

Meigs County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: May 12, 2021

Approved: June 4, 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 Meigs County School district uses a foundational skills curriculum grounded in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. The curriculum provides a minimum of 45 minutes of explicit, systematic, sequential, and evidence-based instruction of grade level foundational skills including: alphabetic principle, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, word composition, fluency, sentence composition, vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, and conventions as the primary form of instruction. The materials, questions, and tasks provide regular practice and spiral review to address the acquisition of print concepts, including alphabetic knowledge, directionality, function, structures, and text features. Instructional opportunities are frequently built into the materials for students to practice and gain decoding/encoding automaticity; this includes prosody and reading fluency in oral reading. The curriculum contains built in differentiation strategies also.

Materials include explicit sequence of instruction. They also support ongoing and frequent assessment (formative or summative) to determine student mastery and to inform meaningful differentiation of foundational skills, including a clear and specific protocol as to how students performing below standard on these assessments will be supported. This curriculum has a designated ELA block of time (120 minutes) for instruction in grades K-2.

Meigs County School district, with the adopted high-quality instructional materials, also utilizes the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum provided by the state department. This curriculum provides students with explicit instruction and practice in phonemic awareness and phonics.

During instruction, teachers use the Say, Spell, Read, Write routine where the teacher explicitly teaches a sound, students practice the sound in whole group, the teacher models writing the sound, the students write the sound, then students apply the skill in independent practice (small groups or individual). For example, in first grade during the second nine weeks (Unit 4), students will know how to decode consonant digraphs th, sh, ng. Students learn to blend the sounds together to say the word, then blend and build on the word by changing letters through modeling, pocket charts, letter

tiles, etc. Ex. sing--replace the s with an r to make ring. Then students have the opportunity to practice using decodable texts that are aligned with the sounds taught in explicit instruction. These decodable texts are available for at home practice through ebook and print. The curriculum also establishes routines for explicit instruction with corrective feedback strategies and built in differentiated strategies.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

The Meigs County School district has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 grounded in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, the ELA block will be divided into two one-hour sessions. In ELA 1, students will receive instruction that focuses on reading, speaking, and listening skills. In ELA 2, students will receive writing instruction and work in small groups to provide differentiation based on student needs and achievement. Although there will be two separate classes, much collaboration will be done to ensure coherence. The purpose for this division is to promote an emphasis on writing to develop not only readers but strong writers who can successfully utilize text evidence to support claims or prompts. SS content is embedded to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection across domains.

The materials address foundation skills to build comprehension and provide questions and tasks that guide students to read with purpose and understanding, making connections between acquisition of foundational skills, and making meaning during reading. They provide coherently sequenced questions and tasks to support students in developing literacy skills. The culminating tasks require students to read, discuss, analyze, and write about texts while participating in a volume of reading to build knowledge. All daily instruction includes components for knowledge-building and apply that knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak daily for about 60 minutes. The other 30 minutes includes foundational skills instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, spelling, and writing. Nothing is taught in isolation. All skills are embedded within the lesson and spiral review opportunities are available to allow students to succeed in mastery.

For example, in 4th grade, Unit 3 is about Government. In the first week, students share prior knowledge of government. In vocabulary lessons, teachers provide explicit support for vocabulary needed to access and comprehend complex texts throughout the unit. Domain specific vocabulary words such as Congress, governors, and elect are introduced and displayed. General academic vocabulary words using vocabulary routines established within the curriculum such as structure, maintain, crisis, federal, funds, and prosper are also introduced to students. The teacher sets a purpose for the first read as students engage in reading a complex text. Students then summarize and distinguish between important/unimportant details during guided practice. Next, students can plan, research, draft, revise, and edit an Informative/Explanatory Essay about a problem the government helps solve utilizing the problem/solution text structure and using text evidence to support their answer. Students use the practice of distinguishing important/unimportant details when identifying problem/solution. Students use their word knowledge and vocabulary skills as they engage in group discussion and writing tasks. Foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of the block and is dedicated to developing students' holistic literacy approach to fluency,

vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Our improvements for next year are grounded in opportunities for teachers to refine student application through independent practice, including implementation of small groups to emphasize continued application of foundational skills. We also want to improve in designing opportunities for reading and writing conferences within our instructional plans.

Additional Information

Meigs County supports the literacy growth and achievement of all students.

The Meigs County LEA plans to support school(s) and/or subgroup(s) in the upcoming year by

- focusing on specific professional development needed to improve literacy
- District level personnel plan to collaborate with local school districts showing success by observing and working in collaborative PDs.
- The district has implemented K-2 ELA Lead Teachers to support ELA instruction at all schools.
- Grades 3-5 Lead Teachers lead all literacy PLCs along with the instructional coaches and instructional supervisor
- Schools also have a lead teacher/teacher-leader in each content to focus on vertical planning, share best practices, and evaluate data during PLC's.
- District and school administration will work together with teachers to emphasize and have conversations around successful unit and lesson planning utilizing the IPG's.
- We will have grade level meeting/PLC's to discuss the instructional focus documents and student work.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Benchmark Advance

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Benchmark Advance

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Meigs County Schools utilizes the Tennessee Foundational Skills curriculum (Reading 360) provided by the Tennessee Department of Education to focus on a sounds first approach.

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

easyCBM grades K-2, 4-5

aimswebPlus grade 3

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, winter, and spring students are given a universal screener (EasyCBM or Aimsweb) to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk". Our grade-level

teachers, interventionists, and principals review the universal screener data to determine which students score between 0-40%. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of Tier 2 or Tier 3 instruction. Students classified as Tier 2 or Tier 3 are given a diagnostic assessment (such as the PASS test) to determine specific deficits to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skills gaps. Tier 3 students receive daily, small group intervention for at least 45 minutes in their area of greatest deficit. Tier 2 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, Benchmark Advance, contains an assessment and reading intervention in which teachers can find activities that directly address skills gaps. They can tailor this to the needs of their RTI students based on their individual diagnostic test.

