their practices grounded in the science of reading has been and will continue to be a focus of improvements for our school district this coming year. All ELA teachers will be fully trained in the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum, grounded in reading science.

In grades 3-5, we continue specific and explicit reading instruction through small groups. The Wilson Reading system and Benchmark Advance Intervention is coupled with the TNFSCS curriculum to provide foundational skills instruction in syllable division and morphology instruction. These programs are facilitated through an additional time (45 minutes) known as grow time. Our school utilizes grow time to provide rotation of intervention based on student need. Students are also given intervention in vocabulary, comprehension and fluency as needed. This block of time is in addition to the standard 60 minutes of reading in Benchmark Advance.

### **Additional Information**

For the 2023-2024 school year additional coaching support was put in place to assist with curriculum alignment and implementation for the instructional process. Coaches worked alongside teachers with less than 3 years of experience with content knowledge to help support increased growth for the academic year. Student data was tracked more closely with coaching support to align to specific needs of all students. Tutoring was adjusted to meet a smaller ratio percentage for students in grades 3-5 to help meet the needs of skills gaps with an intentional focus placed on accelerated learning to best support the needs within the school.

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

Benchmark Advance

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

Benchmark Advance

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement (TNFSCS)

Wilson Reading System

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

Our district administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to students in grades K-5.

## Supplemental Screeners

We also administer the following screeners to our K-5 students: PASS and PWRS. We plan to use WADE (Wilson assessment) as well.

## Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, students are given a universal reading screener. We have transitioned to using AIMSweb plus as provided by the state of Tennessee. This screener is used to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are “at risk”. Our grade-level teachers, interventionists, and principal review universal screening data to determine which students score between the 0-40th percentile. Those students demonstrating high risk are identified as Tier II or Tier III. This initial screener is used to determine skill deficits in foundational reading skills to help with the appropriate placement and intervention provided for Tier II and Tier III. Tennessee crosswalk information from the universal screener will help determine specific deficits to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. They receive daily, small-group intervention for 45 minutes in their area of greatest deficit. All interventions and schedules are aligned with the expectations outlined in the TN RTI<sup>2</sup> Manual.

Moving forward into the next school year, we will refine our practices by using other diagnostic tools. We plan to use PASS, PWRS and the WADE (Wilson Assessment) to help better define the areas of need for our students. This will direct our instruction in small groups.

We have research-based options for reading intervention support available to our students who are “at-risk” and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our tiered interventionists use multiple supports: Wilson Reading System, Sonday (scripted in phonics instruction) and Benchmark Advance Intervention series. These programs provide the core instruction for students with significant reading deficiencies. These programs are supplemented with hands-on/ multisensory activities that meet individual needs. Intervention teams which include interventionists, classroom teachers, and principals meet after each universal screening period to determine if a change in the intervention, intensity, or person providing the intervention is warranted. The team also looks at progress monitoring data that has been completed between these periods. Progress monitoring data is collected on at risk students bi-weekly. The team also looks at other variables (attendance, discipline, classroom teacher input, and engagement) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider.

Our students receive explicit instruction in their specific area of deficit in small groups using research-based materials and strategies. These students are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who do demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law’s requirements. Our district uses a research-based supplemental program as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia are notified that the Wilson, Sonday, or Benchmark curriculum is being used to support their students. This approach is a systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for those students. Parent

conferences are held as needed to further describe the intervention process and program used for instruction.

Intervention takes place daily during a grade-level time in the master schedule. When students are in their RTI groups they work to strengthen their skill deficits. For example, students struggling with word reading proficiency levels, spend time learning the rules for decoding our language. They are given instruction in syllabication to learn the patterns of words and how to better decode and read fluently.

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

Our district notifies all K-5 parents of their child's universal reading scores through a home literacy report which is sent three times a year after subsequent screenings are completed in fall, winter and spring. The district then 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, or after reviewing additional screenings for the characteristics of dyslexia). Students' scores are communicated with parents through letters that provides clear explanation of student skill gaps and the depth and extent of student need. We also provide information about how those gaps will be addressed during intervention and share it in parent meetings.

Parents are notified of their child's placement in Tier II or Tier III. Interventionists communicate the amount of time students will be in intervention classes and the skills they will be working on during those intervention times. The importance of the intervention is explained to parents. Parents are notified each 4 ½ weeks of the progress their child has made or the lack of progress. As parent meetings and phone calls are made throughout the year, references to student materials are given, whether that be high frequency word cards, extra practice, websites etc. School tutoring is an option for students with areas of need. Teachers contact parents as they see a need for after-school tutoring. This service is provided free of charge to students. Teachers regularly send home support for student practice at home.

Our school is working continually to provide additional resources for parents to help them reinforce deficit skills at home. These resources include directing them to the state's foundational skills resource site where they can download free materials. Students are also provided access to school sites such as IXL. All of these are accessible free of charge.

At the beginning of the year, students in grades K-3 receive a letter provided by the state to explain the 3rd grade retention law and the emphasis of learning to read by 3rd grade. This letter further explains the results of students who do not perform adequately on state testing assignments and the process of retention or additional support in the 3rd and 4th grades.

Students found to have dyslexia characteristics receive a letter too, notifying the parents of the findings and providing resources explaining in parent-friendly language the difficulties their student may face. This letter is coupled with contact information of our school's contact for questions about dyslexia and websites to research for more information.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Teachers in our district have had high-quality professional development in foundational literacy skills instruction as all K-5 teachers have completed Course 1 of the Early Reading Training. Our teachers also attended course 2 of the Early Reading Training.

Our plan for providing PD for all K-5 teachers is as follows:

- Any new K-5 teachers to our district will participate in course 1 of the Early Reading Training developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Course 2 will be recommended.
- Secondary Literacy Training course 1 will be offered for any teacher interested this summer. This training will refresh the foundational literacy skills learning from the early reading training and will go into more detail about fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- We plan to incorporate literacy focused PLC Meetings throughout the school year. PLCs will focus on data review of student strengths and limitations with foundational literacy skills.
- District and school leaders will attend TDOE literacy focused Communities of Practice – these meetings are held throughout the school year. The information learned will be presented to all staff.