

Sequatchie County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: September 15, 2023

Approved: July 1, 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 Expeditionary Learning/Imagine Learning, 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. This curriculum incorporates a structured systematic literacy approach that strengthens and addresses students' needs. The K-2 foundational skills curriculum is a daily, one-hour block that uses a structured phonics approach. Students make letter-sound connections that provide further support in reading and writing. At the end of second grade, students can independently read grade-level texts.

Griffith Elementary School has a total of 150 minutes dedicated to the ELA block in K-2. This 150-minute block is divided into skills and module. The foundational skills instruction is broken down into two parts: whole group instruction and small group differentiated instruction. During whole group instruction, the teacher provides explicit instruction where students are engaged in an instructional practice of a newly introduced phoneme, grapheme, spelling pattern or skill. The teacher introduces students to the new skill, models examples, and provides a "work time" opportunity for students to apply their new learning. After whole group instruction, students will apply and practice these instructional practices through purposeful independent activities or small teacher-led groups aligned to the lesson, student's needs, and Tennessee standards. The independent student practices include activities focused on fluency, "word work," writing, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary and comprehension. The scope and sequence of the curriculum is based on research of effective instruction. Each lesson has an intentional sequence of Instructional practices (simple routines such as Chaining or Spelling to Complement Reading), each of which builds on the learning from the previous lesson and connects to the next lesson's learning. For example, at the beginning of the second semester, students will be introduced to the concept that every syllable has a vowel and identify two, three, and four phoneme words they have been working on as closed syllables. They will learn how to break a word into two syllables (CV, VC) to decode efficiently. After several weeks of practice, students will be introduced to long vowel sounds via the spelling pattern of an open syllable. The cycle will begin with single-syllable words and then moves to two-syllable words. Following these lessons, students will be introduced to another

spelling pattern for long vowel sounds: “silent e” (CVCe). Because this is the first of four cycles that work with this pattern, the focus in this cycle is on one-syllable words. These lessons provide students with multiple opportunities to apply a number of words through reading and writing (Cycles 12 & 13 bas-ket, dis-cuss, mag-net Cycle 14 me, mo-ment, ze-ro, si-lent Cycle 15 flame, plane, make Cycle 16 bike, slike, hole, nose Cycle 17 flute, huge, Pete, eve). Our improvements for next year are to provide time and support for teachers to engage in structured intellectual lesson preparation for upcoming units and lessons. Teachers will analyze the Tennessee State foundational standards, prepare for instruction, observe trends, and respond to data to support student learning. Our master schedule will reflect changes to include "Tribe Time" in addition to the designated RTI time. "Tribe Time" is an additional school-wide time to target specific skills for improvement. These intentional time periods will focus on daily foundational literacy skills instruction.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Our district uses an integrated literacy block for grades three through five grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Our district adopted Expeditionary Learning/Imagine Learning for Grades 3-5 ELA curriculum. The 3-4 curriculum consists of 120 minutes and 5th grade 70 minutes of comprehensive, explicit instruction focusing on ELA standards for each grade level. Within the first hour of instruction, students are within a literacy module that explicitly teaches reading comprehension, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills. While building knowledge around complex text, foundational skills are embedded within the instruction (minimum of 30 minutes daily). All foundational skills instruction includes morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency. Through these foundational practices, students can apply their knowledge and skills to read, write, and build comprehension skills around a complex text. Within the ELA block time is dedicated for students to have the opportunity to practice foundational skills within a complex text. Daily instruction includes independently, in small groups, or with the teacher. Some of the areas of focus are independent reading, rereading complex texts from the module with a specific focus, such as; inferencing, fluency, speaking and listening, writing, and grammar usage and mechanics, word study and vocabulary. For example, students in 4th grade are now beginning their module study on Animal Defense Mechanisms. Throughout the module, students will build knowledge around animal defense mechanisms to write an informative piece on one specific animal of their choice. Within the module, students will participate in close reads, read alouds, and independent reading of a complex text. They will draw inferences as they research, make observations, and synthesize new information. For example, in the first hour of the ELA block, lesson 8 has students participate in a read-aloud to determine the supporting details to understand the text's main idea. In this lesson, students will also use a diagram in a text to provide additional information in understanding of the text. Embedded within the lesson is an opportunity for students to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words by using affixes and roots. Through explicit instruction, the teacher will guide students in breaking a word apart to find the base or root word along with the prefix or suffix and determine the meaning of the word. Students will also practice these same standards/skills within the 30-minute foundational block. With guidance from the teacher in small groups, students will practice with a Fryar Model to determine the meaning of suffix al, ed, and ial. Students will also practice another complex text on animal defense mechanisms to