Based on progress monitoring results of specific skill gaps and other student data, data teams will determine if that intervention is not proving to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions (such as, but not limited to, Exact Path and/or Really Great Reading) will be utilized. Data teams meet at least every 4 ½ weeks to determine if a change in the intervention or the person providing the intervention is warranted. If there is a concern expressed by a parent or any member of the team, meetings will be held as needed. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance, engagement, etc.) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider. Progress reports are given to the family every three weeks.

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 (such as, but not limited to, Really Great Reading) that meet the law’s requirements. Our district uses a research-based supplemental program as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Additionally, our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified which curriculum (such as, but not limited to, Really Great Reading) is used to support those students, as it is based on the approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for those students. Interventions take 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 skill deficits. For example, students who need instruction in comprehension may read a new text and answer scaffolded questions using interventions that includes teacher guided corrective feedback responses and comprehension questions or they may use readers and questioning from the Benchmark intervention system. For students who need fluency support, they receive intervention through Benchmark Advance.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

The Meigs County district notifies all parents of students in K-5 regarding screening results as well as, 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 complete the fall universal screening. Communication to parents is also given after the winter and spring universal screenings (three times each school year).

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. Parents are told what areas that the student needs intervention and what interventions are provided. In our communication with parents, information is provided on the importance of a child being able to read by the end of third grade and information on the pathway to 4th grade.

The district defines how students are assessed and what "reading intervention" means for families. Parents are notified of their child's progress, or lack thereof at least three times per year upon completion of benchmark screening. Data teams meet at least every 4 ½ weeks to determine if a change in the intervention or the person providing the intervention is warranted. If there is a concern expressed by a parent or any member of the team, meetings will be held as needed. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance, engagement, etc.) as part of the decision-making process before change is made to the programming or provider.

Progress reports are given to the family every three weeks. In the parent notification, recommended activities/suggestions (that do not require purchased resources) are given to parents to support students in the area of deficiency. Additionally, teachers notify and communicate with parents weekly through newsletters to outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains that students will be studying.

Professional Development Plan

Our K-5, RTI, and special education teachers have taken part in the Read 360 training, completing two weeks of training with the foundational skills materials. Any teacher newly hired within the last year, who has not participated in the TN Early Reading training, will complete the week one asynchronous training at a minimum. This week of training will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and Vocabulary.

Meigs County Schools works to utilize the following for all K-5 teachers regarding professional development in foundational literacy skills instruction.

Assessment of Needs: Begin by assessing the current level of proficiency and understanding of foundational literacy skills among K-5 teachers. This can be done through surveys, interviews, or observation of classroom practices.

Curriculum Deep Dive: Conduct a deep dive professional development in foundational literacy skills instruction. Discuss where the curriculum covers topics such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies.

Differentiated Instruction: Recognize that teachers may have varying levels of expertise and experience in literacy instruction. Work in PLC's and grade levels to discuss providing support and resources tailored to individual needs.

Collaborative Learning: Encourage collaboration among teachers by forming professional learning communities or study groups focused on foundational literacy skills instruction. This allows teachers to share best practices, resources, and experiences.

Ongoing Support: Offer ongoing support to teachers through coaching, mentoring, and access to resources such as instructional materials, lesson plans, and online courses. Provide opportunities for teachers to seek clarification and ask questions.

Data-Driven Instruction: Emphasize the importance of using data to inform literacy instruction. Train teachers on how to collect, analyze, and interpret student data to identify areas of need and adjust instructional strategies accordingly.

Feedback and Evaluation: Continuously gather feedback from teachers to assess the effectiveness of the professional development program. Use this feedback to make adjustments and improvements as needed.

Sustainability: Ensure the sustainability of the professional development efforts by integrating foundational literacy skills instruction into existing teacher training programs and embedding it within the school culture.

August 2024: Grades 3-5 ELA Standards Guide training

September 2024: Grades K-5 Small Group training with emphasis on foundational literacy skills instruction.

- Grades K-5 Analysis of district universal screener data--Teachers and leaders will review assessment data at the district, school, and classroom levels to determine trends in deficits and individual student data to inform classroom practices/instruction, to build and meet the needs of RTI groups.
- Grades 3-5 Analysis of district TNReady data and IReady Benchmark data--Teachers and leaders will review assessment data at the district, school, and classroom levels to determine trends in deficits and individual student data to inform classroom practices/instruction. Teachers will develop a list of focus standards and utilize the Standards guides to unpack the standard, discuss vocabulary, and analyze questions

October/November 2024: Teacher Collaborative Planning (Unit and Lesson)-Teachers will collaborate with the curriculum vendor and/or instructional coach/supervisor to prepare appropriate lesson level tasks for student needs and instructional guidance during stockpile days and/or PLCs.

January 2024: Analysis of district universal screener data--Teachers and leaders will review assessment data at the district, school, and classroom levels to determine trends in deficits and individual student data to inform classroom practices/instruction, to build and meet the needs of RTI groups.

February/March 2024: Teacher Collaborative Planning--Teachers in grades K-2 will review unit and pacing guides and make any revisions as needed. Teachers in grades 3-5 will continue to analyze final benchmarking data to determine student needs and prepare for TNReady review.

April/May 2024: Repeat cycle for Reading 360 Early Reading Training (as needed) Develop priority students for summer school, plan and determine curriculum to be used, evaluate student data to determine individual student needs.