

Washington County Schools
Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 31, 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

Students receive instruction with grade-level Tennessee State Standards in small and whole group settings to provide a strong foundation in literacy.

The following are K-2 specific REQUIREMENTS for instructional time in ELA:

- Kindergarten, First, and Second grades: 120 - 140 minutes daily.

K-1 should have 60 minutes of Foundational Skills and 60 minutes of Listening and Learning instruction and 2nd grade should have 70 minutes of Foundational Skills instruction and 70 minutes of Listening and Learning instruction. Our district uses Benchmark Advance, 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. Benchmark Advance provides foundational skills instruction and includes explicit instruction and student practice in fluency, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, phonics, and comprehension. Each grade level engages with ten units designed to build world knowledge from strands that are consistently mapped across grade levels with a vertical progression of topics and essential questions.

Students participate daily in activities such as word work that provides direct, explicit instruction to build phonological awareness, phonics skills, and fluency both in and out of text. Vocabulary and comprehension are developed through listening/read aloud opportunities where teachers strategically ask questions and model thinking that leads to application during independent reading. The foundational skills instruction contains activities and practices that teach the following foundational skills: phonological awareness (recognize rhyming words, blend and segment compound words, blend, segment, and count syllables, blend and segment onset-rime, blend, segment, and count phonemes, segment compound words, and isolate individual phonemes) and phonics (identify individual letter sounds, decode regular words, decode words with common rime families, identify sounds for letter combinations, decode one-syllable words with letter combinations, identify common spellings for long and short vowel sounds, know and apply final -e conventions, read words with r-controlled vowels, read words with l-controlled vowels, read words with inflected endings, read words with prefixes and suffixes, read two syllable words with various syllable types, read multi-syllable words, and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis in text). Benchmark Advance program's scope and sequence, is clearly developed to progress from easier to

more complex skills (e.g., short vowels with one spelling before long vowel sounds with multiple spellings), separate the teaching of confusing letters and sounds (e.g., *i/e*, */a/ /e/*), and contain a built-in review and repetition cycle to ensure mastery of taught skills so students can transfer them to all reading and writing demands. 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. Furthermore, students are provided opportunities to practice reading using Benchmark small group texts and decodable texts aligned with learned sound-spelling and high frequency words taught in explicit instruction. They are also used for fluency practice.

Our improvements 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.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Students receive instruction with grade-level Tennessee State Standards in small and whole group settings to provide a strong foundation in literacy.

The following are 3rd-5th grade specific REQUIREMENTS for instructional time in ELA:

- Third, Fourth, & Fifth grades: 75 – 120 minute Literacy Block daily.

Third, Fourth, & Fifth grade should have a 75 minute literacy block that includes reading (30 minutes); grammar, morphology, and writing (45 minutes). Literacy block includes explicit supports for fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Washington County Schools has an integrated literacy block for grades three through five anchored in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards for English Language Arts. Our curriculum materials, Benchmark Advance, have been approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Students receive between 75 and 120 minutes of daily literacy instruction. Each grade level engages with ten units designed to build world knowledge from strands that are consistently mapped across grade levels with a vertical progression of topics and essential questions.

Benchmark Advance is centered around 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 20-30 minutes each day, students participate in metacognitive, morphology, comprehension, vocabulary, word study, and, grammar/language mini lessons designed to provide them with the skills and strategies needed to be proficient readers. Teachers meet with small groups of students for 20-40 minutes each day to scaffold reading behaviors, reinforce strategies, and build fluency. In addition, students participate in daily 15-minute writing mini lessons. Students are then given time for independent writing while teachers meet with small groups of students who have similar writing needs. 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 third grade students will study Economics. As students move through the unit selections through close reading opportunities, they will build on their vocabulary of critical thinking and broaden their vocabulary of literary genres, techniques, and features. Each unit begins by briefly activating prior knowledge and reading independently and/or aloud.

After the daily read aloud (or independent 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 response to an inferential question that requires students to use evidence from the text to support their answer. For example, in vocabulary lessons teachers provide explicit support for vocabulary needed to access the complex text. In the economics lesson, the students study words with suffixes -able, -ful, -less as in dependable, useful, useless, etc. Students use their word knowledge as they engage in group discussion and writing activities.

