

Marshall County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: August 30, 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 a foundational skills curriculum focused on a sounds-first approach grounded in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. K-2 students spend 60 minutes each day engaged in direct systematic foundational skills instruction. Students participate in activities that build phonological awareness, phonics practice, and fluency practice in addition to comprehension and vocabulary work. During this time, teachers explicitly teach a sound, the students practice the sound aloud, the teacher models writing the sound, the students refer to their individual code chart on which they write the sound, and then students apply the skills in independent practice. 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.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Marshall County Schools has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 anchored in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Beginning in the 24-25 school year, our curriculum in grades 3-5 will be Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). We had previously used CKLA in grades K-3 only. This curriculum is approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. During an 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 routine is not the same each day, all daily instruction includes components for knowledge-building for 60 minutes per day and foundational skills instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, spelling, and writing for at least 30 minutes per day. 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 in CKLA may include briefly activating prior knowledge and reading independently and /or aloud in partners or whole groups. After the read-aloud, the students may summarize the content through a think-pair-share model,

unpack the most essential vocabulary, 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

To provide additional support for our schools and teachers as they address the identified student subgroups, we will conduct learning walks using the IPG and give specific feedback for improvement. The learning walks will be conducted by school and district administrators. In addition, teachers will use unit and lesson prep protocols to ensure they are planning opportunities for additional support for the identified students who need it. We are part of the Literacy Implementation Network. We receive literacy support from NIET in grades 3-6 as part of this network. In addition, we have contracted with NIET to provide an additional ten support days for teachers at Marshall Elementary School to improve literacy instruction and will have a focus on specific subgroup support. We have added tutors to each elementary school and hired additional K-3 teachers to lower the pupil-teacher ratio.

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

In the fall, students are given a universal screener, aimswebPlus, to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency, scoring below the 15th percentile, or "at-risk", scoring between the 16th and 40th percentile. Our teachers, administrators, and interventionists review the data to determine which students fall into these categories and need additional support. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction. The students are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits to best assign students to a small group with an interventionist that will narrow skill gaps.

Students receive daily, small group intervention for at least 45 minutes in their area of greatest deficit. We have researched options for reading intervention support available to our students who are at risk and/or have a significant reading deficiency. CKLA has an assessment and remediation guide we use in addition to our other intervention programs. 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 as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Our district notifies the families of these students. Families are notified that The Sonday System curriculum is used to support those students, as it is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction. The intervention takes place daily during a grade-level time in the master schedule. When students are in their RTI groups, they work on activities and assignments that make them stronger in that skill. Interventions address the specific skill gaps and progress monitor specific gaps. Data teams use progress monitoring data to inform decisions about duration, material, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Our district notifies families in grades K-5 if their child has a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring below the 15th percentile) or is at -risk of a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring between the 16th and 40th percentile) immediately after the district's fall universal screening. Students' scores are communicated in family-friendly language that provides a clear explanation of student skill gaps and the depth and extent of student needs. The families 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 on grade level by the end of grade 3 and includes information on the promotion pathway to grade 4. Our district explains how students are assessed and what a "significant reading deficiency" means. In family communication, data teams note any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by program monitoring and universal screening data as well as recommended activities that will support students around the deficit area (at no cost to families). These communications go out to families with students in grades K-3 three times annually and are shared in grades 4 and 5 annually. Families are subsequently notified of their child's progress, or lack of progress, after the 4 ½ week data team meetings. Additionally, the ELA curriculum contains family letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip families to work with the child. Families can better understand how to support their students through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their children are learning.

Professional Development Plan

All teachers holding an elementary endorsement in our district have completed the Early Literacy Training. Teachers are encouraged to complete course two and /or take a refresher of course one. As new teachers are hired, the information about course one is shared with them, and in-service credit is awarded once it is complete. We have found that most teachers had the course while in college. As part of our involvement in the HQIM Literacy Implementation Network, our teachers receive embedded professional development on lesson and unit prep, the IPG, and ELA standards guides.