

Fayette County Schools
Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 25, 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

Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) uses Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), a foundational skills curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee English Language Arts (ELA) standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. The four elementary schools have literacy blocks that range from 90 -150 minutes. Certified teachers will engage K-2 students in direct systematic foundational skills instruction for at least 60 minutes each day that is aligned to CKLA's research-driven scope of system of foundational skills. For example, each day, students engage in 3-4 "mini lessons" aligned to the systematic scope and sequence of foundational skills in order to allow them adequate time to both learn and practice new skills that ultimately result in fluent reading, comprehension, and writing skills. The CKLA scope and sequence includes direct instruction and aligned student practice in phonics, grammar, spelling, and writing. The scope and sequence is also based on research of effective instruction for readers in the areas of phonemic awareness (i.e., recognizing rhyming words and counting syllables), phonics (i.e., identifying letter sounds and decoding words). There are four guiding principles for the CKLA skills strand:

- **Explicit Phonics:** Explicit, systematic phonics instruction is a more effective way to teach decoding than "whole language" or whole word methods
- **Synthetic Phonics:** Synthetic phonics (or linguistic phonics), in which instruction is oriented from sound to letter, is an especially powerful way to teach phonics.
- **Repeated Oral Practice:** Repeated oral practice and oral reading are proven methods of improving fluency.
- **Intensive Practice:** Intensive practice with skills-aligned texts is essential in order to build reliability and automaticity in reading

Additionally, CKLA engages students in ongoing reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension practice with decodable readers aligned to the skills students are learning to meaning from text and to produce the written word. These readers increase in length and complexity as students develop their reading and spelling skills.

The adoption of high quality instructional materials has empowered teachers as they plan for quality instruction, gather student work, and monitor student progress. FCPS continues to provide on-going professional learning opportunities for teachers to become stronger in delivering integrated literacy instruction. Improvements for next year are lesson planning and lesson internalization for both teachers and students.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) uses Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), 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. During the integrated ELA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a total of 90-150 minutes of ELA instruction each day. Daily instruction includes components for knowledge-building (to build and improve the ability to comprehend complex texts and apply that knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak) 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. Our 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 instance, a daily lesson in grades 3-5 CKLA may include briefly activating prior knowledge and read independently and/or aloud in partners or whole group. After the daily read-aloud (or independent reading using on-grade level, complex text), the students may summarize the content (through a think-pair-share model), unpack the most essential vocabulary ("word work"), respond to a series of scaffolded questions with both discussion and writing. An example of a writing activity in conjunction to the text is to 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.

The adoption of high quality instructional materials has empowered teachers as they plan for quality instruction, gather student work, and monitor student progress. FCPS continues to provide on-going professional learning opportunities for teachers to become stronger in delivering integrated literacy instruction. Improvements for next year are lesson planning and lesson internalization for both teachers and students.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

Additional Information about Instructional Materials

Supplemental Materials from Amplify- K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

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

In grades K-5, Fayette County Public Schools uses easyCBM (state approved) for the universal screener and progress monitoring. EasyCBM is in compliance with RTI2 and Say Dyslexia requirements. The screener is used to assess reading and math in the fall, winter, and spring for grades K-5.

Intervention Structure and Supports

FCPS administer Easy CBM as an universal screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are “at-risk”. Our grade-level teachers and principals review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. Those students demonstrating needs are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction. Students classified as Tier II or Tier III are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits in order to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. Students receive daily, small-group intervention for at least 45 minutes in their area of greatest deficit.

FCPS 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 recently adopted ELA curriculum, CKLA, contains an assessment and remediation guide in which teachers can find activities that directly address targeted skill gaps. Teachers and interventionists can tailor the resources to the needs of their RTI group of students. If that intervention is not proving to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions (such as SPIRE or Voyager Passport) become an option. Focused interventions will cover letter naming, letter sounds, phoneme segmenting, word and passage fluency, or comprehension.

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 specific skills gaps, characteristics of dyslexia, and other learning challenges. 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 in that skill. For example, students who need instruction in comprehension may read a new text and answer scaffolded questions, all related to the knowledge-building unit they are studying in Tier I instruction. For students who need fluency support, they may receive intervention using the district adopted intervention program.

Data teams meet every 4 ½ weeks to determine if a change in the intervention or the person providing the intervention is warranted. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance,

engagement) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

FCPS notifies parents in grades K-5 if their child is “at-risk” for or has a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring in the 0-25th percentile) 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. The letter will also include a description of the importance of being able to read by the end of 3rd grade.

FCPS establishes 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 4 ½ week data team meetings. In the parent communication letter, the intervention(s) and any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as proven by on-going progress monitoring and universal screening data. Other recommended activities at no cost to families that will support students in the area of deficit will be shared at the school level through the CKLA curriculum. Additional, CKLA contains parent letters (K-3) that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip parents with strategies to work with their child. These activities are not tailored by child, but tailored by skills. It is important to note that parents that have students in grades K-3 will receive updated communications concerning their child’s progress three times a school year. Parents that have students in grades 4 and 5 will be updated at a minimum of once per school year.

Professional Development Plan

Teachers in FCPS will participate in the free and optional Reading 360 Early Literacy Foundational Skills Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education through an approved vendor. The training will focus on foundational skills and require teachers to demonstrate knowledge and competency. Our plan for providing professional development for all K-5 teachers is as follows:

April 2021 – All K-5 teachers will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Foundational Skills Training series, asynchronously. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. We will ensure that participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to starting Week 2.

June 2021 – FCPS has registered for June 28, 2021 to offer the cohort-based in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all teachers in grades K-2. All 3-5 teachers will have the opportunity to engage in Week 2. The participating teachers will also include interventionists, special education teachers, ESL teachers, and elementary instructional leaders. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics fluency, and vocabulary.

FCPS plans to include the following grades PK-5 teachers in the Early Literacy Network, which will provide on-going literacy support from a state-approved vendor. Teachers are required to demonstrate knowledge and competency through quality engagement and feedback in PLCs, TEAM evaluations, during informal coaching sessions with instructional coaches, strategic and intentional professional development from the school/district, and academic classroom walks using the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG).

Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Fayette County Public Schools is committed to providing teachers and students with high quality materials that will enhance the learning experiences in the classroom.