

## **Hamblen County Schools**

### **Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 20, 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**

Our district uses HMH – Into Reading , 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. This curriculum uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction for a minimum of 45 minutes daily. The foundational literacy skills time includes high-frequency word (word work) practice, phonics, phonological awareness, spelling, fluency, and comprehension practice. During instruction, teachers introduce the sound or vowel pattern. Students and teachers work together to explore and apply the sound or pattern. Then teachers apply the skill in independent practice. In grades K-2, our district also supplements foundational literacy skills with Saxon Phonics. It is based on foundational research in science of reading and cognitive science. Students are given opportunities to practice letter recognition, sounds, coding, spelling with vowel patterns, independent practice, and fluency/comprehension practice with decodable readers. Each K-2 teacher spends a minimum of 30 minutes daily teaching foundational skills in Saxon Phonics. When you combine the foundational literacy time in HMH with the foundational literacy time provided by Saxon Phonics, our district instructional time includes 75 minutes of foundational literacy instruction. For example, in grade 2, students learn to read and spell diagraph oa. Students go through a fluency review with all taught letters, diagraphs, combinations. Students are then given new words that contain diagraph oa. Once students have been guided by their teacher to identify, code, and read the diagraph, they do guided and independent practice for the skill taught. The next portion of the lesson requires students to apply both old and new learning in a decodable reader. Next year, our district aims to make improvements in master scheduling to allow for more common planning and collaboration time for teachers. Increased collaborative time will allow for more data-driven decisions for instructional planning rooted in the needs of student deficits. Teachers can collaborate to structure units and lessons to meet students' needs.

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

Our district uses HMH – Into Reading , 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. The district acquired a waiver for grade 3. During the integrated ELA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational literacy skills, students

receive a minimum of 120 minutes of ELA instruction. Although the daily schedule can differ, students engage in instruction in academic vocabulary, reading skills for comprehension, foundational skills (decoding, morphology, spelling, fluency), and writing workshop that includes grammar. The reading instruction component which focuses on building comprehension to help build and apply knowledge accounts for 60 minutes of the daily ELA time. Foundational skills instruction accounts for at least 30 minutes of ELA instruction each day. Writing instruction, which includes grammar, is also 30 minutes each day. For example, in grade 4, students begin with a lesson on decoding with suffixes. Students are given examples of words with suffixes. As a group, they break the word into syllables and identify the base word and the suffix. Students then move to guided practice that allows them to read words with suffixes. Finally, students move to independent practice where they have to apply the lesson learned. The spelling words for the week are connected to the decoding strategy that is learned. Also included in the foundational skills portion of HMH is fluency practice. During the fluency lesson, students again apply the lessons learned about suffixes to decode, work on accuracy, and practice self-correction. Next year, our district aims to make improvements in master scheduling to allow for more common planning and collaboration time for teachers. Increased collaborative time will allow for more data-driven decisions for instructional planning rooted in the needs of student deficits. Teachers can collaborate to structure units and lessons to meet students' needs.

### **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**

Hamblen County has adopted a state approved curriculum for ELA instruction (HMH – Into Reading), with the exception of grade 3; however, our district submitted a waiver for grade 3 and it was granted by TDOE. When making curriculum decisions in Hamblen County, it is crucial that we ensure all of our students have access to high-quality literacy and vital that we select programs to make our students successful. We have improved our efforts in recent years to guarantee our teachers understand how students learn to read and what we can do help our students read better. One of our approaches is focusing on the speaking and listening sections of our adopted curriculum so that students are using these skills throughout the instructional day. Reading must begin with oral language and the speaking and listening sections of our curriculum support development of all literacy skills, such as comprehension and writing. Our district has also chosen to supplement with several research-based resources to ensure each of our K-5 students have a strong literacy foundation, are aligned to our TN Academic Standards, and fully support phonics, phonemic awareness, and phonological awareness. For example: In grades K-2, we have supplemented with Saxon Phonics for the past several years. All district teachers have been trained on how to implement this program effectively, it has been aligned to our current adopted curriculum, and it is used to reinforce coding and decoding strategies within text for our primary students each day. Our 3-5 colleagues use the foundational section of our curriculum for 30 minutes each day. These

foundational sections include vocabulary development, decoding, phonics, fluency, and self-correction instruction. They also use pieces of the TN Foundational Skills Curriculum to further address foundational skills within their daily instruction. Finally, all of our K-5 teachers use West Virginia Phonics, ReadWorks, and CommonLit as supplemental material to reinforce phonics and foundational skills and to confirm that all students have access to a variety of text and text complexity.

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

Hamblen County uses AimswebPlus by Pearson Assessments as the universal screener for reading in grades K-5. AimswebPlus includes Early Literacy measures for grades Pre-K through 1 and Reading measures for grades 2-5. It provides a benchmark assessment for fall, winter, and spring as well as progress monitoring and survey level assessments. Reports include an individual monitoring graph that can be sent home to parents every 4.5 weeks to show whether or not a student is projected to meet his/her goal by the target date based on the current rate of improvement. Because AimswebPlus has benchmarking measures for basic reading skills (letter/sound identification, phoneme segmentation, word reading/decoding), oral reading fluency, and written expression, it complies with the dyslexia screening requirements.

