

Henry County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 18, 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 Henry County School District uses a foundational skills curriculum grounded in reading research and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. The research is based on the mastery of skills needed to be a successful reader by the end of 3rd grade. The program also highlights the importance of developmental and instructional relationships among print concepts, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, and word recognition, and reading fluency. The program's whole-group lessons provide daily, explicit, and systematic instruction to develop skills in phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, word study or vocabulary, fluency and integrated writing which includes grade appropriate standard aligned explicit grammar instruction. The skills block for most K-2 classes is approximately 60 minutes. Read aloud or knowledge building is approximately 30 minutes daily. During the literacy skills block students are engaged with phonological awareness, phonics instruction and practice within text, vocabulary or word work, and comprehension skills. During explicit and systematic phonemic awareness instruction teachers engage students with rhyming and onset fluency, isolating final or medial sounds, blending and segmenting words, syllables, and phonemes, adding and deleting phonemes, and substituting phonemes. Phonemic awareness lessons are done in a whole group setting and applied and reinforced during small group or individual skills practice. During explicit phonemic awareness and phonics instruction teachers are required to articulate sounds correctly and in kindergarten begin the process of letter sound recognition. Teachers model the connection between sound and the written symbol(s). Students engage with speech sounds and phoneme-grapheme correspondence during whole group instruction and application during small group and independent practice. For example, in a first-grade classroom, during the 1st nine weeks, students are engaged with short /u/. Students blend, isolate, segment, alliterate phonemes in CVC, CCVC, and CVCC words. Students also engage in blending CV segments and then apply to decodable CVC words such as /bu/, /cu/, /ru/ etc. This exercise is followed by adding a final sound-but, cut, run, etc. Next, students are given decodable texts that are aligned to short /u/ and a spiral of short vowel sounds taught to date. Next school year, working with teachers who have varying levels of instructional need, coaching teachers, and following up with how high-quality curriculum materials are being used in the classroom will be a focus. A second focus will be working to arrange time for teachers to concentrate on student data, problem solving student deficits, and collaborate on best practices during a professional learning community setting.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

The Henry County School District has an integrated literacy block for grades 3 through 5 that is aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Curriculum used in grade 3 was given a waiver by the Commissioner of Education (provided as an artifact in this plan). As part of the waiver process for ELA adoption the district addressed the intent of the state expectations district and school meetings included working with the Alignment of Tennessee English Language Arts Standards to The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Expanded Edition. For the last two years, we have worked closely with this document which outlines how the behaviors and understandings found in The Literacy Continuum are consistent with expectations laid forth in the Tennessee English Language Arts Standards. This work was instrumental in the decision to pursue the waiver for Into Reading from HMH. For grades 4 and 5 the knowledge building curriculum, Learn Zillion, Louisiana Guidebooks was officially adopted. The district started using the Louisiana Guidebook curriculum during the 2015-2016 school year. District-wide students in 3rd grade receive approximately 90 minutes a day of ELA instruction. For students in grades 4th and 5th instructional time varies between the three schools in the district. On average across the district students receive approximately 65 minutes of ELA instruction. For grades 3rd through 5th the ELA block is integrated and includes the following components: knowledge-building with complex texts (students are asked to listen, read, write, think, and speak) reading fluency and building reading stamina, grammar, and vocabulary. Morphology and spelling are consistently taught in grade 3 but time varies in grades 4 and 5. 3rd grade engages students in grade level phonics, explicitly taught then applied in small group or independent practice for a minimum of 30 minutes a day.

The curriculum used in 4th and 5th grades does not allow for explicit instruction but embeds fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. Foundational skills are embedded in all aspects of the 4th and 5th grade literacy block which includes fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. Additional support is given to students who need extra word study opportunities. For example, fifth grade uses supplemental resources to explicitly teach grade level grammar and word study skills. Essential vocabulary is embedded throughout the adopted curriculum and supplemental and application practice is provided to students using Vocabulary.com. Next school year our focus will be to ensure that all teachers have an in-depth understanding of the foundational literacy standards in grades 3-5. A second focus will be to work with teachers in grades 4 and 5 to develop sound instructional practices to explicitly teach the foundational literacy standards as well as embed and apply those skills where appropriate.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

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

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

LearnZillion - 3-5 Guidebooks

Additional Information about Instructional Materials

The Henry County School District elected to use HMH in 3rd grade in order to be consistent in grades K-3. Grades 4-8 adopted Learn Zillion, Guidebooks. Our district has adopted an approved

curriculum for ELA instruction; however, we have chosen to supplement in several ways. Our district will use the Heggerty Literacy Resources Phonemic Awareness curriculum in PreK- 2nd grade. 3rd grade will use Bridge the Gap from Literacy Resources in small group for students that have not mastered the primary phonemic awareness skills. This supplement allows us to systematically focus on the phonological awareness and advanced phonemic awareness skills that are crucial for reading success. Grades 4 and 5 supplement the Learn Zillion curriculum with an online grammar program, Grammar Flip, and 2 out of our 3 schools utilize IXL for grammar and vocabulary independent practice. All 4th and 5th grade students have access to Vocabulary.com.