determine main idea, vocabulary, fluency, writing, speaking and listening. Our improvements for next year are to provide time and support for teachers to engage in structured intellectual lesson preparation for upcoming units and lessons. Teachers will analyze the Tennessee State foundational standards, prepare for instruction, observe trends, and respond to data to support student learning. Our master schedule will reflect changes to include "Tribe Time" in addition to the designated RTI time. "Tribe Time" is an additional school-wide time to target specific skills for improvement. These intentional time periods will focus on daily foundational literacy skills instruction.

Additional Information

In 2022, we were identified for Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) with SWD. To support areas of growth, we have an ongoing partnership with NIET. Our goals include the following:

- 1) our leadership team will develop shared practices of best instructional practices to improve outcomes for SWD,
- 2) our students' IEPs are customized for what each SWD needs,
- 3) our general and SPED teachers develop proficiency in practices that the ILT has identified as critical to SWD success.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Imagine Learning EL Education (formerly LearnZillion Expeditionary Learning)

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Imagine Learning EL Education (formerly LearnZillion Expeditionary Learning)

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) K-5

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the Fall, K-5 students are given a universal screener (Aimsweb Plus) to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk". The RTI team (made up of an administrator, grade level teachers, and the interventionists) reviews the data to determine which students score below the 40th percentile. Those students showing need are classified as needing Tier 2 or 3 instruction. Students identified as needing intervention are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits. The results from this assessment are used to place them in a small group for intervention to narrow the skills gap. Students receive daily, small-group intervention for up to 60 minutes in their area of greatest deficit. The interventionists tailor the small-group systematic reading interventions to the needs of their RTI group of students. If that intervention is not proving to be effective, the more comprehensive, strategic interventions (SPIRE, Foundations, Wilson, UFLI, etc.) become an option. 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 curriculum contains numerous assessments and remediation strategies the classroom teacher can use in addition to the intervention provided for any student.

Data teams meet every 4.5 weeks to determine if a change in intervention or the person providing the intervention is warranted. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance and

engagement) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider. The RTI groups are constantly changing based on data-driven decisions by our data teams. 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 that meet the law's requirements. Our district uses a research-based supplemental program as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified of the explicit, systematic, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for 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 and fill in the skills gap. Classroom teachers work closely with students and provide intentional interventions on a Tier 2 level with the identified students.

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 the district's school completes the fall universal screening. Students' scores are communicated in a parent friendly (native language, if necessary) 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 4.5-week data team meetings. In the parent notification/communication, data teams note any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress 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). These communications go out to parents with students in grades K-5 three times annually.

Professional Development Plan

All K-5 teachers have received the Foundational Literacy Skills training from TDOE. We have offered Course 2 on-site at Sequatchie County. We have also sent teachers to other nearby cohorts to accommodate the Course 2 training. We have a plan in place for any new teachers to our district to complete course 1 of the early reading training.

PreK-5th grade teachers will receive the following literacy professional development: PLCs, coaching cycles, focused professional development from district, vendor, and academic walks using IPGs for both knowledge and foundational skills. Professional development is also included on administrative days as well as the in-service days included on the Sequatchie County calendar.