

## Henry County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

First Approved: June 21, 2023

Approved: June 7, 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

The Henry County School District uses Amplify/CKLA foundational skills curriculum grounded in reading research and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Additionally, the district supplements phonemic awareness instruction with Heggerty-Literacy Resources (2022) for systematic instruction in PreK-2nd grades. The research-based programs focus on the mastery of skills needed to be a successful reader by the end of 3rd grade. The programs also highlight the importance of developmental and instructional relationships among print concepts, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, and word recognition, and reading fluency. The program's whole-group lessons provide daily, explicit, and systematic instruction to develop skills in phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, word study or vocabulary, fluency and integrated writing which includes grade appropriate standard aligned explicit grammar instruction.

The skills block for most K-2 classes is approximately 60 minutes. Read aloud or knowledge building is approximately 30 minutes daily. During the literacy skills block students are engaged with phonological awareness, phonics instruction and practice within text, vocabulary or word work, and comprehension skills. During explicit and systematic phonemic awareness instruction teachers engage students with rhyming and onset fluency, isolating final or medial sounds, blending and segmenting words, syllables, and phonemes, adding and deleting phonemes, and substituting phonemes. Phonemic awareness lessons are done in a whole group setting and applied and reinforced during small group or individual skills practice.

During explicit phonemic awareness and phonics instruction teachers are required to articulate sounds correctly and in kindergarten begin the process of letter sound recognition. Teachers model the connection between sound and the written symbol(s). Students engage with speech sounds and phoneme-grapheme correspondence during whole group instruction and application during small group and independent practice. For example, in a first-grade classroom, during the 1st nine weeks, students are engaged with short /u/. Students blend, isolate, segment, alliterate phonemes in CVC, CCVC, and CVCC words. Students also engage in blending CV segments and then apply to decodable CVC words such as /bu/, /cu/, /ru/ etc. This exercise is followed by adding a final sound- but, cut, run,

etc. Next, students are given decodable texts that are aligned to short /u/ and a spiral of short vowel sounds taught to date.

The school continues to coach teachers who have varying levels of instructional needs as well as following up with how high-quality curriculum materials are being used in the classroom. This is accomplished by using the K-2 Foundational Literacy Instructional Practice Guide. A second focus will be working to arrange time for teachers to concentrate on student data, problem solving student deficits, and collaborate on best practices during a professional learning community setting. A third focus for the upcoming school year will be to focus on coherence of instructional and high-quality instructional materials between Tier I, Tier II and III, and special education services.

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

The Henry County School District has an integrated literacy block for grades 3 through 5 that is aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Curriculum used in grade 3 (HMS Into Reading) was given a waiver by the Commissioner of Education (provided as an artifact in this plan). For grades 4 and 5 the knowledge building curriculum, Imagine Learning, Louisiana Guidebooks was officially adopted.

District-wide students in 3rd grade receive approximately 90 minutes a day of ELA instruction. For students in grades 4th and 5th instructional time varies between the three schools in the district. On average across the district students receive approximately 65 minutes of ELA instruction (30 minutes of foundational literacy). For grades 3rd through 5th the ELA block is integrated and includes the following components: knowledge-building with complex texts (students are asked to listen, read, write, think, and speak) reading fluency and building reading stamina, grammar, and vocabulary. Morphology and spelling are consistently taught in grade 3 but time varies in grades 4 and 5 while 3rd grade also engages students in grade level phonics, explicitly taught then applied in small group or independent practice for a minimum of 30 minutes a day.

The curriculum, Imagine Learning, used in 4th and 5th grades does not allow for explicit instruction but embeds fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. Foundational skills are embedded in all aspects of the 4th and 5th grade literacy block which includes fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. Additional support is given to students who need extra word study opportunities. For example, fifth grade uses supplemental resources to explicitly teach grade level grammar and word study skills. Essential vocabulary is embedded throughout the adopted curriculum and supplemental and application practice is provided to students using Vocabulary.com.

The school system will continue to focus will be to ensure that all teachers have an in-depth understanding of the foundational literacy standards in grades 3-5. A second focus will be to work with teachers in grades 4 and 5 to develop sound instructional practices to explicitly teach the foundational literacy standards as well as embed and apply those skills where appropriate within a 30-minute block.

### **Additional Information**

The district's involvement in the Literacy Implementation Network shows a commitment to improving literacy skills among students. The use of high-quality instructional materials and

collaboration with organizations like Imagine Learning and HMH suggests a data-driven approach to teaching and learning.

The appointment of literacy leads at each school demonstrates a focus on literacy instruction and data analysis. Working with teachers during PLC cycles to evaluate data and plan lessons indicates a commitment to continuous improvement in literacy education. Overall, the data and programs in place suggest a proactive approach to improving student literacy skills in reading, which may further contribute to academic success in the future.

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

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

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

HMS Into Reading -Grade 3 (Approved waiver)

Imagine Learning Guidebooks (formerly LearnZillion) Grades 4-5

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

K-2- Heggerty Literacy Resources Phonemic Awareness Curriculum provides a systematic approach for K-2 students.

