

Fayette County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: June 27, 2022

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

Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) employs 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, Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). CKLA has four (4) guiding principles that encompass the skills strand:

- **Explicit Phonics:** Explicit, systematic phonics instruction is a more effective way to teach decoding than "whole language" or whole word methods
- **Synthetic Phonics:** Synthetic phonics (or linguistic phonics), in which instruction is oriented from sound to letter, is an especially powerful way to teach phonics
- **Repeated Oral Practice:** Repeated oral practice and oral reading are proven methods of improving fluency
- **Intensive Practice:** Intensive practice with skills-aligned texts is essential in order to build reliability and automaticity in reading

Designated literacy blocks are scheduled at all four (4) elementary schools that range from 90-120 minutes in length. Certified teachers will engage K-2 students in direct systematic foundational skills instruction for at least 60 minutes each day that is aligned to CKLA's research-driven scope of system of foundational skills. This instructional time includes activities that build phonological awareness, phonics practice, and fluency practice in addition to comprehension and vocabulary 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, and then students apply the skill in independent practice (small group or individual).

The adoption of high-quality instructional materials has empowered teachers as they plan for quality instruction, gather student work, and monitor student progress. Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for teachers to collaborate within PLCs as they solve problems of practice and as they internalize the instructional plan through unit-level and

lesson-level preparation, in conjunction with on-going professional development and academic walkthroughs.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) employs 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, Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). The four (4) elementary schools' schedules have an ELA block that integrates an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, thus providing our students receive 90 minutes of ELA instruction with 30 minutes of embedded foundational skills instruction. All instructional delivery 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, students may be learning literacy skills using a novel. Students begin by activating background knowledge and reading independently and/or aloud. After the daily read-aloud of a complex text, the students may internalize the content using the think-pair-share method, unpack essential academic vocabulary, respond to a series of scaffolded questions, and write a response to an inferential question that requires students to provide evidence from the text to support their answer. Foundational skills are embedded in all aspects of the 90-minute instructional block, which is dedicated to developing students' holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research.

Additional Supports

Fayette County Public Schools will implement a comprehensive approach to addressing the subgroup (SWD) that are not showing expected growth academically. As a school district committed to ensuring the success and well-being of all students, these proactive strategies and targeted interventions will uplift the subgroup facing challenges in their academic progress.

Key Plan Components

- **Data Analysis and Identification:** review assessment results and progress monitoring data to pinpoint areas of concern and perform a gap analysis.
- **Root Cause Analysis:** conduct a root cause probe to understand the underlying factors contributing to their lack of growth. This will aid us in pinpointing academic, social, emotional, or environmental barriers that may be hindering students' progress.
- **Targeted Interventions:** develop targeted, tiered interventions and support strategies tailored to the subgroup's unique needs, i.e., differentiated instruction, personalized learning plans, academic enrichment programs, and family engagement initiatives.

- Professional Development: ongoing professional development for staff to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to address the subgroup's diverse needs, including but not limited to IEP development, RTI intervention, progress monitoring, fidelity checks, evidence-based practices, culturally responsive teaching, and learning styles.
- Collaborative Partnerships: collaborate closely with families, support services, and external partners to create a network of support around the subgroup's challenges in their academic progress.
- Progress Monitoring and Evaluation: monitor the effectiveness of our interventions and support strategies for the identified by regularly progress monitoring, analyzing data, and implementing feedback loops that will allow us to adjust our approaches, celebrate successes, and address areas needing improvement.

At Fayette County Public Schools, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive learning environment where all students have the opportunity to thrive and succeed. By addressing the needs of subgroups not showing growth with this multidimensional approach, we aim to empower every student to reach their full potential.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Supplemental Materials from Amplify- K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

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

i-Ready Suite for grades K, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th
Tennessee Universal Reading Screener for 3rd grade

Intervention Structure and Supports

Three (3) times year (fall, winter, and spring) students are assessed via this universal screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency, scoring between 0-40 percentile. Our teachers and administrators review the universal screener data and other data points to determine which students fall into these categories and need additional support. Those students showing need are classified as needing Tier II or Tier III instruction. Students classified as Tier II or Tier III are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits 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. We have research-based options for reading intervention and support available to our students who are "at-risk" and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our adopted ELA curriculum contains an assessment and remediation guide in which teachers can find activities that directly address skill

gaps. They can tailor this to the needs of their RTI group of students. If that intervention is not proving to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions 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, i.e., attendance and engagement as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider.