**Intervention Structure and Supports**

The reading skills of all students in grades K-5 are screened using AimswebPlus, a nationally normed, skills-based universal screener three times per school year for the purpose of intervention, instructional decision-making. The students who score between 0-25th percentile and/or are identified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction are administered diagnostic and survey level assessments to determine each student's specific reading intervention needs. Students who score below the 25th percentile are placed in Tier II intervention groups where they receive additional skills-based instruction designed to meet their needs. Students who have not made adequate progress with Tier II intervention or who score below the 10th percentile on the universal screening receive more intensive interventions in Tier III.

Students are assigned to small intervention groups designed to meet their needs that meet daily for at least 30 minutes if deemed in need of Tier II and at least 45 minutes if deemed in need of Tier III services. Schools use a walk-to-learn approach to response to instruction and intervention. Interventions take place daily during a grade-level time set in the master schedule specifically for RTI. Personnel are maximized for each grade during their RTI time. During their RTI time, students work on deficit foundational skills at their instructional levels identified through the universal screener and diagnostic assessments.

Our district provides multiple research-based options for reading intervention including S.P.I.R.E., Sounds Sensible, and Lexia to address the needs of students who are "at risk" and who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Based on data collected through the universal screener, diagnostic assessments, and survey level assessments, interventions are tailored to the needs of the students. RTI Data teams meet every 4 ½ weeks to review each student's progress monitoring data and the rate at which students are improving. The RTI team analyzes screening and

progress monitoring data to assist teachers in planning and implementing appropriate instruction and evidence-based interventions for all students. If students are not making progress at a typical or aggressive rate of improvement, recommendations for increasing student's intervention time or implementing a more comprehensive, strategic intervention are considered by the RTI team. Along with progress monitoring data from AimsWebPlus, students' attendance data and behavioral notes regarding student engagement are considered prior to any changes being made in intervention programs, providers, and/or length of intervention sessions.

Students in our district are also screened using additional diagnostic and survey level assessments to determine if they demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Students who exhibit characteristics of dyslexia receive intensive interventions as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law's requirements. Families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia are notified of the characteristics demonstrated on the universal screener and diagnostic assessments along with the program being used to support those students.

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

All students in grades K-5 are screened with AimswebPlus per the district universal screening schedule. The school-level RTI<sup>2</sup> team is responsible for considering the results of the universal screenings against all other available data to determine which students are at risk and need reading intervention.

Off grade level measures in Aimsweb in addition to PASS, PWRS, and Words Their Way Spelling Inventories are used as survey level assessments to identify characteristics of dyslexia when:

- A student scores below the 25th percentile in word reading fluency, oral reading fluency, and/or written expression
- A student scores above the 25th percentile, but experiences marked difficulties in the classroom with spelling, reading, and/or writing skills.

After the close of the universal screening window, the school team will provide notification, in parent friendly language, to the parent/guardian of any student who is determined to be at risk in reading and in need of intervention. The home literacy report will include each of the following:

- The areas of reading in which the child exhibits deficits
- Information about the characteristics of dyslexia
- Information about the importance of being able to read proficiently by the end of third grade
- Information about the specific reading interventions and supports the LEA recommends for the student (tier, amount of time per day, reading intervention program)
- Reading intervention activities parents can use at home with their child to improve reading proficiency
- Dyslexia Overview for Parents brochure from TDOE

- Individual Student Profile Report from AimswebPlus

Parents of students in grades K-3 will receive the home literacy report after each universal screening administration (fall, winter, spring). Parents of students in grades 4 and 5 will receive the report following the fall universal screening. In addition, parents of students in grades K-5 will receive an intervention progress report along with the Individual Monitoring graph from AimswebPlus following each of the school RTI<sup>2</sup> teams' 4.5-week meetings. Parents will also be notified any time there is a recommended change in their child's intervention plan.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Hamblen County will host two cohorts of the Reading360 training this summer July 26-30. This cohort consists of grades K-2 teachers from a variety of all our elementary schools. All other K-5 teachers are highly encouraged to participate in the Reading360 week 1 asynchronous modules once it becomes available.

Members from the district instructional team are also attending these training sessions. This will enable the district to redeliver the information from TDOE's training to all K-5 teachers. This redelivery will take place during the school year and summer of 2022 and 2023 to ensure all K-5 educators have completed the required training.

In addition, our district is partnering with TNTP to provide on-going training to all ELA teachers in grades K-12. Through this partnership, all district ELA teachers will engage in a two-day ELA Boot Camp during Summer 2021 followed by quarterly in-person PD sessions focused on materials-based unit preparation and implementation. Teachers' knowledge and competency will be assessed through monthly walkthroughs led by TNTP to collect data and inform future training. District leaders and administrators will be trained on the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) to provide continuous support to teachers.

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

For SY21-22, the district is focused on improving early literacy. A Pre-K through second grade task force has been established and is comprised of our district's leading foundational literacy teachers. The task force will meet regularly to use data to drive instructional planning and delivery and determine the success of implemented programs.