

Lauderdale County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

First Approved: May 11, 2021

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

Lauderdale County Schools follows the Science of Reading, an established body of work that reveals how students learn to read and what kinds of instruction are most likely to benefit all learners. A convergence of research supports that learning reading is not a natural process and must be taught explicitly. Students in Grades K-2 are provided Core foundational skills instruction utilizing a state-approved foundational skills curriculum. Additionally, students in K-2 are provided explicit phonemic awareness instruction using the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum. The lessons focus on phonemic awareness skills, letter-sound recognition, and language awareness. Students in grades K-2 also spend time in small groups with teachers and interventionists working on targeted skill deficits for 40-45 minutes daily.

The Foundational Skills Block is 90 minutes long, divided into three major chunks:

- 30 minutes: Whole group instruction—foundational skills
- 40-45 minutes: Differentiated small group foundational skills instruction (including independent work time)
- 10-12 minutes: Explicit Phonemic Awareness with the whole group

In the Foundational Skills Block, whole group instruction is broken into four parts: Opening, Work Time, and Reflection, Goal Setting, and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness. During the opening, students engage in a familiar instructional practice that connects to prior learning or warms them up for the Work Time. In the Skills Block, an instructional practice is a routine used consistently over one or more modules that addresses grade-level standards, ensuring all students have access to grade-level instruction. Work Time is the heart of whole group instruction. Whole group is where students use instructional practice routines to practice newly introduced graphemes (letters), phonemes (sounds), spelling patterns, or skills. During the Reflection and Goal Setting portion of whole group instruction, students set goals for their growth as readers. Like the other components of the K-2 Language Arts Curriculum, there is a focus on students' habits of character in the Skills Block. The lesson's Closing often emphasizes a growth mindset, helping students notice and reflect on: "How did our work today help us become even more proficient readers?"

During our Phonemic Awareness time, (10-12 minutes) the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness curriculum is used to provide explicit, teacher directed instruction in rhyming, initial phoneme isolation, blending, final & medial phoneme isolation, segmenting, manipulating sounds by adding or deleting words, syllables, initial or final phonemes, and substituting phonemes at the word, syllable, and phoneme level. During small group instruction (40-45 minutes per day), teachers work with groups of students to teach new material, reteach, or extend based on students' needs. The teacher meets with approximately three groups per day. Students reading below grade level meet with the teacher every day. Students reading at or above grade level meet with the teacher one or two times per week. Each day, students who are not working with the teacher engage in purposeful, independent rotations.

Students engage in a combination of the following each day:

- Accountable Independent Reading
- Word Work
- Writing Practice
- Reading Fluency

Students in grades K-2 receive 90 additional minutes of literacy instruction with a knowledge-building curriculum anchored in the science of reading and is aligned to the Tennessee ELA standard. All daily instruction includes components for knowledge-building (to build and improve the ability to comprehend complex texts and apply the knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak) for 70 minutes per day and additional foundational skills instruction for 20 minutes per day that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, and spelling embedded within the lesson. The foundational skills explicit instruction includes practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for teachers to collaborate 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.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Students in grades 3-5 are provided 90 minutes of literacy instruction using a knowledge-building curriculum anchored in reading, aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. The curriculum materials, Wit & Wisdom ELA, are selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Although the daily routine 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 the knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak) for 70 minutes per day and foundational skills instruction for 20 minutes per day that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, and spelling. The fluency, vocabulary, and morphology skills are not taught in isolation but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection.

A core lesson sequence in grades 3-5 Wit & Wisdom includes a framework of text-specific content questioning to engage students in the module content and in the process of reading complex texts. Students engage in daily work around reading, understanding, and analyzing complex text. Students

articulate their learning through speaking and writing about their knowledge of the topic of study. Students also have regular practice examining the crafts of writing, speaking, and listening, and through Craft Questions: students develop responses to the texts they read and grow their critical thinking skills. Some daily lessons give students targeted fluency practice through the reader's theater, poetry readings, and student-led declamations. In addition to directly addressing grade-level reading, writing, speaking, and listening standards, Core lessons provide embedded instruction in grade-level foundational reading skills such as spelling, language, and vocabulary. Additionally, each day, students participate in isolated practice with grade-level foundational reading skills in Deep Dives. The Deep Dives focus on vocabulary, morphology, and language conventions pertinent to the core lessons.

