

## **Tipton County Schools**

### Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: June 20, 2023

Approved: June 20, 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**

K-2 students spend at least 60 minutes in CKLA foundational skills instruction daily. The foundational skills instruction is the primary form of instruction and includes student practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The foundational skills program is based on science of reading research and is aligned with the TN state standards, which includes the ELA core instructional shifts. Skills are taught in a systematic, comprehensive, sounds-first approach and build over time. The explicit skills instruction is accompanied by 100% decodable readers. In addition, specific supports for students who have not mastered language code are available for real time remediation.

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

ELA instruction for grades 3-5 is aligned to the TN state standards. Third grade continues to finish out the language code that is considered foundational. For all of 3-5, students engage in HQIM which contain texts that provide students the opportunity to practice and refine code for a minimum of 30 minutes daily as well as build knowledge. This strand also includes building more around language through grammar, morphology, spelling, writing, fluency, et cetera. Teachers have sidebar supports as well as fluency, decoding, and encoding remediation guides to assist students who struggle with foundational skills or need additional help.

### **Additional Supports**

In order to address 4th grade ELA growth with specific subgroups, we have put several interventions in place - high dosage, low ratio tutoring for non-proficient students twice each week for 30 minutes; we have used the 95 Percent group as the intervention curriculum; we have had specialized training for teachers and administrators regarding best practices in addressing skill gaps for those students. This subgroup of students has participated in summer programming. In addition to these interventions, we partnered with Leverage Education for instructional coaching support. For Summer 2024, we are providing additional training through Kids First and have trained all administrators on instructional coaching through the Bureau of Education and Research.

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

Amplify CKLA

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

Amplify CKLA

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

- 95 Percent Group
- Heggerty
- SPIRE Foundations: Sounds Sensible
- Sondag System

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

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) K-5

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

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

At-risk students or those identified with a significant reading deficiency receive instruction and support through a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). These supports include grade appropriate, differentiated Tier I instruction to avoid widening of learning gaps. Additionally, students receive targeted, basic skill level support at the Tier II/III levels to close instructional gaps that interfere with meeting grade-level standards-based benchmarks. Specifically, the interventions at the Tier II/III levels target reading skills that allow students to become successful with accuracy and rate of reading, as these skills that help to define reading fluency are foundational to being successful in comprehension. Students who present with comprehension deficiencies receive support through targeted instruction that meets the language acquisition domain of comprehension with continued efforts remaining steadfast on accuracy and rate while incorporating the final piece to fluency and prosody. The district supports students and the MTSS with School-wide Instructional Facilitators (SWIFs) who work closely with teachers and interventionists to determine gaps, diagnose reading deficiencies, prepare individual instructional plans, and monitor progress. The chosen research-based intervention programs and strategies for instruction are matched to student deficits based on survey-level assessments used to diagnose individual needs. The SWIFs meet with building teams to discuss student progress at scheduled recurring 4-5-week intervals. These teams use progress monitoring data to inform decisions about duration, material, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress. Additionally, the district supports these students by employing a District-wide Instructional Facilitator who provides training, direction, and support to building-level facilitators. Moreover, district supports (committees, personnel, and funding) aid in meeting the needs of at-risk or students with reading deficiencies. Committees meet to determine timelines for screening, to perform and discuss instructional observations at all tiers, and to make decisions regarding personal training to close gaps. Funding to operate a MTSS spans from securing personnel

to providing materials. In addition to securing personnel, district funding allows all reading teachers and other personnel to attend LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) Training. Program materials, training for utilizing programs, and embedded support from district facilitators and supervisors to implement interventions with fidelity are provided as well. Additional funding allows building-level facilitators to participate in conferences and professional reading opportunities. This knowledge ensures that current best practices are utilized. Aligning student performance with diagnostic assessments while providing targeted instruction in the progression of reading from phonology to written language is the goal of each school. The procedure to identify students and provide instruction is aligned to Tennessee's RTI<sup>2</sup> framework and dictates the skills-based intervention groups that are needed. K-2 groups target phonology and basic phonics instruction at both Tier II and III, while grades 3-5 target advanced phonology and advanced phonics. Materials aligned to the science of reading research include but are not limited to AimsWeb Benchmark and Progress Monitoring System and S.P.I.R.E. Reading Intervention for Tier III instruction. Language-based, multi-sensory, direct, and explicit programs of reading intervention are secured to provide the best practices needed to close student reading deficiencies.

