

Dyer County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: June 3, 2022

Approved: June 3, 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

Our district utilizes a foundational skills curriculum that is aligned to the Tennessee ELA standards and has been created to reflect the science of reading. The HMH Into Reading curriculum is a literacy program which includes a large portion (55-65 minutes) of the daily instruction focused on foundational skills for grades K-2. The Tennessee Foundational Skills curriculum supplement resources are also used by K-2 teachers daily. This program allows for explicit foundational skills teaching. The block of ELA instruction includes explicit teaching through focused mini lessons with phonological awareness (approx. 10 minutes), Alphabet Knowledge (approx. 10 minutes), Phonics practice (approx. 15 minutes), and word study (approx. 15 minutes) in addition to comprehension and fluency practice (50 minutes total).

The lessons with HMH Into Reading, provide a direct plan for teaching speech sounds, distinct from the letters that represent them; attention is called to sound and word pronunciation with emphasis on blending and separating sounds in spoken words. Teachers provide explicit and systematic instruction of phoneme-grapheme (sound-symbol) correspondences, sound/spelling connection, and blending/decoding practice. Alphabet knowledge instruction includes multi-sensory instruction methods of letter card manipulation and modeling blending sounds with finger-movement. During the word study section of the foundational literacy block the students practice building, manipulating, and sorting words to transfer skill knowledge. Comprehension and fluency are an additional 90 minutes of daily instruction and practice. This block of time helps to reinforce phonics skills through read alouds and short reads, as well as to provide time to focus on the comprehension standards. For example, in the third nine weeks, kindergarten students will learn to blend spoken phonemes to form one-syllable words. They will also be able to isolate and pronounce the medial vowel sound in a one-syllable word. Students will have the opportunity to practice these skills while reading decodable texts. In the second nine weeks, second grade students will learn the oa, ow, and oe vowel team spellings for the long o sound. They will also blend and decode regularly spelled one-syllable words with long patterns o, o_e, oa, ow, and oe. They will also use knowledge of syllable patterns to decode longer words.

In addition to the 55-65 minutes of whole group foundational skills instruction, students receive a focused differentiated small group instruction. Our district uses various readers for small group

instruction, which have a strong base of developmentally appropriate foundational skills. Teachers, based on specific student needs, use the assessment and remediation guide to target specific areas of student need. Students learn to apply foundational skills to decode and make meaning of increasingly challenging text. Within the small group setting students develop and use a network of complex strategies and behaviors needed to become successful lifelong learners. One improvement for next year is to implement collaborative vertical planning. Vertical planning structures will enhance access to curricular rigor for all students, connecting learning expectations horizontally within and across content areas and contexts to develop accurate knowledge frameworks. Another improvement is the continued time for collaborative planning for teachers to develop and refine opportunities for their students to practice writing skills.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Our district uses a literacy curriculum for grades three (3) through five (5) aligned to the Tennessee ELA standards and created to reflect the science of reading. Students receive 140 minutes of direct ELA instruction on a daily basis. During this block of time, students are engaged in whole group instruction, small group instruction, and independent work study. Our third through fifth grade students spend 30-45 minutes daily working with foundational skills using the assessment and remediation guide from the Foundational Skills Curriculum. Students receive at least 90 minutes of uninterrupted instructional time for whole group instruction and 20 minutes daily during small group instruction. We are currently using a state approved curriculum, Guidebooks. The Guidebooks curriculum provides students with daily opportunities to build and apply knowledge through reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking. This curriculum engages students with authentic texts that allow them to cohesively work on fluency, vocabulary, writing, and comprehension.

Our daily foundational skills instruction focuses on grammar, morphology, spelling, writing and fluency. In grades 3-5 we focus on a daily warm-up before we move into our daily ELA instruction. In grades 3-5 our warmup focuses on Greek and Latin roots, affixes, prefixes, suffixes, spelling patterns, syllabication, and letter sounds. These standards-based warm-ups will be connected to the core curriculum. The warm-ups provide an opportunity to collect formative data to give teachers guidance on which standards we need to focus on in both whole and small group instruction. In addition to whole group instruction, students receive focused differentiated small group instruction. Our district uses various student readers for small group instruction, which have progressive steps within the comprehension focus. Students learn to internalize a variety of strategic actions that help them work with words, read with phrasing and expression, and retell text. Foundational and comprehensive strategies are used to help students bridge the gap between fluent reading lessons and their independent assessments. For example, our third-grade students just finished a unit about Treasure Island. The unit started with an overview of the end task and then had students activate prior knowledge with treasure. The daily routine often begins with a review and a discussion. In an example lesson, the lesson begins with a class discussion about similes and why authors use them. Partners discuss what similes are and why authors use them. Next the lesson moves to working with words. The teacher works with students to analyze a quote from the text Treasure Island. Together they identify the simile and discuss what the simile reveals about the character. Students are then given another quote from the text to analyze to find the simile and identify its meaning. A think-pair-share activity is used to engage students in a discussion about how

authors use figurative language and what they reveal. After practicing with a partner, students express their understanding by writing similes to describe a character after the teacher models an example of a strong and weak response. Therefore, foundational skills instruction is embedded throughout the curriculum.

Additional Supports

Dyer County is dedicated to improving student literacy outcomes. In order to provide additional support to identified schools in the area of ELA 4th grade, school leadership, testing/data coordinator, literacy coach and teachers will review student data (TCAP, benchmark and qualitative data) to determine the areas of need and specific students who need additional support in fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Further diagnostic testing may be conducted to identify specific foundational skills that are missing to become fluent readers. The team will complete a deep review of all data to determine the academic needs of targeted students and if T2, T3 or tutoring support is needed.