FCPS 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 to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who 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 and notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia accordingly. 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. We also provide tutoring in 4th grade for at least 30 minutes a day three days a week on skills. 4th grade ELA teachers are responsible for providing this instruction. This ensures we meet the Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act in congruence with the third-grade retention requirements that requires intervention for affected students before they can be promoted to fourth grade.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

FCPS notifies parents in grades K-5 if their child is “at-risk” for or has a significant reading deficiency 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 and information on the pathway to 4th grade.

The district defines for families 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-3 three times annually and are shared in grades 4 and 5 annually. We also communicate with families when there is any change in the student’s RTI program.

Professional Development Plan

FCPS teachers have participated in the free Reading 360 Early Reading Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. We ensure any new K-5 teachers in our district have completed Course 1 of the Early Reading Training prior to teaching.

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

- July 2024: All K-5 teachers will collaborate in grade level and vertical teams for training on the IPG, explicit direct instruction and foundational reading development and grounded in a phonics-based approach.
- August 2024: All K-5 teachers, instructional coaches, Principals, Assistant Principals, ESL staff, and special education teachers will attend district wide professional learning on practical classroom application of research findings pertaining to strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, content area literacy integration, and vocabulary.
- September 2024: All K-5 teachers will participate in professional learning that focuses on Instructional practice delivery, including explicit direct instruction, clear learning targets, standards deconstruction, and high impact strategies. Grades K-5 teachers, elementary instructional leaders, Chief Academic Officer, and the Southwest CORE ELA consultant conduct walkthroughs using the IPG and provide feedback to teachers.
- Elementary instructional leaders and teachers will review fall iReady Diagnostic/Universal Screener w/ Early Literacy Tasks and aimswebPLUS (Grade 3) to determine both trends and deficits and individual student data to inform classroom practice, to build and meet the needs of RTI groups.
- October 2024: All K-5 teachers will attend professional learning that outlines strategies for striving learners and small group instruction/interventions. Grades K-5 teachers, elementary instructional leaders, Chief Academic Officer, and the Southwest CORE ELA consultant conduct walkthroughs using the IPG and provide feedback to teachers.
- November 2024: All K-5 teachers will attend professional learning that outlines best practices for bridging learning by delivering string instruction and analyzing student work (ASW). Elementary instructional leaders, Chief Academic Officer, and the Southwest CORE ELA consultant conduct walkthroughs using the IPG and provide feedback to teachers.
- January 2025: Elementary instructional leaders and teachers will review winter iReady Diagnostic/Universal Screener w/ Early Literacy Tasks and aimswebPLUS (Grade 3) to determine both trends and deficits and individual student data to inform classroom practice, to modify RTI groups. All K-5 teachers will attend professional learning aimed at delivering strong instruction, analyzing student work (ASW via writing), aggressive monitoring, and a deeper view at ELA instructional shifts. Elementary instructional leaders, Chief Academic Officer, and the Southwest CORE ELA consultant conduct walkthroughs using the IPG and provide feedback to teachers.
- April 2025: Elementary instructional leaders and teachers will review spring iReady Diagnostic/Universal Screener w/ Early Literacy Tasks and aimswebPLUS (Grade 3) to

determine both trends and deficits and individual student data to inform classroom practice, to determine the effectiveness of RTI groups.

FCPS plans to include all PK-5 teachers in the Early Literacy Network, which will provide on-going literacy support from a state-approved vendor. Teachers are required to demonstrate knowledge and competency through quality engagement within PLCs and feedback from academic walkthroughs, TEAM evaluations, during informal coaching sessions with instructional coaches, strategic and intentional professional development from the school/district, and academic classroom walks using the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG).

Fayette County Public Schools is committed to supplying teachers and students with high quality materials that will augment the classroom learning experiences.