

Van Buren County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: August 12, 2021

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

Our district uses Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts, a foundational skills curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. 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 in grades K-2. Spencer Elementary School has literacy blocks that are 120 minutes in duration in grades K-2 with the 60 minute daily designated block for foundational skills instruction.

The foundational skills instruction contains activities and practices that teach the following foundational skills: phonological awareness (recognize rhyming words, blend and segment compound words, blend, segment, and count syllables, blend and segment onset-rime, blend, segment, and count phonemes, segment compound words, and isolate individual phonemes) and phonics (identify individual letter sounds, decode regular words, decode words with common rime families, identify sounds for letter combinations, decode one-syllable words with letter combinations, identify common spellings for long and short vowel sounds, know and apply final -e conventions, read words with r-controlled vowels, read words with l-controlled vowels, read words with inflected endings, read words with prefixes and suffixes, read two syllable words with various syllable types, read multi-syllable words, and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis in text). The scope and sequence of the curriculum is based on research of effective instruction for struggling readers. The guidelines for the sequencing of skills are to teach pre-skills before the new skill or strategy is presented, introduce high-utility skills before less useful ones, introduce easy skills before more difficult ones, separate strategies and information likely to be confused, introduce new information at a realistic rate, and provide adequate practice and review. For example, students learn basic letter-sound correspondences for consonants and vowels and the VCe rule before they are required to decode words with the VCe pattern in them. Our improvements for next year are grounded in continuing our work with transitioning from lesson planning to lesson prepping. The adoption of high-quality instructional material has changed how teachers prepare for instruction. Teachers no longer have to gather resources, they are internalizing the quality material and preparing to implement it in their classroom. We will continue to use the IPG for our weekly

walkthroughs and will complete the unit prep guides for each CKLA unit during our grade level bi-weekly PLCs with the help of the school administration and literacy coach.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Our district has an integrated literacy block for grades three through five grounded in reading science aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. The district adopted Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts for grades three through five. The curriculum materials are 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 minimum of 90 minutes of ELA instruction daily. All daily instruction includes components of knowledge-building 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. The 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. For example, our 3rd graders completed the unit on the Human Body: Systems and Senses. The unit integrates the skills of spelling, dictionary skills, grammar, and morphology with the scientific knowledge of the Human Body. Students will review and learn spelling regular and irregular plural nouns, will become proficient in the application of guide words, will learn conjunctions as a part of speech, and learn new suffixes and morphology units on prefixes such as dis- and mis-. The integration of the above skills will be learned while increasing the students' knowledge of the human body. The curriculum builds a great deal of knowledge with its vertical alignment with grade K having a unit on "The Senses", and grades 1-3 having units on the Human Body. Our improvements for next year are grounded in continuing our work with transitioning from lesson planning to lesson prepping. The adoption of high-quality instructional material has changed how teachers prepare for instruction. Teachers no longer have to gather resources. They are internalizing the quality material and preparing to implement it in their classroom. We will continue to use the IPG for our weekly walkthroughs and will complete the unit prep guides for each CKLA unit during our grade level bi-weekly PLCs with the help of the school administration and literacy coach.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) K-5

Intervention Structure and Supports

Spencer Elementary School utilizes Amplify, 95% Group, SPIRE, SRA, Heggerty's, TouchPhonics, and Saxon Phonics for reading intervention in grades K-5 for students either identified at-risk for a significant reading deficiency or identified with a significant reading deficiency. Universal screening

data as well as student classroom performance, TCAP results, prior intervention outcomes (if applicable), and teacher observation data is used during RTI Data Team Meetings to determine placement, intensity, and scheduling of students into Tier III, Tier II, Remediation, or Enrichment. Students who are placed in Tier III receive the most intense intervention daily for at least 40 minutes and are progress monitored bi-weekly. Students who are placed in Tier II receive intervention daily for at least 30 minutes and are progress monitored bi-weekly. The universal screener and diagnostic assessment will determine the specific deficit the student will be provided support and progress monitored on. Students receiving Tier II or Tier III intervention will be provided a focused intervention on Basic Reading Skills, Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, and Written Expression. RTI Data Team Meetings will be conducted quarterly to evaluate student progress and either continue the intervention, change the intervention, or change Tier placement.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Our district notifies parents in grades K-5 if their child is “at-risk” for or has a significant reading deficiency immediately after district schools complete the fall universal screening. 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. The parents 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 by the end of 3rd grade and information on the pathway to 4th grade. The district defines for families how students are assessed and what a “significant reading deficiency” means. Parents are subsequently notified of their child’s progress, or lack of progress, after the first data team meetings.

In the parent notifications/communication, we explain the intervention(s) and any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screening data as well as recommended activities (that do not require purchased resources) that will support students in the area of deficit (activities are not tailored by child but tailored by skill deficit generally). These communications go out to parents with students in grades K-5 three times annually.

Additionally, the ELA curriculum contains parent letters that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip parents to work with their child(ren). Families can better understand how to support their student(s) through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their child(ren) are learning.

Professional Development Plan

Our Interventionists participate in Community of Practice webinars 1 to 2 times per month, participate in AimsWeb webinars, and attend the Dyslexia Conference at MTSU each year. Our ELA instructional coach works with Tonia Powell and the Core office as well as our contracted partner TNTP to work on topics for bi-weekly PLCs for all ELA teachers. We have added K-2 and 3-5 Lead teachers for ELA that will work alongside school admin and instructional coaches to provide coaching conversations and monthly PD during our Eagle Encounter Days. In addition, teachers are requested/permitted to observe lessons in other classrooms/schools. Our K-5 teachers have



completed the TDOE Early Reading Training, and we ensure any new teacher to our district completes this course.