Identified students will receive support using high quality instructional materials based on their area of need. Teacher support will be provided by admin and coaches. The literacy coach, administration and instructional coaches will collaborate with teachers during bimonthly planning sessions to ensure specific areas of need are addressed in small groups. The use of high- quality low-ratio tutoring will be provided for students in need. The remediation materials in the foundational skills curriculum can be used to target needs. The use of STAR Phonics and Flyleaf materials may also be used to target specific gaps in reading. Continuation of Tier 2 and 3 materials will support acquisition of foundational skills.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Reading

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Imagine Learning Guidebooks (formerly LearnZillion) 3-5

Supplemental Instructional Materials

The Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement will be utilized in grades K-2 to ensure our students are getting the foundational skills instruction they need, in addition to what our adopted curriculum offers. Kindergarten through second grade classrooms use sounds-first warm-ups in all of our schools, and we strongly believe this will help our students gain more phonological and phonemic awareness. We want to build this understanding with our students and their families. In order to achieve this goal, we send home corresponding activities, sight word lists, and decodable readers to provide students with additional opportunities to reinforce daily lessons outside of school. Helping them to grow as readers and writers. The use of STAR Phonics and Flyleaf materials may also be used to target specific gaps in reading.

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

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) grades K-3

STAR Literacy Suite grades 4-5

Intervention Structure and Supports

Dyer County aligns interventions with the TN RTI² Manual. After each benchmark is given, teachers, principals, instructional coaches, interventionists, and our elementary supervisor meet to review data to determine students who need further testing to develop small groups and determine the appropriate intervention. Those students demonstrating a need are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction and are then placed into either a Tier II or Tier III intervention group. Students who are placed into Tier III intervention groups have a PR of 0-15 and will receive a minimum of one-hour daily intervention. Students are given diagnostic assessments to help determine the best path to bridge the individual student's gaps. Our diagnostic assessments also help to determine specific focus areas for the groups (phonemic awareness, phonics, word study, fluency, comprehension strategies, etc.)

Our district has implemented research-based intervention programs to support our Tier II and Tier III students, who have been identified as having a substantial reading deficiency or are "at-risk" for developing reading deficiencies. Our focus is on addressing specific skill gaps. Our Tier II intervention programs (such as HMH decodables, Amira, STAR Phonics, and Flyleaf) address students current reading skills and are developed to focus on word study and foundational skills, as well as provide the opportunity for students to develop comprehension strategies to improve their reading. These programs are easily tailored to meet the needs of the Tier II students. A more strategic intervention is used to address the needs of Tier III students. Such interventions include Sounds Sensible, SPIRE, Voyager, and RISE. For students that show a deficiency in letter sound relationships, Sounds Sensible is used. Sounds Sensible® provides hands-on instruction in the most reliable indicators of reading success: phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and understanding letter-sound relationships, as well as handwriting. The lessons follow a structured literacy approach, helping students quickly master 20 consonants and short a. For students in first and second grade who demonstrate a reading deficiency, S.P.I.R.E. is used. S.P.I.R.E. is a teacher-led 10-step lesson plan that methodically walks students through phonemic awareness and phonics, then spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency — instilling and reinforcing every stage of reading development. Lessons include multisensory activities that meet different learning styles, engage all students, and provide continual practice and review to lock in permanent gains. The Voyager Program is used with students in grades second through fifth grade who have mastered their foundational skills but are struggling with comprehension. This program provides struggling readers with explicit instruction, corrective feedback, and more time on task to master critical reading skills.

Data teams meet every 4 1/2 weeks to review progress monitoring data and to determine if a change in the intervention is needed or the person providing the intervention needs to be changed. The data teams also look at other variables such as attendance and engagement as part of the decision-making process before an adjustment or change is made to the intervention program. If a child is not showing progress with the intervention, a change is made to find one best suited to

address the deficit area. Intervention takes place daily and is part of the school wide master schedule. This time is protected and valued. When students are in RTI groups, the work is centered on activities that are skill specific for their needs. RTI time frames include:

Tier II & III Intervention:

- Grades K-2 60 minutes daily
- Grades 3-5 45 minutes daily

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

After each benchmark is given (three times each year), all parents receive notification on how child performed on benchmark. Each school holds RTI meetings that include teachers, interventionists, instructional coaches, principals, and elementary supervisor. Once groups are determined parent contact is made through a literacy letter explaining our intervention process and our goals for each individual student. The letter explains what learning deficits each student has and how the intervention will meet the student's individual academic needs. The parents will be notified of the length of the daily intervention and no-cost strategies that can be used at home to help their child grow as a reader and learner. It will also emphasize the importance of being able to read by the end of their third-grade year. Parents receive information on 4th grade pathways to promotion. This information is provided in written correspondence three times a year, as well as in person parent meetings in the Fall and again in the Spring before TNReady assessments.

Progress reports are sent home each mid nine-week period and the RTI team meets regularly (every 4 ½ weeks) to determine if a student is making adequate growth in their current intervention. We resend home a form letting them know if their child is making progress and any changes that will be made in the upcoming nine weeks.

In addition to our RTI team's communication with families, classroom teachers also send out corresponding letters to families about what they see in the classroom and how they can help their child make progress at home.

Professional Development Plan

Teachers within the Dyer County school district, who have completed the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training will participate regularly in review of foundational skills instruction, specifically the Tennessee Foundational Skills curriculum through PLC's. Materials focus on the Science of Reading. New teachers are provided the information to register for the free Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

All new teachers of grades kindergarten through second grade will participate asynchronously in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series. The online training will focus on a phonics-based approach to teaching foundational reading curriculum. Participating teachers will complete Week 1 certification prior to Week 2.