

## Putnam County Schools

### Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Updated: June 30, 2023

Approved: June 21, 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

Putnam County K-2 students will spend 60 minutes each day engaged in direct systematic foundational skills instruction using Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), which is grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. This instructional time includes adequate time to both learn and practice new skills that ultimately result in fluent reading, comprehension, and writing skills. The CKLA scope and sequence includes of direct instruction and aligned student practice in phonics, grammar, spelling, and writing. There are four guiding principles for the CKLA skills strand:

- Explicit Phonics: Explicit, systematic phonics instruction to teach decoding
- Synthetic Phonics: Synthetic phonics or linguistic phonics in which instruction is oriented from sound to letter
- 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

Additionally, CKLA engages students in ongoing reading fluency and comprehension practice with decodable readers aligned to the skills students are learning to make meaning from text and to produce the written word. These readers increase in length and complexity as students develop their reading and spelling skills. CKLA lessons included specific instruction and practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

During instruction, teachers follow the "I do, We do, You do" procedure to teach new sounds and skills to model them, and the student then practices the skill independently. In addition to the 60 minutes skills block in CKLA, K-2 students also engage in 10-15 minutes of daily phonemic and phonological awareness activities through Heggerty Phonemic Awareness lessons. These activities are designed to provide daily instruction in eight phonological and phonemic awareness skills. Students practice blending, segmenting, and manipulating words, syllables, and phonemes.

Our improvements for next year include training all K-2 teachers in LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) and prioritizing foundational skills lesson preparation to ensure consistent instruction and learning opportunities for students across the district.

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

Our district has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 grounded in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), are selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. During the integrated ELA block, which employs an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a total of 90 minutes of ELA instruction each day. All daily instruction 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. A daily lesson sequence in grades 3-5 CKLA may include briefly activating prior knowledge and reading independently and/or aloud in partners or whole groups. After the daily read aloud (or independent reading in on-grade level, complex text), the students may summarize the content (through a think pair-share model), unpack the most essential vocabulary (“word work”), respond to a series of scaffolded questions with both discussion and writing and write a response to an inferential question that requires students to use evidence from the text to support their answer. Students also receive vocabulary instruction where teachers provide explicit support for vocabulary needed to access the complex text. In some lessons, the students may study the root words to understand how they can use parts of words to determine meaning. Students use their word knowledge as they engage in group discussion and writing activities. Therefore, foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of this 90-minute block and is dedicated to developing students’ holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research.

### **Additional Supports**

Putnam County Schools is dedicated to improving student literacy. Schools and schools with subgroups with level 1 or 2 TVAAS data will be supported in many ways in our district.

- Strong Tier 1 instruction for all students will continue to be supported through IPG walkthroughs and feedback to teachers, intellectual prep of our adopted HQIM (CKLA), and data check-ins looking at the progress of students.
- Instructional coaches and administrators will be engaged with teachers during their collaboration time and focused not only on identifying gaps in learning but also on how to adjust instruction to give supports to students and subgroups during small group instruction and making a plan for ensuring it happens.

- Additionally, there will be a focus on instruction, progress monitoring, and decisions on adjustment for all students, including subgroups, during intervention time. Not only will struggling students receive instruction during this time in Tier 2 or 3, but all students will receive instruction addressing their academic needs based on data.
- Tutoring will also be leveraged in grades K-5 for identified students to assist in their progress towards meeting grade-level proficiency.

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

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (K-5)

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

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (K-5)

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum 10-15 minutes per day of phonemic/phonological awareness activities (sounds-first instructional approach)

### **Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5**

DIBELS, 8th Edition Grades K-2, 4-5

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) Grade 3

### **Supplemental Screener**

iReady for 3rd Grade

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

In the fall, winter, and spring, students are given a universal screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are “at-risk”. Our grade-level teachers and principals review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-40th percentile and common standards-based assessments within the curriculum are analyzed, as well. 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 in order 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 support available to our students who are “at-risk” and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our adopted ELA curriculum, CKLA, contains an assessment and remediation guide in which teachers can find activities that directly address targeted 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 (intensity, duration, or material) 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 do 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 (Wilson Code) as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that the Wilson curriculum is used to support those students, as it is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of 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, all related to the knowledge-building unit that they are studying in Tier I instruction, in order to maintain instructional coherence. For students who need fluency support, they may receive intervention using the Wilson Code and Read 180 programs.

Additional Information about the CKLA Assessment & Remediation Guide: The Assessment and Remediation Guide provides multiple additional resources for teachers to use as they support students on their path to mastery of grade-level foundational skills:

- Sample Lessons
- Word/Chaining Lists
- Activities for Reteaching
- Games for Reinforcement

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

Immediately following the fall K-5 benchmark assessments (DIBELS, Aimsweb, and iReady), families are notified if their child falls below the 40th% and are considered "at-risk". Families receive a letter that provides a clear explanation of their child's skill gaps and how the school plans to support the student in closing those gaps. They will be given information about the specific intervention and the amount of time that will be spent each day using that intervention. They will also be given information about the importance of being a proficient reader by the end of 3rd grade and information on the pathway to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. No cost activities for families to do at home to support literacy are also shared. These home literacy reports go home three times each year for K-3 students and at least one time each year for students in grades 4-5.

Parents are also notified of their child's progress in intervention after each 4<sup>1/2</sup>-week data team meeting. Students are progress monitored throughout intervention services to determine if skills gaps are being closed and adequate progress is being made. If not, a change in intervention may be

necessary. Any changes made in programming and/or services are communicated to the parents, as well as no-cost activities they can do at home to support their child's progress.

Assessment results go out to parents with students in grades K-5 multiple times per year, including following each universal screener (BOY, MOY, EOY), and are included in each progress report/report card. Additionally, the CKLA curriculum contains Home Letters in K-2 that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domain topics for the coming week and inform parents about ways to support and enhance their child's learning experience. They are given questions to ask their child about the text they are listening to and reading and are given ways to support the foundational skills their child is learning that week.

### **Professional Development Plan**

K-5 Teachers in our district will complete, as required for licensure renewal, Week 1 of the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Teachers may also participate in the optional Week 2 In-Person Reading 360 training. As additional training, the district will offer the LETRS training for our K-2 teachers, interventionists, and ELL teachers. Our plan for providing PD for all K-5 teachers is as follows:

June: All teachers in grades PreK-5th grade will engage in Week 1 of the Early Reading Trainings series asynchronously. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. We will ensure 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 synchronously and in-person.

August, September, October: K-2 teachers, interventionists and ELL teachers will engage in Units 1-3 of the LETRS Training. This training will be facilitated by the instructional supervisor and instructional specialists who are certified LETRS Local Facilitators and emphasize practical application of the training in the classroom.

January: K-2 teachers, interventionists and ELL teachers will engage in Unit 4 of the LETRS Training, thereby completing the LETRS training. This training will be facilitated by the instructional supervisor and instructional specialists who are certified LETRS Local Facilitators and emphasize practical application of the training in the classroom.