

**Purpose Preparatory Academy**  
**Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: June 23, 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**

Early elementary grades are the most critical years in the teaching of reading; therefore, at Purpose Preparatory Academy (“Purpose Prep”) we use a two-teacher model to decrease class size during literacy instruction to ensure intensive, small group, differentiated instruction. We are intentional about our focus on foundational skills instruction, the primary form of instruction. In these primary grades, the goals of literacy instruction are (1) to build fluency in decoding and reading development and (2) to lay the foundation for articulate expression in writing. Goals (1) and (2) ensure that foundational skills instruction is demonstrated as the primary form of instruction. In alignment with TN state standards, instructional time devotes 225 minutes to our literacy model, including three 45-minute blocks where scholars are divided into three strategic groups of no more than 10 scholars to receive targeted attention on literacy skills necessary for them to advance to the next level of reading proficiency. These small group placements are highly flexible, and teachers are constantly assessing scholars to ensure they are receiving the appropriate content required to deepen their mastery of reading concepts. These small group, rotating blocks are explained in the table below. Additionally, our 45-minute writing block focuses on handwriting skills, grammar lessons, and composition of sentences and paragraphs utilizing the Writing 6+1 Traits Model. One 25-minute block of vocabulary development enables scholars to learn Tier 2 vocabulary words, such as arduous, lethargic, and benevolent, in an authentic, text-based way through the read aloud structure of research-proven programs, such as Scholastic “Text Talk” that further allows scholars to develop fluent and expressive reading skill, reading comprehension strategies, and listening acuity. As evidenced, instructional time includes explicit instruction and student practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Literacy curricular sources include:

SRA Reading Mastery (K-2)

Novel and Nonfiction Book Sets (K-4)

Scholastic Text Talk (K-3)

Destination Reading (K-2)

Handwriting and Language (K-4)

Composition (K-4)

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

In alignment with TN state standards, literacy instruction comprises a total of 225 minutes of the school day in grades 3-4. With a focus on Vocabulary Development foundational skills during a 25-minute block, scholars continue to expand their repertoire of robust words. Scholars then participate in a 20-minute Word Work block during which they analyze parts of words in context to their meanings, spelling patterns, and language constructions, including Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, continuing to solidify their spelling and fluency foundation. Overall, instruction addresses morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency. Two separate blocks develop strong reading comprehension skills for scholars. The Nonfiction and Novel Studies block involves direct instruction of reading standards through nonfiction and fiction grade level texts. Standards are sequentially aligned throughout the text. During the Guided Reading block, scholars are continuing to apply grade-level skills and reading strategies with texts at their independent reading levels. Ongoing support ensures

skill-building in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The guided reading block provides differentiated support and the appropriate challenge to all scholars, as they analyze and comprehend independently leveled texts. Each Writing and Grammar class of 45 minutes begins with a daily-edit lesson on rules of grammar and writing conventions. The class incorporates multiple writing methods, included modeling, guided writing, and interactive writing, which are based on the Writing 6+1 Traits Model. The aforementioned speaks to the evidence-based approach we use to teach foundational skills.

Literacy curricular sources include:

Novel and Nonfiction Book Sets (K-4)

Scholastic Text Talk (K-3)

Handwriting and Language (K-4)

Composition (K-4)

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

Approved waiver for other materials

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

Approved waiver for other materials

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

- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP, from NWEA)

We administer NWEA MAP 3x/year to identify potentially at-risk students. Data teams analyze these results along with classroom-based assessments, Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress

(STEP) and easyCBM fluency measures to make Tier II identifications and ensure compliance with 49-1-229.

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Our goal is to ensure that 100% of our scholars, regardless of deficiencies, are achieving at or above grade level. Scholars are considered to be achieving below grade level if ongoing assessment results indicate a lack of skills master and/or lack of proficiency in the core content. We implement an inclusive educational model that serves all scholars in a manner that maximizes academic potential and provides them with the foundational skills, knowledge and character for future success. We embrace the structure of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model to ensure we are meeting all scholars' learning needs.