Our improvements 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

Benchmark - K-5 Advance

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Benchmark - K-5 Advance

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

All students receive the Renaissance STAR Reading and Math Universal Screeners three times a year: Fall, Winter, & Spring. Students scoring below the 25th percentile than takes the easyCBM Benchmark Assessments to identify skills deficient. WCDE utilizes the PASS (Phonological Awareness Skills Screener) and the PWRS (Phonics and Word Reading Survey) as a dyslexia screener for those students who show struggles at the word level. PASS helps teachers detect students who may be at-risk for reading and spelling difficulties and also difficulty developing phonological awareness. PWRS helps teachers identify which phonics correspondences and patterns a student has learned and which ones a student needs to be taught. ID Teams meet every 4.5 weeks to monitor and discuss student progress. Student data and instructional strategies are discussed and inform decision-making plans for students. Administrators must be present. RTI² is scheduled in the master schedule at all schools with at least 50 minutes of intervention time. Tier II classes have no more than 12 students; Tier III classes have no more than 5 students in Kindergarten and no more than 6 students in 1st – 8th grade. Indirect and direct fidelity checks are conducted at all schools by administrator and central office staff. Progress monitoring measures are through easyCBM. For additional support and interventions Tier II uses 95 Percent Groups and Orton Gillingham Strategies are used with Tier 3 students. Currently, all of our interventionist have been trained with Orton Gillingham.

Intervention Structure and Supports

All students receive the Renaissance STAR Reading and Math Universal Screeners three times a year: Fall, Winter, & Spring. Students scoring below the 25th percentile than takes the easyCBM Benchmark Assessments to identify skills deficient. WCDE utilizes the PASS (Phonological Awareness Skills Screener) and the PWRS (Phonics and Word Reading Survey) as a dyslexia screener for those

students who show struggles at the word level. RTI2 is scheduled in the master schedule at all schools with at least 50 minutes of intervention time. Tier II classes have no more than 12 students; Tier III classes have no more than 5 students in Kindergarten and no more than 6 students in 1st – 8th grade. Indirect and direct fidelity checks are conducted at all schools by administrator and central office staff. Progress monitoring measures are through easyCBM, 95 Percent Group, and Orton Gillingham. PASS and PWRS are also utilized as a dyslexia screener. Interventions are evidence-based and differentiated based by Tier II and III. Intervention schedules are aligned with expectations outlined in the RTI2 manual. Students are placed in small groups based on their individual specific needs. Interventions are address to meet these individual needs with individualized instruction and progress monitor. ID Teams meet every 4.5 weeks to discuss the progress monitoring data that will inform decisions about duration, material, and intensity changes when students are not showing progress.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

All students receive the Renaissance STAR Reading and Math Universal Screeners three times a year: Fall, Winter, & Spring. Students scoring below the 25th percentile than takes the easyCBM Benchmark Assessments to identify skills deficient. . WCDE utilizes the PASS (Phonological Awareness Skills Screener) and the PWRS (Phonics and Word Reading Survey) as a dyslexia screener for those students who show struggles at the word level. At this time, parents receive a letter to inform them that their child's score indicates that he/she is experiencing some challenges (identifies area of challenges) and they receive additional interventions each day. Parents receive a letter every 4.5 weeks to inform them of their child's progress. This letter provides information about "next steps" for their child based on the ID Team decisions. Classroom newsletters, family tip sheets, and school wide family reading nights are used to provide information on the importance of reading proficiency by third grade as well as engage and encourage family participation in their child's journey toward reading proficiency.

Professional Development Plan

Washington County is hosting one of the Early Reading Training sessions that includes approximately 43 teachers grades K-2. These participants are completing the Week One modules before Week Two training scheduled for June 1st – June 4th.

Washington County grades 3 – 5 ELA teachers have been given the opportunity to complete the Week One modules during the summer break. Week Two training will be offered to these teachers upon completion when they return to the new SY22 with support and collaboration from TDOE, Early Reading Training, LIN Literacy Implementation Grant, and district supervisor and curriculum coaches.

District ELA curriculum coaches are also completing the modules and will attend the in-person training. Follow-up on this training will be provided during a back to school in-service day for teachers with touch points and walk-thru throughout the school year. Additional training and touch points will continue with our work through the

LIN – Literacy Implementation Network (focus on 3-5) and

ELN – Early Literacy Network (focus on K-2)

Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

As we continue recovering from the effects of the pandemic on our faculty, staff, students, and parents we are eager to move forward. Our goal is to utilize the support from our Early Reading Training, Early Literacy Network, and Literacy Implementation Grant. The past year unfortunately put on hold a lot of professional development that we normally do with our teachers.