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

STAR Literacy Suite: Pre-K

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus): K-3

i-Ready Suite: 4-5

### **Supplemental Screener**

i-Ready- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Three times a year, all K-8 students are given a universal reading screener to determine which students are at-risk. After each screening window is completed, grade level teachers, the RTI team, and building level principals review screener data to determine if all students who are below the 40th percentile are at risk and which students need to be classified as Tier II and Tier III. For students below the 25th percentile further screening is conducted to determine if students have characteristics of dyslexia. For students who are identified with COD an ILPD plan is developed and entered into TNPulse. After students are identified, additional diagnostic assessments are administered to determine reading deficiencies and best group placement. After diagnostic assessment results are analyzed, students are assigned to small groups according to their specific reading skill deficits. COD, Tier II, and Tier III students are scheduled into a daily rotation and receive between 30 (Tier II) and 45 minutes (Tier III) of focused intervention. Reading interventionists teach explicit lessons from research-based intervention supports and match the intervention program to

the area of greatest deficit. In addition to COD, Tier II, and Tier III intervention, K-2 teachers utilize small group instruction to address additional intervention support during Tier I.

The recently adopted ELA curriculum for grades K-3 contains an intervention program specific to identified skill deficits, to be used by teachers when appropriate (Assessment and Remedial Guide). Progress monitoring is used as a data point to determine if the intervention is effective.

Interventionist log attendance and note student engagement during learning sessions. After sufficient data from progress monitoring and other student data sets is gathered the interventionist meets as needed with teachers and administrators to determine if their current intervention program needs to be changed or modified. Fidelity checks are conducted monthly or more frequently when needed.

Henry County schools use research-based supplemental programs as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia as well as for Tier II and Tier III students. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Included in the letter to parent, the schools communicate what curriculum is used to support their child.

Additional Screening Example for the Winter Benchmark:

Grade Test(s) if < 25th percentile and currently in RTI

- Kindergarten
  - Letter Word Sound Fluency (LWSF)
  - Phoneme Segmentation (PS)
  - Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)
- 1st Grade
  - Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)
  - Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)
  - Encoding Assessment
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade
  - Reading Comprehension (RC)
  - Vocabulary (VOC)
  - Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)
  - Encoding Assessment
- 3rd Grade
  - Reading Comprehension (RC)
  - Vocabulary (VOC)
  - Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)
  - Encoding Assessment
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - Reading Diagnostic-Encoding Assessment
  - ORF Passages
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - Reading Diagnostic-Encoding Assessment
  - ORF Passages

For example, to address specific gaps the district may use Read Naturally or S.P.I.R.E Reading to focus on reading fluency deficits in grades 3-8. Both programs are also used to work on literal, inferential, and evaluation comprehension skills. Another example, Wilson Reading or Wilson Just Words are used for students identified with COD. In grades K-2, RTI groups use a variety of intervention supports based on student need. Sondays and S.P.I.R.E curriculum are used to support students that are deficient in beginning reading foundational skill deficits. The district is working to implement a coherence model to include Tier I, Special Education, and RTI. This model will aid students who are pulled for intervention and or special education services.

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

Our district notifies parents in grades K-8 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 completes one of the three universal screening sessions. Parents are informed that students are given a universal screener for reading three times a year. After the screening process is completed, 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. Aimsweb and i-Ready screening programs also generate a parent friendly data report after each testing cycle. The parents are told what intervention their student(s) will receive and the amount of time each day the student will receive services. Additional information includes the importance of being able to read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade and the pathways to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. We also provide no cost family activities to support learning at home.

Parents are given RTI progress reports at a minimum of every 4 1/2 weeks. For students with COD parent communication follows the outlined protocols from the Dyslexia Guidance document. Parents are notified their child is at risk, which is followed up by the potential development of the ILPD plan. If parents decline the plan their child is still served in a group designed to meet their reading skill deficits.

As a district, we realize the need to improve communication with parents about the importance of reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade. Presently, classroom teachers communicate monitoring and assessment data and free recommended activities to help close learning gaps in specific skill areas to parents. This type of communication goes home to parents in grades K-3 at least 3 times a year. Additionally, the school system communicates with 4th and 5th grade parents regarding their child’s reading skill deficits, what interventions are used, and their progress as screener reports are sent home for all at risk students in grades K-8 after each URS.

### **Professional Development Plan**

The current PreK-5th grade teaching staff have participated in the free one-week asynchronous Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Seventy percent of K-5 teachers have participated in the face-to-face week 2 for Early Reading. A plan is in place for new teachers to our district to complete this training before teaching. Early Reading Training course 2 is recommended.

As a district we are going to continue to focus on reading foundational skills for K-2 teachers and the importance of teaching foundational literacy skills to mastery. Teachers that teach grades 3-5 will continue to focus on how to best utilize and implement high quality instructional materials as well as how to best embed grade level foundational literacy standards during their ELA blocks.

These professional development opportunities will help our teachers strengthen their skills in teaching early literacy and help ensure that our students are proficient in the foundation of literacy skills in grades K-5.

- May 2024- New teachers to the district will participate in the Early Reading training the week of May 28-May 31st.
- July 2024- 3-5 grade teachers will participate in unit prep and lesson internalization training. Teachers will focus on how to prep units or modules and work on lesson internalization.
- July 2024- K-2 teachers will participate in foundational skills training-focusing on sounds first instruction.
- July 2024- Data Analysis and Progress Monitoring using Aimsweb and i-Ready Universal Reading Screeners
- July 2024-May 2024- Access for All training for all K-2 Tier I, RTI, and Special Education Teachers. The purpose of this training is to continue to work on the coherence model and how it will be monitored through the upcoming school year.
- November 2024- Knowledge Building in the K-2 classroom- how can it be done effectively- We will continue to work on ensuring this element of reading is not overlooked in K-2 classrooms.
- August 2024-May 2024- TNTP will continue to work with 3-5 ELA teachers using the K-12 IPG.