Hence, our program embeds intervention schedules that are in alignment with expectations as outlined in the RTI<sup>2</sup> manual. RTI's approach to working with scholar who need additional support is evidence-based in which tiered support provided is differentiated by Tier II and Tier III according to the intensity of scholars' needs. We will use structured intervention supports to ensure that all scholars have access to differentiated high-quality teaching to support and address their specific gaps. Also, intervention structures are in place so as to progress monitor specific skill gaps, intervene when the rate of progress is slow, and serve scholars in smaller and more intensive settings with additional support staff as their needs become more intensive and our responses more specialized.

As part of our Professional Development prior to the start of the school year, all staff are trained in developing action plans that best meet the needs of all scholars moving forward following each interim/diagnostic assessment. We ensure the development of necessary knowledge and skills around effectively implementing intervention supports and overseeing the implementation, management and monitoring of IEPs within our building. With an intervention schedule and appropriately certified staff that allows for push-in support daily and pull-out support as needed, scholars receive the interventions they need to reach success. If a scholar does not demonstrate improvement following interventions over an extended period of time, and this is believed to be due to an educational disability, we will refer that scholar for testing to determine special education eligibility. If it is determined that a scholar is eligible, an IEP will be developed.

\*NOTE: Intervention blocks take place throughout the day. This is reflected on the schedule where 'Lit' blocks are happening. During these times, students are in 3 small groups, with 2 of these groups in front of a classroom teacher. During any given lit block, the remaining 1/3rd of students are available to be pulled for interventions.\*

Purpose Prep's teachers and leaders are constantly reviewing data collectively to determine which scholars, if any, are not meeting expected academic outcomes. In fact, our data teams use progress monitoring data to inform decisions about duration, material, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress. Specifically, each Wednesday teachers bring data to Professional Development sessions and a portion of the time is dedicated to analyzing and identifying scholars who need additional supports. The data that is reviewed in these meetings can include data from interim assessments and STEP data in earlier years and Discovery Education Assessment and/or

Achievement Network or TCAP data in grades three and four or other data that the teacher has collected in the classroom. Scholars who are in need of additional support are provided some or all of the support systems such as:

Small literacy group instruction (10:1 ratio) allows for targeted literacy instruction at the appropriate reading level. While all scholars at Purpose Prep are provided with small group literacy instruction, most intensively in kindergarten through grade two, our struggling scholars are placed in groups of no more than seven (7) scholars, and additional support is provided with the capacity of the leadership team, specifically the Head of School, Dean of Scholar Support, and Dean of Academics. This approach to intervention is in line with research that shows that struggling scholar readers should be given reading instruction in groups of no more than 5-7.

Increased reading and math instruction: For scholars demonstrating academic deficiencies, we reserve non-core academic blocks, including our 20-minute snack, 45-minute enrichment, and 20-minute choice time for daily opportunities for tutoring support and remediation. We implement targeted intervention support during this time, such as a structured computer intervention called Destination Success for reading and literacy intervention<sup>98</sup>. Destination Success provides incremental reading and math intervention along with assessments geared towards state assessments and tracking.

Push-in Support: The Dean of Scholar Support and enrichment teachers provide individualized instruction and small group learning environments as needed. Staff, teachers, and leaders operate with an “all hands on deck” mentality. When necessary, we rely on supports from our Head of School, Dean of Scholar Support, Dean of Academics (starting Y3), and/or Teaching Fellows (starting Y4) to provide more individualized and small group learning support in the classroom. In addition, our two teacher classrooms allow one teacher to focus on whole group instruction while the other teacher pulls a group of scholars during mathematics or other subject areas for more individualized attention.

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

Purpose Prep believes that frequent and consistent parent-friendly communication regarding scholars' scores, progress and achievement, special education matters, etc. is absolutely critical to ensuring that scholars thrive as expected and that parents are able to support the work of the school to the greatest extent possible. Furthermore, families are made aware of their children's skill gaps, including the severity of the gap(s) and necessary supports. In addition, information about how those gaps will be addressed during intervention and the importance of 3rd grade reading proficiency are reinforced. In cases where there's an IEP, the Dean of Scholar Supports is responsible for making every effort to ensure that a family member is present at every IEP meeting of the child. Should family members be unable and/or unwilling to attend an IEP meeting, the school proceeds with the meeting, but the DSS retains written records of the school's attempts to set an IEP meeting with the family present at a mutually agreeable time and place. We remain in communication with K-3 more than 3x/year, and the same can be said about our 4th grade families. Families of scholars with exceptionalities receive regular communication reports of scholar progress in the general education program and IEP objective through the school-wide monitoring and reporting process, including quarterly parent-teacher conferences and report cards. In addition, the DSS is responsible

