

Achievement School District
Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: June 1, 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 Achievement Schools use EL Foundational Skills curriculum which is aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Seventy-five minutes of the 150-minute literacy block is primarily dedicated to foundational literacy skills in K-2 classrooms. EL Foundational skills lessons build students' phonological awareness, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. During the instruction, the teachers model the pronunciation of a letter sound, students practice the sound aloud, writing the letters that represent the sound and finally apply those skills in independent practice. For example, by the end of the second nine weeks, kindergarten students will be able to identify all the letters and pronounce the letter sounds. Continuous opportunities to blend, segment, isolate and determine phonemes will have students reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade.

To address significant skills gaps, the Achievement Schools will increase the foundational skills block by fifteen minutes. As a result, K-2 teachers will have common planning and content-specific PLCs to improve internalization and execution of the lessons.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

The Achievement Schools has an integrated literacy block in grades 3-5 that is grounded in the science of reading and aligned to the Tennessee ELA standards. Even though the EL curriculum in grades 3-5 is designed for 60 minutes, the district increased the instructional block by 30 minutes to address the needs of the students in differentiated small group instruction. Small group instruction consists of practice in fluency, grammar, writing, vocabulary, foundational and reading comprehension skills. During the integrated instruction, the students are explicitly taught vocabulary words as they appear in text by introducing these new words prior to reading the text independently. Teachers model reading strategies to demonstrate how to utilize comprehension techniques to help students understand what they read.

By the end of third grade, students are required to write about what they read. Students will receive instruction that integrates writing, speaking & listening, and language skills using both informational and literary texts. Students will engage in discussions and have open spaces to think, plan, compose, revise, and share ideas that are aligned to the writing standards. Writing is a routine practice embedded in instruction.

For example, in Grade 3 Module 1 Unit 1 Overcoming Learning Challenges, students learn how to consider pace, volume, tone, and expression when reading fluency passages. They also identify affixes to determine meaning of words from the text and engage in language dives to help with sentence structure building comprehension and writing skills.

Teachers in grades 3-5 will have common planning and content-specific PLCs to improve internalization and execution of the lessons.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Open Up - K-5 Expeditionary Learning

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Open Up - K-5 Expeditionary Learning

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

The Achievement Schools universal reading screener is Easy CBM. This screener adheres to the guidelines of the established RTI2 framework and Say Dyslexia requirements. It is used to assess K-5 reading in the fall, winter, and spring.

The Achievement Schools administer a universal screener, EasyCBM, to students three times a year. The initial screener given in the Fall is used to classify students as Tier II/Tier III, based on their deficiencies in reading. Additionally, each school team (i.e., principal, school level RTI2 coordinator, general ed teachers and special ed teachers) will administer ongoing diagnostic, and classroom based instructional reading assessments to monitor student progress and plan appropriate instruction and/or intervention for every student identified as at risk or having a significant reading deficiency. Students are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. If a student is identified as dyslexic more intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law is prescribed.

Intervention Structure and Supports

The Achievement Schools uses Lexia, System 44, and i-Ready for intervention. EasyCBM is used to determine if students are making adequate progress. Data team meetings are held every 21 days to review progress and make decisions regarding students' placement in intervention. As a result, students can move between tiers, progress to enrichment, or the S-Team process can be initiated. An updated list is emailed to all teachers and changes are implemented the following week.

Throughout the process, all students continue to receive explicit and systematic instruction using the high-quality grade-level core curriculum, EL (Tier I). Students scoring below the benchmark guidelines during any screening period are immediately given a diagnostic assessment to determine instructional grouping and intervention. Our adopted EL curriculum contains assessment, enrichment, and remediation materials in which teachers can find small group activities to tailor to the needs of the intervention groups. Data is consistently used and closely monitored to drive the frequency, intensity, and duration of intervention services.

Since intervention is scheduled throughout the day in 45-minute blocks for grades K-5, Tier II students receive explicit face-to-face instruction daily from their teachers to address identified skill gaps in small group rotations along with one or more of the aforementioned computer-based interventions. Tier II students are progress monitored biweekly. In addition to small group support, Tier III students are pulled 2-3 times per week to receive individualized face-to-face support from an experienced reading interventionist to address their greatest deficits. Tier III students are progress monitored weekly. During Tier II/Tier III Intervention, students receive focused, small group and individualized support in the areas of morpheme awareness, phonemic awareness, fluency, grammar, writing, vocabulary, foundational and language and/or reading comprehension skills using research-based materials and strategies to improve their specific reading deficiencies. For example, students struggling with comprehension may read a variety of real-world source texts to answer scaffolded questions that build students' confidence with grade-level vocabulary as they develop important critical thinking and analytical skills related to the knowledge building unit being covered in Tier I instruction.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

The Achievement Schools will notify 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 and after each benchmark. The notification is sent in parent-friendly language that provides a clear explanation of students' scores and skill gaps with the extent of student needs. The parents are informed of the interventions the students will receive and the amount of time each day the student will receive services. This is coupled with a description of the importance of reading proficiently by the end of 3rd grade. The Achievement Schools will clearly define how students are assessed and what a "significant reading deficiency" means.

Parents will be routinely notified of their child's progress, or lack of progress, after routine data team meetings. In the parent notifications/communication, data teams will 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 (free and available resources) that will support students in deficit (activities are not tailored by child but tailored by skill deficit generally). These communications will go out to parents with students in grades K-3 three times annually and are shared in grades 4 and 5 annually. Additionally, the 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 prepare 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

The Professional Development offerings for K-5 teachers will be a combination of the state's free and optional Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series and district provided foundational skills training.

Week 1 Training will be held in May 2021 for all K-5 teachers. It is a week-long, self-paced virtual training. Upon completion of this training, teachers will have a strong understanding of the cognitive science and reading research that supports sounds-first foundational reading skills instruction, what strong instruction in each element of sounds-first reading foundational skills consists of, and the alignment between the research and the TN Academic Standards for Literacy.

Week 2 Training will be held in June 2021 for all K- 5 teachers. It will prepare teachers to implement sounds-first foundational reading skills instruction and all components of the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement (TNFSCS). Upon completion of this training, teachers will have a strong understanding of how to translate research into practice and deliver excellent instruction that reflects the state's research-based vision for foundational skills instruction.

In addition, the Achievement Schools will take advantage of district provided professional development that will develop teachers' understanding of foundational skills and how they support reading comprehension by engaging in a systematic method grounded in a phonics-based approach to teaching early literacy.