

Coffee County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 25, 2021

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 “Wonders” by McGraw Hill which is 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 high quality curriculum uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time (45-60 minutes daily) for foundational skills instruction in grades K-2. This instructional time includes activities that build phonological awareness, phonics practice, and fluency practice in addition to comprehension and vocabulary work (“word work”). During that instruction, teachers explicitly teach a sound, the students practice the sound aloud (learning how to produce pure sound), the teacher models writing the sound, the students refer to their individual code chart on which they write the sound, then students apply the skill in independent practice (small group or individual).

Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for teachers to collaborate during school and district grade level PLCs as they solve problems of practice (refine the opportunities to develop and practice writing skills, for example) and as they internalize the instructional plan through unit-level and lesson-level preparation. Our District Literacy Coach will continue to support, provide training sessions, and model lessons as needed by individual teachers. We also have Assistant Principals/Instructional Coordinators at each elementary that will continue to provide instructional guidance and support.

Additionally, our district plan includes a process of moving toward implementation of the state open resource foundational skills curriculum. The district will be offering the 2 week training for teachers who are available to be trained this summer. We have a cohort of 50 teachers participating in this training as this is the amount we were allowed. Those teachers will be receiving a teaching kit for their attendance and will begin using this program to supplement the foundational component of the current HQIM. Over the course of the next few years, we expect all K-2 teachers will transition.

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, “Wonders” by McGraw-Hill, are selected from those 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, our students receive a total of 90 minutes of ELA instruction (as expected in RTI2 guidelines). Although the daily schedule is not the same each day, all 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. The fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills are not taught in isolation, but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection.

For example, a lesson that was just taught in our district included the following integration. A fifth grade class began by reading a nonfiction text about how different minority groups had an impact on WW2. Before reading the text, they did work with latin roots and defined and identified words that would later be found in the text as well as related words. Students also did vocabulary work with words they would be encountering in the text using the HQIM materials to dig into the words. Students read the text in a variety of ways. (Echo, choral, partner, and independent)

After reading the passage, students worked in small groups and focused on one of the specific minority groups from the story. The group re-read the small section related to their topic chorally and were expected to use good fluency as they practiced reading. Using speaking and listening skills, the students unpacked the text with rigorous comprehension questions related to standards for their grade level. Finally, as a group, the students had to identify 5 words from the latin roots chart they had completed at the start of class that could be used to discuss the particular small group and talk through how that word applied. Once the group finished talking through the text, they independently responded to a writing prompt. The success criteria required the use of the latin root words and vocabulary words previously worked with throughout the lesson.

All aspects of reading were embedded throughout the lesson and expected in student work products through success criteria. At least 30 minutes of the block was spent on teaching, reviewing, and expecting foundational skills in student work.

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 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 through second grade. We plan to begin teacher training this summer and start the move toward all teachers using this supplement as we are able to train them. We plan to use the daily sounds-first activities as our daily warm up in all elementary schools across the district.

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

In the past, we have been using the AIMSweb screener. We have used this screener for all grade levels, K-5, 3 times a year. Going forward, we plan to evaluate the Tennessee universal screening option that is being released May, 2021. We anticipate the use of this screener going forward.

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, students are given a universal screener (AIMSWEB) to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are “at-risk”. Our grade-level teachers and principals review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction. Students classified as Tier II or Tier III are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits in order to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. Students receive daily, small-group intervention for at least 45 minutes in their area of greatest deficit and many of our schools surpass this with an hour of intervention in the area of greatest deficit.

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 recently adopted ELA curriculum contains assessments that directly address skill gaps. Teachers can tailor this to the needs of their RTI group of students. If these intervention practices are not proving to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions (such as SPIRE) become an option. Data teams meet every 4 ½ weeks to determine if a change in the intervention or the person providing the intervention is warranted. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance, 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 area of deficit in small groups using research-based materials and strategies. These students are also screened using additional survey level assessments, such as the PASS phonological screener, 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 research-based supplemental programs as intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia, such as SPIRE. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that a specific intervention program is used to support those students, based on the Orton-Gillingham 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 in the master schedule just for RTI. When students are in their RTI groups, they work on activities and assignments that make them stronger in that 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. For students who need fluency support, they may receive intervention using the SPIRE program.

Throughout our district, the schools have acquired many research-based programs that we use to address needs. During data meetings, the team decides which of the programs would be best

matched to the needs of each student. Those programs include SPIRE, Lexia, Road to the Code, Language X, Read Naturally, Read Live, Foundations, West Virginia Phonics, Florida Center of Reading Research, and others.

Our district additionally tried to think outside the box this year as we addressed the needs of these students who have significant reading deficiencies. Each Friday throughout much of the 20-21 year, our district had virtual learning Fridays. On those days, students with needs attended in-person to meet in additional small group and individual work with the teacher. These times of additional intervention were specifically designed to help students remediate learning loss and address the reading deficiencies.

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 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 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.

Frequent weekly communication is also sent to parents regarding the foundational skills being taught in the Tier 1 instruction. This year, as our district sought to address the learning loss in students who had significant reading deficiency. In order to do so, we established extra times of parent communication on virtual learning Fridays. Parents had video conferences, phone calls, and in person meetings to discuss helping students.

Professional Development Plan

Teachers in our district 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:

April 2021 – A cohort of 50 teachers of grades in grades Pre-K through five will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series, asynchronously. This training will focus 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 the week of July 5.

July 5-9, 2021 – Our district has registered 50 teachers for the cohort-based, in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all teachers in grade Pre-K through second. The participating teachers will also include interventionists, special educational teachers, instructional coordinators, and the district literacy coach. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

We plan to include grade three through five as we have spots available each time we offer the training in our district.