for making special phone calls home on a regular basis, no less than once per month, to update the family on a special education scholar's academic or behavioral performance, including updates of actual performance against benchmark goals set in the scholar's IEP, when applicable. Family involvement is an integral part of Purpose Prep's educational program for every child, and scholars with exceptionalities receive priority attention from all staff to go above and beyond the school's standard expectations and policies for involvement of every child's legal guardians. Lastly, parent notification plans include no-cost activities to support learning at home.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Our K-4 teachers will complete the state literacy training in monthly increments.

Quality teacher development is the key to attracting and retaining talented individuals and the lever to raising student achievement levels. The children of North Nashville deserve the highest quality educators, and it is our responsibility to support our teachers to execute dramatic student results. We know that when classroom instruction improves, student achievement gains increase. Therefore, we prioritize ongoing, varied PD opportunities for grades K-5 on foundational skills instruction grounded in a phonics-based approach, and for teachers to improve their instruction through (a) classroom observations and debriefs between colleagues and from the instructional leadership team, (b) data analysis and action planning meetings, (c) curriculum development and review, (d) lesson review and analysis, (e) professional learning communities, (f) classroom observation video debriefs, (g) instructional rounds, (h) leadership opportunities within the school for teachers, (i) excellent classroom and school visits, (j) professional development sessions led by instructional leadership team members, lead teachers, training providers with experience and proven track records supporting districts, and consultants, and (k) individual check-ins. The plan is also absent of cueing or MSV strategies.

Going forward, Purpose Prep will continue to conduct training for our teachers on behavior management techniques. An important component of discipline is structure. Structure provides a framework for learning to take place. We will ensure that all of our teachers have a structured classroom for learning to take place. Teachers are also required to demonstrate knowledge and competency. Our teachers motivate our scholars daily to try their best. We will continue to acknowledge their hard work and celebrate their successes. Continuing to have a positive school environment will support us to reach our suspension rate goal.

Summer PD for staff - Summer PD will be hybrid and cover everything from classroom management techniques and procedures, curriculum development and implementation, data analysis, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and theory and query regarding anti-racist pedagogy. We have three weeks of Summer Pd prior to scholars arriving, from July 14th - August 3rd.

Lastly, 90.6% of teachers are returning for the 2021-22 school year. This strong retention rate is due to the intensive coaching and mentorship support provided throughout the year, including but not limited to: daily morning huddles with all staff, weekly data meetings, weekly department/grade-level meetings, biweekly coaching and observation cycles, monthly professional development, monthly leadership listening and feedback forums, quarterly curriculum goal-setting, and a mid-year

reflection cycle that made adjustments to our virtual model and its impact on all stakeholders, including staff.

Reading Mastery Signature Edition uses the highlight explicit, systematic approach of Direct Instruction to accelerate reading and help students achieve a high rate of success. The Reading Strand we use addresses all five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics and word analysis, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Spelling instruction is also provided to help students make the connection between decoding and spelling patterns. Teachers receive 3 hours of training in Summer PD on direct phonics instruction, including practice and live feedback. Biweekly literacy observations throughout the year are done by literacy coaches to determine mastery of the practices.

STEP is a research-based formative literacy assessment whose trainers and staff have supported over 3,000 teachers and 110,000 students across the country with systems that prove to significantly improve student outcomes. 86% of students who reach STEP 12 by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade meet or exceed state standards. The assessment provides a set of tools tightly aligned with scientifically established reading development milestones, to follow students' progress from kindergarten through third grade. STEP provides educators with the requisite insight to tailor literacy instruction and meet the needs of all students. As of Fall 2021 it is confirmed they offer an MSV-free coding platform & PD supports. We contract with STEP Trainers for 8 hrs. of PD annually to guide staff through the process of learning how to interpret results with reliability, as well as follow on implementation support via data teams and live observations. Teachers receive 2 hours of STEP data analysis support quarterly, and biweekly literacy observations throughout the year to determine mastery of the practices.