

**Decatur County Schools**  
**Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 27, 2021**

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**

\*The Decatur County Schools District uses HMH Into Reading with a foundational skills curriculum grounded in the Science of Reading and is aligned to the Tennessee ELA Standards as approved by the State Textbook and Instructional Materials. Kindergarten through 2nd grade students are taught in a self-contained classroom in Decatur County. Each teacher has a two-hour, uninterrupted ELA Block. The ELA Block includes a thirty minute foundational lesson for whole group. It also includes thirty minute rotations of small groups where Foundational skills are explicitly taught. So K-2 receives 45 minutes or more of Foundational skills instruction and practice daily with: phonological awareness and phonics skills appropriate for each grade level. Explicit and systematic instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency and spelling provides students with the critical building blocks to become confident, independent readers and writers. Using the Start Right Readers, students apply what they have learned about phonics and fluency to reading decodable texts. These texts contain only previously taught phonic elements and high-frequency words, and they feature a connected storyline or topic across the week's texts to build students' interest and anticipation. Students develop and deepen their comprehension of increasingly complex texts with interactive read-alouds. Teachers explicitly teach academic words from the texts and reinforce word-learning strategies in the context of reading. Vocabulary is taught using Topic Words to build Knowledge . Key Academic Vocabulary is taught in the modules along with the word meaning clues. Students are taught and develop text comprehension and it is monitored or assessed as students retell a story, match pictures to text or use picture clues, etc.

\*Our improvements for the upcoming year are centered around the designated times for the teachers to collaborate and work in PLCs as teachers continue to internalize the instructional planning through unit-level and individual lesson plans and continue to implement the high quality instructional materials within their classrooms.

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

\*The Decatur County School District uses HMH Into Reading with a foundational skills curriculum grounded in the Science of Reading and is aligned to the Tennessee ELA Standards as approved by the State Textbook and Instructional Materials. Third through Fourth students are departmentalized and each ELA teacher has a one hour and forty five minute ELA Block and Fifth Grade students have

a one hour and twenty five minute ELA Block. The Block includes a thirty minute Foundational lesson for the whole group. Additional time for isolated teaching of Foundational Skills is also used throughout the ELA Block. So 3rd - 5th receives 45 minutes or more of Foundational Skills instruction and practice daily that is embedded with fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Listening Comprehension instruction with Teacher Read-Alouds are conducted. Students are involved with-in activities where they engage and respond as they compare selections. The morphology of this curriculum is paired with knowledge and skills. Grammar use of the conventions is taught, such as, parts of a sentence, kinds of sentences, quotations, etc. Foundational skills with decoding and spelling are a key component. The Writing Workshop is an essential piece where the teacher incorporates instruction with the writing process, such as a personal narrative. In the Narrative the student plans and generates ideas, organizes, drafts, revises and edits, then is ready to publish and present their finished product. Writing skills are taught through daily whole and small group instruction.

\*Our improvements for the upcoming year in 3rd - 5th are also centered around the designated times for the teachers to collaborate and work in PLCs as teachers continue to internalize the instructional planning through unit-level and individual lesson plans as they continue to implement the high quality instructional materials within their classrooms.

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

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - K-2, 4-5 Into Reading, Tennessee

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

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - K-2, 4-5 Into Reading, Tennessee (Grades 4 and 5)

#### **Additional Information about Instructional Materials**

We purchased Wit and Wisdom a few years ago, prior to the adoption of our HMH ELA curriculum. We are using it particularly in grade 3, since the HMH curriculum did not make the cut for 3rd grade for Foundational Skills.

#### **Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5. This screener complies with RTI<sup>2</sup> and Say Dyslexia requirements.**

Decatur County uses easy CBM for the Universal Screener, as well as, benchmarking and progress monitoring for all K-8 students which is on the state approved list. Easy CBM complies with RTI<sup>2</sup> and Say Dyslexia. Along with Easy CBM we use PASS (Phonemic Awareness Skills Screener) and PWRS (Phonics and Word Reading Survey). The screener is administered within the first twenty days of the new school year. It is also administered mid-year before we dismiss for Christmas break and at the end of the school year during the last three weeks of school. The screener is appropriate for Pre-K-5 students and is available to pre-Kindergarten students. Results from each universal reading screener administered to the students will be submitted to the department. We will not be using the state universal screening option for the upcoming school year.

