

**Maury County Schools**  
**Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 21, 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 the McGraw Hill Wonders foundational skills curriculum. Wonders is grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. This K-2 curriculum uses foundational skills as a primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time (~45 minutes in a 120-minute block) for foundational skills instruction in K-2. This instructional time includes activities that build the Tennessee ELA Foundational Skills standards. Examples include developing phonological awareness, phonics practice, and fluency practice in addition to comprehension and vocabulary work. During that instruction, teachers explicitly teach a sound, the students practice the sound aloud, the teacher models writing the sound, then students apply the skill in independent practice (small group or individual). The gradual release of responsibility model is practiced throughout the process.

For example, students in kindergarten learn the phonemic awareness of individual letters. During this process, they learn the sounds, recognize and learn to write the letters, and begin blending words phonemically. As students learn more letters, they learn more words and put them into sentences. They practice these sentences by reading and writing them. Throughout this learning students have multiple opportunities to read decodable texts that are aligned with the sounds taught in explicit instruction.

Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for teachers to collaborate as they solve problems of practice and as they internalize the instructional plan of Wonders through unit-level and lesson-level preparation.

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

Our district uses the McGraw Hill Wonders foundational skills curriculum. Wonders is 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 minutes (minimum) of ELA instruction. Although the Wonders daily schedule is not the same each day, all daily instruction includes components for 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. Wonders 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, Unit 3 of fourth grade has the big idea, “Why are individual qualities important?”. This question is answered through a series of questions throughout the six-week unit through daily read-aloud, shared reading, and independent reading. Students will summarize their learning through daily conversations and writing responses to questions for individual texts (or multiple text synthesis). Beginning day one of the unit, students are introduced through explicit instruction to the vocabulary integrated within the texts to build learning capacity. Grammar and phonics practices are also integrated within the curriculum daily through explicit instruction and practice (gradual release of responsibility depending on the week and standard being practiced). Through all of these avenues of learning, foundational skills instruction is embedded and explicitly taught in all aspects of the 90-minute block and is dedicated to developing students’ holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research.

Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for teachers to collaborate as they solve problems of practice and as they internalize the instructional plan of Wonders through unit-level and lesson-level preparation.

### **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.**

AimsWeb

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

In the fall, students are given a universal screener (AIMSWEB) to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are “at-risk.” Our grade-level teachers and administrators 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 (95% and Sunday System are the primary diagnostics used across the district) 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. Wonders, our adopted ELA curriculum, contains an assessment and remediation guide in which teachers can find instruction and activities that directly address skill gaps. They can tailor this to the needs of the RTII group of students. If that intervention is not proving to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions become an option. At the district level, 95% Group and Sunday System were

purchased to support learning intervention opportunities for ELA. 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 (screener provided by AIMSWEB). Students who do demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law's requirements (Sunday System meets this requirement). 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 Sunday System 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 RTII. When students are in their RTII groups, they work on activities and assignments that make them stronger in that skill. For example, students who need instruction in phonics may receive direct instruction using the 95% Chip Kit and practice fluency using the Wonders fluency passages. For students who need vocabulary support, they may receive intervention using the Vocabulary Surge practice in 95%.

Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for teachers and administrators to have time to analyze the data and collaborate as they determine students needs, analyze best practices to support student learning, and training on intervention strategies for teachers and interventionists.

### **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 evidence 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 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. 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" 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 notifications/communications, 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 (activities are not tailored by child; they are tailored by skill deficit generally). These communications go out to parents with students in grades K-3 three times annually and are shared in grades 4 and 5 annually.

Additionally, the Wonders ELA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip parents to work with the student. Families can better understand how to support their student(s) through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their student(s) are learning. Finally, the Wonders curriculum has an online component with games and practice activities parents can complete at home with their student to support weekly learning.

### **Professional Development Plan**

We are participating in the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series, as well as qualifying for the Reading 360 grant, wherein we will focus on our middle grades foundational literacy implementation.

April/May 2021 – Teachers in grades Pre-K through 5 will participate in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training Series.

June/July 2021 – Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training

Ongoing – Reading 360 middle grades collaborative, K-2 Early grades collaborative; 95% Group Training at the beginning of the year, as well as Wonders and Sonday system.