

## Scott 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

Scott County Schools selected Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts, a foundational skills curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to the Tennessee ELA Standards and on State Board/State Textbook Commission approved list. This curriculum uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time (60 minutes daily) for foundational skills instruction known as the "skills block." This curriculum has a systematic scope and sequence, and teacher instruction is explicit for each grade level. Use of the CKLA teacher guide ensures that a clear objective is communicated to students, teachers model with clear examples, the thinking process is verbalized, students practice opportunities are provided, and feedback is prioritized.

Within the 60 minutes, students will experience foundational skills instruction that contains activities and practice that teach the following foundational skills:

- Phonological Awareness: The ability to recognize and manipulate the spoken parts of sentences and words. Examples: being able to identify words that rhyme, recognize alliteration, being able to count the number of syllables in a word.
- Phonemic Awareness: Being able to hear and manipulate individual phonemes in spoken words; recognizing which sets of words begin with the same sound, isolating and saying the first or last sound in a word, combining/blending the separate sounds in a word to say the word, or breaking a word into separate sounds.
- Phonics: The relationship between letters and sounds in language. Examples: Being able to identify individual letter sounds, decode regular words, decode one-syllable words with letter combinations, read single-syllable words with short vowel spellings, or read words with prefixes and suffixes.
- Fluency: The ability to read text accurately, with speed, and proper expression.
- Comprehension: The ability to understand and make meaning from what has been read, using background knowledge, decoding skills, vocabulary, and critical thinking strategies to construct meaning from text.

- **Vocabulary:** Words that students must know to communicate effectively through reading and writing. It includes understanding the meaning of words as well as how words are used in different contexts—reading, listening, writing, or speaking.

During instruction, our teachers explicitly teach a sound, and the students practice the sound aloud, so they can learn how to produce its pure sound. Teachers also model writing the sound and students also write the sound.

The CKLA teacher's guide provides many suggestions to improve fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Reading fluency is improved by read alouds, paired readings, choral reading, and encouraging students to do independent reading in challenging books which improves comprehension and vocabulary. The scope and sequence of the curriculum is based on research of effective instruction for struggling readers. Skills are taught from simple to complex; pre-skills taught before a new skill; easy skills before more difficult ones and new skills with enough review and practice.

Bruce Billings, East Core ELA Consultant, has helped us develop an ELA Improvement Plan for the next school year to begin implementation this summer.

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

Scott County Schools has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials, Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), were selected from those approved by the State Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. During the integrated ELA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a total of 90 minutes of ELA instruction each day. Although the daily schedule 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 that knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak) for a minimum of 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 group. 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. So 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.

Bruce Billings, East Core ELA consultant, has helped us develop an ELA Improvement Plan Implementation will begin with ELA professional development this summer and fall in preparation for implementing Instructional Preparation which will include Lesson and Unit Prep, regular teacher communication and collaboration, and IPG walkthroughs at each elementary school. He will continue to support and will assist us during the 2024-2025 school year. We have also hired a Reading coach to support principals and teachers in ensuring our students succeed in ELA.

### **Additional Supports**

Scott County is dedicated to supporting our identified schools and subgroups to ensure literacy growth and improvement. Our planned supports include:

- Bruce Billings, ELA East Core representative, will continue to work with our principals and instructional coaches to help us establish an ELA Improvement Plan for Scott County. Our goal with his help and support is to help school leaders establish routines and processes for monitoring implementation at the school level and use that data to adjust implementation supports to drive toward the Scott County ELA vision for high-quality instruction.
- We have also hired a K-5 reading coach to conduct PD, hold monthly grade level meetings along with each school's instructional coach to work with teachers in identified schools (each school one day per week) to use CKLA curriculum, and engage in unit and lesson preparation (IPG) to support all students but with an emphasis on specific subgroups.

We feel our TCAP achievement and TVAAS scores will improve from all our hard work planned for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **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**

Wonders by McGraw-Hill

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

Pre-K: STAR Literacy Suite

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Suite (K-5)

Our district administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to students in third grade for the Spring Benchmark.

## **Intervention Structure and Supports**

In order to meet the unique needs of our students, intervention schedules vary from school to school in our district. Scott County Schools follows the recommendation outlined in the TN RTI<sup>2</sup> Manual. Three times a year our students take a universal reading screener. Based on the results from the screener, along with other student data, students may be placed in a tiered intervention group based on need. Students in Tier 2 will receive 30 minutes of intervention daily while students in Tier 3 will receive 45 minutes daily. Student interventions will address their specific skill gaps. Students will be progress monitored regularly on their specific gaps. Our data teams will use the progress monitoring data and other student data to inform decisions about the duration, material, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress with the intervention.