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

Reading deficiencies are determined through universal screenings to identify students who could be at-risk. Screening dates are communicated on websites, newsletters, social media, and our automated call-out system. Additionally, the district website includes the purpose, sitting time, and timeline for communicating results to parents. Reporting progress to parents happens systematically and frequently. The process follows a cyclical timeline: universal screening results; intervention placement; student intervention plan; progress monitoring data; revision to student intervention plan; progress monitoring data, et cetera.

Parents receive notification of significant reading deficiencies with a letter that outlines characteristics of dyslexia as they apply to individual students. In this letter, the parents are told what research-based intervention their student will receive and the amount of time each day the student will receive services that target their skill gaps. These letters are written in parent-friendly language and provide no-cost family activities to do at home to support literacy. We also share information about the importance of reading on grade level by third grade as well as promotion pathways to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. These letters go home with K-3 students three times each year and at least annually for students in grades 4-5.

In addition, we explain the characteristic of dyslexia that is being targeted. An addendum to the letter is also given to parents communicating the definition of the characteristic of dyslexia, relaying its importance in learning to read, and sharing with parents the subtest that assesses the characteristic of dyslexia.

Following the recurring data meetings (every 4-5 weeks), parents receive updates as measured through our progress monitoring instrument. The progress reports contain current data and updated intervention plans, as appropriate. As students change levels of support, parents are

notified using tier-specific letters communicating their new placement, an explanation for the decision, and supporting data. Instructional facilitators, working closely with teachers, manage the data and work as a liaison between home and school. They also plan, organize, and deliver parent training to support reading interventions at home.

Schools host a literacy night which showcases home activities and shares the importance of reading 20 minutes/day. Early intervention is paramount in closing gaps; therefore, communicating with parents during kindergarten orientation concerning the third grade reading benchmark is planned. Adjusting both the Title 1 Annual Meeting and the literacy night's agenda to include the third grade reading benchmark will serve as an additional way to communicate the third-grade reading expectation. Examples of no-cost reading activities (phoneme segmentation using household items like cereal, for example, other phonological awareness activities such as manipulating sounds and words, rhyming word tic-tac-toe, et cetera), strategies for helping your child at home, and parent literacy engagement opportunities will also be shared.

To ensure that this information is ready and available, the family involvement coordinator, district instructional facilitator, and building instructional facilitators will coordinate efforts to compile a comprehensive array of ways families and schools can partner to meet the expected third-grade benchmark. Schools will share the third-grade reading expectations and home-based strategies to help meet these expectations at other school events. Home literacy reports sharing third-grade reading expectations, at-home strategies and activities to support literacy, and interventions detailing the reading deficit targeted will be distributed to families via fliers and shared on webpages in addition to the in-person opportunities.

### **Professional Development Plan**

K-3 teachers, administrators, and School-wide Instructional Facilitators were trained on the science of reading through the LETRS course (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) during Spring 2020 and the 2020-2021 school year. We continue to offer additional LETRS training, including module 2 to interested teachers.

Our 4th-5th grade teachers, Special Education teachers, and interventionists, along with some K-3 teachers who previously attended the LETRS course (and wanted additional training) participated in the TDOE's Reading 360 Early Literacy Training. New teachers who are hired also continue to participate in the state's Early Literacy Training.

Our district was also part of the LIFT Network through SCORE, which partnered with TNTP to provide training and support in K-5 ELA classrooms during year 1 (2020-2021) of the adoption and continued through Spring 2023. While the vendor support ended with the expiration of the contract, we have continued to train internally on the science of reading, intellectual prep, unit/lesson planning protocol, and other best literacy practices.