

## **Marshall County Schools**

### **Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 18, 2021**

**Edited: August 30, 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**

Marshall County Schools has a dedicated foundational reading skills block for grades K-2 rooted in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), are selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. K-2 students will spend 60 minutes each day engaged in direct systematic foundational skills instruction aligned to CKLA's research-driven scope of system of foundational skills. 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 skill. The CKLA scope and sequence includes direct instruction and aligned student practice in phonics, grammar, spelling, and writing. 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 and comprehension practice with decodable readers aligned to the skills students are learning to make meaning from text and to produce the written word. These readers increase in length and complexity as students develop their reading and spelling skills.

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

Marshall County Schools has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 anchored in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards.

Our curriculum materials in Grade 3, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), and our materials in grades 4-5, (Guidebooks) 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 minutes of ELA instruction each day. Although the daily routine is not the same each day, all 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 curricula also engage 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.

A daily lesson sequence in grade 3 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 in 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 and 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.

In grades 4-5, a daily lesson sequence using Guidebooks typically includes whole-class instruction targeting grade-level standards for reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language with complex texts. Whole-class instruction provides a space for students to think deeply about meaningful text, talk with other students to develop and refine their thinking about text, and write about their knowledge and understanding of complex text. Students also participate in small-group instruction during which they received targeted instruction in morphology and spelling patterns, reading fluency, and grammar. Small group time may also be used to support students with vocabulary and additional knowledge building needed to fully engage with the unit texts, as well as personalized instruction in their writing.

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

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

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

LearnZillion - 3-5 Guidebooks

### **Additional Information about Instructional Materials**

We use CKLA in grades K-3 and guidebooks in grades 4-6.

### **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**

We will transition to the state's universal screener next year. The answers that follow are based on this year's procedures. In the fall, students are given a universal screener (DIBELS) 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 need 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.

We 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. They can tailor this to the needs of their RTI group of students. If that intervention is not proving

to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions such as the 95 % group phonics awareness and phonics activities, become an option. 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.

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 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 uses a research-based supplemental program as one intervention for students

with characteristics of dyslexia. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that the 95 % group curriculum is used to support those students, as it is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for those students.

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 Read Naturally program.

Additional Information about the CKLA Assessment & Remediation Guide:

The CKLA Assessment and Remediation Guide (ARG) provides multiple additional resources for teachers to use as they support students on their path to mastery of grade-level foundational skills:

- **Sample Lessons:** Samples of lessons are provided, as well as lesson templates to guide the planning to build lessons that fit the specific needs of individual students or small groups.
- **Word/Chaining Lists:** The ARG includes words lists and chaining lists that teachers can plan into a lesson for students to use for practicing the mastery of the letter sound correspondences identified as weaknesses.
- **Activities for Reteaching:** The ARG includes activities to be used for reteaching. All of these activities are engaging and designed to be teacher-facilitated. Though there are worksheets for some activities to s

### **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 the district’s 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 extend 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. This is coupled with a description of the importance of being able to read by the end of third grade.

The district defines 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 4 ½ week data team meetings. In the parent notification, data teams note 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. These communications go out to the parents with students in grades K-5 three times annually.

Additionally, the ELA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming weeks that will inform and equip parents to work with the child. Families can better understand how to support their student(s) through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their child(ren) are learning.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Teachers in our district will participate in the free and optional Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Our plan for providing PD for all K-5 teachers is as

follows:

- April 2021 – All teachers of grades in grades Pre-K through five will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy 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 work in June.
- July 2021 – Our district has registered for the cohort-based, in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all teachers in grade Pre-K through second. The participating teachers will also include interventionists, special education teachers and elementary instructional coaches. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

K-2 teachers will also participate in ongoing PLCs throughout the 2021-2022 school year focused on effective internalization and delivery of their CKLA Foundational Skills lessons using internalization templates developed in partnership with the LIFT network and the Early Literacy Network.

We plan to provide grade 3-5 teachers with additional training during the summer of June 2022. They will also participate in ongoing PLCs throughout the 2021-2022 school year focused on effective internalization and delivery of their ELA lessons.