The Scott County School District uses several programs to provide intensive intervention for students who have significant reading deficiencies. For students who are struggling with fluency or basic reading skills, along with those who have demonstrated characteristics of dyslexia according to the universal screener and crosswalk-suggested drill down testing, we use the Sonday program. Sonday is designed to provide systematic, structured, and multisensory reading intervention for struggling students. Each lesson within the Sonday program uses the proven Orton-Gillingham method to provide effective intervention in small-group settings.

For students who are struggling with comprehension skills, we use the Voyager Passport program for grades K-4, and the Voyager Rewards program for grades 5-12. Both Voyager programs use a blended, teacher-led format to provide students with explicit and systematic instruction to accelerate student literacy achievement. We also have the Voyager Rewards Plus program which provides an extra boost of intervention for our older students. This program uses science and social studies text to teach comprehension skills for students who have completed regular intervention but might need extra help before returning solely to Tier 1 instruction.

For many students, we use the intensive intervention programs that are part of our reading series (Amplify/CKLA). We evaluate each student based on the individual needs demonstrated in universal screening, survey level assessments, and other available data to determine the right intervention program to address specific skill gaps for each child. We also use these assessments to determine the intervention program that best serves the student's need in either Tier 2 or the more intensive intervention provided in Tier 3.

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

The Scott County School District notifies parents of students in grades K-5 if their child is "at-risk" for a significant reading deficiency based on the results of the NWEA MAPS universal screening tool. A parent notification letter is sent home directly following the first data team meeting in which students who score below the 15th percentile or are at-risk of a significant reading deficiency as evidenced by students scoring between the 16th and 40th percentile after the district completes the fall screener. (It is also a good idea to use additional evidence). The students are placed into a Tier II or Tier III intervention program. The parent letter explains that the student is administered the universal screening tool three times per year and that the child is experiencing challenges- what the

skills gaps are and the depth and extent of student needs. The importance of being able to read on grade level by the end of third grade and the information on the promotion pathway to grade 4 is also explained.

The letter describes the skill area in which the student is struggling (phonological awareness, phonics, reading fluency, reading comprehension, or written expression). The letter also identifies the intervention used, the tier placement, the amount of time each day the student will spend receiving reading intervention, an explanation of how the intervention will be implemented, and some tips for the parent or guardian to help the student at home at no cost.

Our school district explains how students are assessed and what a “significant reading deficiency; means. Families are also notified of their child’s progress, or lack of progress after the 4½ data team meetings. We also send home the NWEA MAPS family report that includes an explanation of how to read the scores. In the family notification, data teams let parent know of any changes being made if the student is not showing sufficient progress as shown by progress monitoring (Easy CBM) and MAPS as well as recommended activities provided by the school that are tailored by skill deficit generally. (Parents do not have to purchase materials). Notifications are sent out to families with students in grades K-3 three times per year and grades 4 and 5 annually.

Both the initial parent letter and the NWEA MAPS family report also will be sent home when a student performs at the 25th percentile and below.

The classroom teacher will provide no-cost reading activities to families to support their child at home. The activities will be aligned to the students’ area of deficiency and/or grade level content. The letter reminds the parent/guardian to contact the teacher for additional activities to be completed at home.

### **Professional Development Plan**

In the years 2021 and 2022, our school district offered the in-person Early Reading Training in our district in June and July, and one training in fall 2022. At this time, practically all Pre-K-5 teachers have completed both the asynchronous and the in-person training. We also offered one secondary in-person training.

Our current PD plan is as follows:

June – All teachers in Pre-K – 5 who have not already completed Week 1 of the Early Reading Training series asynchronously will do so and will earn a completion certificate (30 PDP points in TNCompass). The training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach.

July – Our district has recommended Course 2 of the Early Reading Training for all teachers in grades Pre-K – 5 who have not already completed this course. The participating teachers include interventionists, special education teachers, and elementary instructional coaches. The training has strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

Bruce Billings, East Core ELA Consultant has been working with us this spring to help us develop an ELA Improvement Plan and will continue during 2024-25 school year. The plan and training will include an initial meeting with district staff, newly hired Reading Coach, Principals, and Instructional coaches to discuss the “why” for the ELA improvement through the following:

- Utilizing monthly IPG walk-throughs in each grade level classroom and providing feedback;
- Analyzing IPG data throughout the year and communicating trends to district and school leaders; and
- Updating unit prep structure.

Implementation will begin with ELA professional development this summer and monthly throughout the year.