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Students in Decatur County are screened using Easy CBM. Students who are identified as "at-risk" using the screener for a significant reading deficiency or math deficiency is served through RTI2 Tier II or Tier III. The students in Tier II and III are pulled during their RTI block and served by Interventionists for 45 minutes and progress monitored weekly for Tier III and every other week for Tier II. The SPIRE program and SRA materials are used at the two elementary schools. SPIRE is primarily used at the middle school. The Universal screening data, as well as, student's TCAP scores, prior intervention data, classroom performance and teacher observation data is used during the RTI Data Team Meetings to determine the students needs for placement. The Universal screener and diagnostic assessments will determine the specific deficits for the student and they will be provided supports and progress monitored on these areas. These Tier II and Tier II students will be provided a focused intervention on Letter Naming, Letter Sounds, Phoneme Segmenting, Word Reading Fluency, Passage Reading Fluency, and Reading Comprehension. RTI Data Team Meetings are conducted every 4 1/2 weeks to determine the student's progress and any needs for change of the intervention or Tier placement. The Tier I students use IXL and work at their own levels during this RTI Pull out time. We hope to incorporate more "hands on" enrichment activities during this RTI time for the upcoming school year.

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

Students in Decatur County who are identified as "at-risk" or Tier II and Tier III will have Home Literacy Reports sent home after each administration of the universal screener, easy CBM, which is given three times per year. Parents are notified immediately after the completion of the Fall Universal Initial Screener if their child is "at risk" for or has a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring in the 0-25th percentile). The communication Letter is in parent friendly language and clearly explains the student's skill gaps and needs. The notification explains what intervention the student will receive and the amount of time each day that the student will receive the RTI services. The letter describes the importance of being able to read proficiently by the end of the 3rd grade also. The district explains how students are assessed and what a "significant reading deficiency" means. Every 4 1/2 weeks data team meetings are conducted and parents receive notification of their child's progress or lack of after each meeting. The parent notification/communications include the data teams notes of intervention(s) and any changes that are being made if the child is not showing adequate progress from evidence by progress monitoring and the universal screening data as well as recommended activities that will support the students in their area of skill deficit. The parents receive these Progress Monitoring reports twice per quarter, as the student is served in RTI. The teacher also keeps up with a Student Checklist to monitor the supports provided during the school year for students to help form the strong educational base needed for future academic success. Parents are informed of no-cost activities that families can incorporate to support learning at home as well.

### **Professional Development Plan**

The State Department is conducting Foundational Literacy Skills training during the Summer of 2021. The State plans to open up the one week (virtual) training for anyone who wants to participate. The principals at our two elementary schools are requiring everyone in grade Pre-K

through 4th to participate in this week one training, since ALL K-5 teachers will be required to have at least one week of Foundational Skills Training completed by August 2023. We will monitor everyone to make sure they have completed the week one virtual training in grades Pre-K - 5 by July 30, 2021. We have fifteen participants signed up for week two training. It is our plan to utilize the Principals and participating lead teachers to conduct PLCs within each school on Foundational Literacy Skills for the upcoming school year. The Administrative Staff will monitor the use and effectiveness of

Foundational Skills taught in the classrooms during Literacy Walks, quarterly, using the Tennessee IPG for Literacy. Lesson and Unit plans will be monitored for inclusion of Foundational Skills and their impact as well.

### **Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

We will continue to use strategies from " The Writing Revolution " book study that we just completed last year and one of the elementary schools also did a book study on "The Fresh Look at Phonics". They are presently doing a book study of "Uncovering the Logic of English". All of which they hope to gain knowledge to help with foundational literacy skills. We are continuing a partnership with NIET and Ayers Institute to continue to receive Professional Development Training for the upcoming school year. We plan to continue support with Strengths Based Coaching, PLCs, Communicating and Recovering Unfinished Learning and Promoting Academic Equity, Student Engagement, and Inclusive Classrooms. Our Literacy Focus will be on the new knowledge that we receive during the one and two week training sessions on Foundational Literacy Skills to target student's skill deficits earlier and provide support and/or remediation to help students to master each grade level.