

Explore! Community School
Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: June 8, 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

Students in grades K-2 at Explore! Community School receive 90 minutes of foundational skills instruction daily, aligned to Tennessee state standards. At Explore!, we have adopted Units of Study for Teaching Reading (Lucy Calkins) in grades K-2.

This model incorporates direct, explicit instruction in fluency, decoding, phonics, grammar, comprehension, and vocabulary. We have daily, intentional teacher modeling of grade-level strategies through a whole class read aloud mini-lesson for 30 minutes. The teacher reads the texts and models the reading strategy and fluent reading for the students. All skills are Tennessee standards-aligned.

Following whole class instruction, students get 60 minutes of small group instruction. Students have comprehension conversations, through both oral and written formats, to integrate foundational speaking and learning skills. Embedded vocabulary of multiple tiers are taught through context. Students have time for independent application of target skills on self-selected texts to enhance application of fluency. We also emphasize shared reading, to allow for guided practice of modeled skills. Students work in guided reading groups at their instructional level on vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and writing in response to reading.

Additionally, the Foundations program (Wilson Language) provides additional opportunities for systematic, explicit phonics and phonemics, building on foundational literacy skills aligned with Tennessee ELA Standards that encompass concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, word/sentence composition, grammar, morphology, and reading fluency.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Students in grades 3-5 at Explore! Community School receive 90 minutes of foundational skills instruction daily, which includes 60 minutes of explicit instruction on grade level curriculum and 30 minutes of targeted reading support. Our school has adopted the Wit and Wisdom curriculum, a modification in the 2021-2022 academic year, in alignment with TN State Standards. Through this curriculum, students will receive enhanced targeted instruction with intentional teacher modeling of grade-level, TN State Standards-aligned skills, including morphology, grammar, and spelling. This curriculum provides access to authentic texts that students would experience in the real world, with

a balance of fiction and nonfiction in line with the recommended percentages from the ELA standards.

Wit and Wisdom uses a content integrated approach, which research says benefits students, providing daily opportunities in reading, writing, listening and speaking. The materials also incorporate topics and themes from social studies which provides additional practice reading complex texts. Our students will have the opportunity to apply their learning through authentic learning tasks. Students have the opportunity to participate in chalk talks, Socratic Seminars, extended writing tasks and performance tasks to demonstrate their understanding of the standards in a meaningful way, while also working on foundational skills such as comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. This also establishes a culture where student voice is valued and encouraged building 21st century learning skills such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Approved waiver for other materials

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Great Minds - 3-5 Wit and Wisdom

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5. This screener complies with RTI² and Say Dyslexia requirements.

Our school will use Aimsweb and NWEA Measures of Academic Progress as our universal screening process. We use Aimsweb as our universal reading screener to be given at the beginning of the year (BOY) as this provides key data for students and explicitly screens for dyslexia. In addition, we will use NWEA MAP as an additional (BOY) data point.

In classrooms, all students also take the Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) reading assessment to observe reading behaviors and listen to oral reading from the students which screens for a variety of reading difficulties. F&P reading assessments are given each quarter

Students who perform below the 25th percentile are then referred for screening for RTI. The team is composed of classroom teachers, interventionists, and leaders, and will use data from the assessment to determine the intervention(s) required for the student based on the screener and the additional data gathered from targeted assessments .

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, students are given a universal screener (NWEA MAP) to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk".

Our grade-level teachers, and instructional team review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. Those students are then grouped into Tier II and Tier II.

They receive either 30, or 45 minutes of daily small group, targeted instruction depending on the tier.

Once a student is classified as Tier II or Tier III, they take regular progress monitoring assessments on Aimsweb to measure progress toward learning goals. Once those are determined, the students are grouped according to their need.

We have additional research-based options (Leveled Literacy Instruction by Fountas and Pinnell, Wilson Foundations, and Orton Gillingham) for reading intervention support available to our students who are “at-risk” and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. We will also adopt READ180 for our 5th grade students as a targeted intervention for our older students who are currently “at-risk” readers.

Classroom teachers and our academic intervention teachers use the guides provided in all these options to adjust their instruction as needed. Our instructional team reviews data in whole team meetings to assess and adjust student placement in the RTI as informed by the data.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Our school notifies families in grades K-5 if their student is determined to be “at-risk” or has a “significant reading deficiency” as soon as the fall screening is completed and they have been assigned an RTI Tier. We use family-friendly language in our communications and also offer phone and/or in-person deeper meetings to discuss student results and action steps. We want to engage parents as partners in this process and informing them of what and how is key to enlisting their true support.

We have designed our home literacy report to guide collaborative goal setting for the student, family, and teacher creating a structure for transparency and shared accountability

- The home literacy report will outline:
 - Introduction and Importance of reading proficiency in 3rd grade
 - A clear explanation of the overall importance of reading as a life skill, and specifically the importance of reading proficiency by the third grade
 - Current data from sources that we use at school to measure literacy
 - The report will share scores for each student’s Aimsweb assessment and the MAP score. We will show the student’s current score, the grade level benchmark and the goal for that quarterly term. That way, the student, parent, and teacher have an at-a-glance chart that shows current performance and goals to reach proficiency
 - Key skills being targeted at school, goal, and timeline
 - Depending on the grade level and skills, the letter will outline which specific skills are being worked on to get to grade level proficiency. They are connected to the overall goal and what has been identified as growth areas based on the screeners and ongoing assessments
 - Criteria for Success

- The criteria for success lets them know what is considered meeting your goal for that quarter. Two outlined goals that will define success along the way until the the student reaches and sustains grade level proficiency
- How families can help at home
- This section will outline a variety of low to no cost strategies that families can use at home to promote reading. We discuss read alouds/shared reading, text previews and predictions using key text features.We outline a variety of activities that use environmental print to help build fluency and interest in reading

The families are notified of their student’s progress quarterly at report card dates, through conversations with classroom teachers and/or academic interventionists so that this can be a collaborative process throughout and we can get the student proficient on grade level goals.

Professional Development Plan

Every K-5 teacher will take the TN Early Reading Training prior to the start of the 21-22 school year and continue to apply those strategies in collaborative grade level teams. Also, each K-5 teacher at our school participates in ongoing Lucy Calkins or Wit & Wisdom professional development, in accordance with their grade level. The initial synchronous week-long training is offered free of cost with consultants through Teachers College at Columbia (for Lucy Calkins), Wilson Language (for Foundations), and/or training on Wit & Wisdom led by Great Minds, encompassing instruction in Tennessee standards-aligned phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary; professional development on foundational skills is independent of MSV or other cueing strategies. Teachers receive certification from the accompanying vendors prior to the beginning of the school year.

Our ongoing professional development focuses on incorporating both the Foundations curriculum, vocabulary development, as well as other foundational skills in upper grades such as grammar and writing. Specialists and interventionists receive targeted professional development throughout the year on Orton-Gillingham and/or LLI, provided by the Orton-Gillingham Academy or Fountas and Pinnell trainers.

Teachers also have weekly professional development sessions that are focused on lesson planning and delivery, where teachers receive support both from their teaching team and from administration, including instructional coaches. Weekly, practical classroom application of phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and morphology is revised and applied.