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

For the 2021-2022 school year the district will use i-Ready as a universal reading screener. i-Ready also has a specific screener for dyslexia which will be used to test students identified at risk. i-Ready will also provide Tier II and Tier III interventionist the ability to progress monitor students. As a district we would like to know more about the Tennessee universal reading screener when it becomes available.

Intervention Structure and Supports

Three times a year, students are given a universal screener (STAR and i-Ready used during the 20-21 school year; i-Ready will be used during the 21-22 school year) to determine which students are at-risk. After each screening window is completed, grade level teachers, the RTI team, and building level principals review screener data to determine if all students who are below the 25th percentile are at risk and which students need to be classified as Tier II and Tier III. After students are identified and placed in the appropriate Tier additional diagnostic assessments are administered to determine reading deficiencies. After diagnostic assessment results are analyzed, students are assigned to small groups according to their specific reading skill deficits. Tier II and Tier III students are scheduled into a daily rotation and receive between 30 and 45 minutes of focused intervention. Reading interventionist teach explicit lesson from research-based intervention supports and match the intervention program to the area of greatest deficit. In addition to Tier II and Tier III intervention, K-3 teachers (prior to COVID) utilized small group instruction to address additional intervention support during Tier I. The recently adopted ELA curriculum for grades K-3 contains an intervention program specific to identified skill deficits, to be used by teachers when appropriate. Progress monitoring is used as a data point to determine if the intervention is effective. Interventionist log attendance and note student engagement during learning sessions. After sufficient data is gathered the interventionist meet as needed with teachers and administrators to determine if their current intervention program needs to be changed or modified.

Based on the student's data team recommendation, students will be screened for characteristics of dyslexia, using the i-Ready Dyslexia Screener. Students who have one or more characteristics of dyslexia, receive intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law. Henry County schools use research-based supplemental programs as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Included in the letter to parent, the schools communicate what curriculum is used to support their child.

Typically, the district uses Read Naturally to focus on reading fluency deficits in grades 3-8. Read Naturally is also used to work on literal, inferential, and evaluation comprehension skills. This type of intervention for Tier II or Tier III intervention groups may also include a knowledge-building reading component that is directly related to Tier I instruction. In grades K-2 RTI groups use a variety of intervention supports based on student need. The S.P.I.R.E curriculum is used to support students that are deficient in beginning reading foundational skill deficits.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Our district notifies parents in grades K-7 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 the district’s schools completes one of the three universal screening sessions. Parents are informed that students are given a universal screener for both reading and math three times a year. After the screening process is completed, 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 STAR and i-Ready screening programs generate a parent friendly report after each testing cycle. The parents are told what intervention their student(s) will receive and the amount of time each day the student will receive services. To improve our communication with parents for the upcoming school year we will communicate with parents the importance of being able to read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade. Parents are given RTI progress reports at a minimum of every 4 1/2 weeks.

To improve our communication with parents for the upcoming school year we will communicate with parents the importance of being able to read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade. Presently, classroom teachers communicate with parents monitoring and assessment data as well as free recommended activities to help close learning gaps in specific skill areas. This type of communication goes home to parents in grades K-3 a minimum of 3 times a year. To improve in this area the system will require parent communication tailored by skill deficit for students in grades 4 and 5 at least once a year.

Professional Development Plan

All PreK-5th grade teachers in our district will participate in the free one-week asynchronous Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed the Tennessee Department of Education.

May-July 2021

Our district registered: 25- K-2nd grade teachers, 7- 3rd and 4th grade teachers, and 13 Interventionist and SPED teacher for the cohort-based, online and face to face training weeks for the Early Literacy Training series. Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series is online and delivered asynchronously. Week 2 is a face-to-face cohort and will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. We will ensure that participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to starting Week 2 work in July.

May 2021

All teachers of grades Pre-K through five will have the opportunity to sign up and engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series, asynchronously.



Summer 2022

For teachers who did not train during the summer of 2021 we plan to require all PreK-5th grade teachers complete the Early Literacy Training series online and delivered asynchronously. Teachers will be required to pass the test and produce certificates of completion.