Grade 3-5 foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of the 90-minute block. It is dedicated to developing students' holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research.

Additional Supports

Lauderdale County Schools plans to support our all schools with subgroups that had TVAAS data in 2022 and 2023 at a level 1 or 2 by implementing the following in our district:

- Continue and strengthen our 3-8 work, focusing our efforts on 6-8, with TNTP through the state's Literacy Implementation Network (LIN)
- Realign some school level administrator roles
- Hiring a district RTI coordinator to support better implementation of skill gap services
- Identified materials for each Tier, 1, 2, and 3
- Train and/or retrain all classified and certified staff who deliver Tiered interventions
- Weekly Literacy Walkthroughs with a Google form connected to the Knowledge Building IPG
- Required tutoring for all 4th and 5th grade students who are on a retention pathway for the entirety of the school year (specific subgroups)
- Wit & Wisdom Launch training at the beginning of each school year to support new to Wit & Wisdom teachers and any other staff that needs retraining on this HQIM to support all students but with a focus on student subgroup support
- Designated PLC time for Module and Lesson prep as well as task analysis and student work analysis

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Open Up OUR Expeditionary Learning K-2

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom (3-5)

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Heggerty Phonological Awareness

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

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) for grades K-5
Supplemental Screener: STAR Literacy Suite

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, students are given a universal screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency, scoring below the 15th percentile, or are “at-risk,” scoring between the 16th and 40th percentile. Our grade-level teachers and principals review the universal screener data to determine which students fall into these categories and need additional support. 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 to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. Students receive daily, small-group intervention for 30- 45 minutes in their 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 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 (such as, but not limited to, LEXIA or SRA Reading) become an option.

Data teams meet every 4 1/2 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 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. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified of the curriculum used to support those students, which is 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. Students who need fluency support may receive intervention using the SRA Reading program.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Our district notifies families in grades K-5 if their child has a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring below the 15th percentile) or is at-risk of a significant reading

deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring between the 16th and 40th percentile) immediately after the district's schools complete the fall universal screening. Students' scores are communicated in family-friendly language that provides a clear explanation of student skill gaps and the depth and extent of student needs. The families 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 on grade level by the end of grade 3 and includes information on the promotion pathway to grade 4. We also include recommended activities (that do not require purchased resources) that will support students around the deficit (activities are not tailored by child but tailored by skill deficit generally). These communications go out to families with students in grades K-3 three times annually and are shared in grades 4 and 5 annually.

Our district explains how students are assessed and what a "significant reading deficiency" means. Families are subsequently notified of their child's progress, or lack of progress, after the 4 1/2-week data team meetings. In the family 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.

Additionally, the ELA curriculum contains family letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip families to work with the child. Families can better understand how to support their students through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their children are learning.

Professional Development Plan

Teachers in our district have and will continue to 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:

On Going – All teachers in grades Pre-K through 5 will engage in Week 1 of the Early Reading 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 our educators earn a completion certificate.

July – Our district has recommended Course 2 of the Early Reading Training for all teachers in grades Pre-K through 5 who have not already completed this course. The participating teachers also include interventionists, special education teachers, and elementary instructional coaches. This training emphasizes practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. This course will be completed asynchronously. Additionally, the district has a comprehensive professional development plan built on the district's strategic plans and K-12 literacy vision. This plan includes district-wide professional development days, school-based in-service days, weekly PLCs, collaborative coaching framework, lesson preparation PLCs, student work analysis PLCs, common grade-level planning facilitated by instructional leaders, and video reflection instruction, and facilitated book studies.