

## **Hardeman County Schools**

### **Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 21, 2021**

**Edited: August 17, 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**

Hardeman County Schools use McGraw-Hill Wonders, 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 and has a designated block of time (45 minutes daily) for foundational skills instruction in grades K-2. Hardeman County Elementary Schools have literacy blocks that range from 90 to 120 minutes daily in grades K-2 with a 45-minute daily-designated block for foundational skills instruction. The foundational skills instruction contains activities and practices that teach the following foundational skills: phonological/phonemic awareness (identify and generate rhyming words, identify similar phonemes in words, blend sounds in words, count syllables, blend and segment onset-rime), phonics (identify individual letter sounds, decode regular words and words with common rimes with families, identify sounds for letter combinations, identify common spellings for short-vowel sounds, final consonant sounds, and vowel variants, identify sound-spellings (blend/build words/encoding) fluency and word recognition in addition to comprehension and vocabulary ("word work"). Word work instruction expands foundational skills to enable children to become proficient readers. During that instruction, teachers introduce/review prior sound-spellings to build fluency, the students practice blend/building words with sound-spellings, the teacher models using manipulatives for interactive learning, the students refer to their individual response board on which they write the sound, then students apply the skill in independent practice (independently or with partners).

The scope and sequence of the curriculum is based on research of effective instruction differentiated to meet the needs of struggling readers. The guidelines for the sequencing of skills is: introduce/review pre-skills before the new skill is presented, introduce high-utility skills before less useful ones, introduce easy skills before more difficult ones, separate strategies and information likely to be confused, introduce new information at a realistic rate, and provide explicit practice and review. For example, students learn basic letter-sound correspondences for consonants and vowels and the VCe rule before they are required to decode words with the VCe pattern in them.

Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for teachers to collaborate as they solve problems of practice (refine the opportunities to focus on phonics instruction, for example) and internalize their instructional plans. The adoption of the high quality

instructional material has had an impact on how teachers prepare their delivery of instruction. Teachers are provided with a plethora of resources and are no longer having to seek and find materials and resources to use within their classrooms. With the incorporation of high-quality materials, teachers are able to design authentic experiences within their classrooms to enhance student success.

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

Our district has an integrated literacy block for grades three through five grounded in reading science aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. The district adopted McGraw-Hill Wonders for Grade three, four, and five. The curriculum materials are selected from those 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 to 120 minutes in third grade, in fourth grade, and in fifth grade of ELA instruction. Although the daily schedule is not the same each day,, all daily instruction includes components of knowledge-building 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. The 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 example, our 4th grade students were taking notes on the lesson, "Remembering Hurricane Katrina". They began by briefly activating prior knowledge and read independently and/or shared reading. After the daily reading (independent reading or shared reading 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, and write a draft that requires students to develop a sequence of events. Another example, our 3rd graders completed a unit in Wonders that integrated the skills of spelling, dictionary skills, grammar and morphology. Students reviewed and learn spelling rules for example, spelling with "a\_e", and becoming proficient in the application of grammar skills such as part of speech, and affixes. Therefore, foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of this literacy block and is dedicated to developing an overall comprehensive approach to students literary understanding.

Our improvement for next year are grounded in the implementation of the high quality materials and the integration of literacy skills and knowledge. Teachers will be provided professional development focused on integrated literacy instruction.

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

McGraw Hill - K-5 Wonders

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

McGraw Hill - K-5 Wonders

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

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

In the fall, students are given a universal screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk". Our grade-level teachers, coaches/interventionists and school/district leaders review universal screener data as well as student classroom performance, TCAP results, and teacher observation data is used to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction. Students identified as Tier III are given AIMSWEB for further assessment. Tier II and Tier III students are placed in small group based on deficit area. Students who are placed in Tier II receive intervention daily for at least 30 minutes and are progress monitored every other week. Students who are placed in Tier III receive the most intense intervention daily for at least 45 minutes and are progress monitored weekly.

Students receive daily, explicit instruction in their area of deficit using research-based materials and strategies. For example, Hardeman County Schools utilizes Sounds Sensible and SPIRE reading interventions in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade for students either identified at-risk for a significant reading deficiency or identified with a significant reading deficiency. RTI Data Team Meetings are conducted every 4.5 weeks to evaluate student progress and either continue the intervention, change the intervention or the interventionist, or change the Tier placement.

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 notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia and meetings with the families are held to discuss the research-based resources available to support the students' needs.

Hardeman County Schools has a district-wide block time for RTI.

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

Our district 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 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 invited to meet and discuss what intervention their child(ren) 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 by the end of 3rd grade.

The district defines how students are assessed and what a "significant reading deficiency" is. Parents are subsequently notified of their child's progress, or lack of progress, after the first 4.5

week data team meetings. In the parent notification, the RTI data team notates the intervention(s) and any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screening data as well as recommended activities (that do not require purchased resources) that will support students in the area of deficit (activities based on skill deficit). These notifications are sent to parents with students in grades K-5 three times annually.

Additionally, teachers provide parents notifications that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains that their child(ren) are learning and/or require additional support to keep them informed.

### **Professional Development Plan**

All K-2 teachers in our district will participate in the free and optional Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. This training was also offered to our 3-5 teachers, special education teachers, ESL, and interventionists/coaches. Our plan for providing PD for all K-5 teachers is as follows:

April - May 2021 - All K-2 teachers and teachers in grades 3-5 who opted in to participate in the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series will engage in Week 1 of the training, 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 work in June.

June 2021 - Our district has registered and will serve as a "host district" for the cohort-based, in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all teachers in grades K-2 and those 3-5 teachers, special education teachers, ESL, and interventionists/coaches who opted in to participate. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

We plan to include grade three through five during the summer of June 2022. K-5 grade teachers will participate in PLCs, Coaching Sessions, and professional development in literacy instruction and focused areas from district leaders and instructional partners.