

Etowah City School

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 13, 2021

Updated: April 25, 2023

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

In reviewing the master schedules for K-2 at Etowah City School, these grade levels spend a minimum of 60 minutes of the 90 minute ELA block per day on foundational skills instruction. This is the first year using the newly adopted Benchmark Advance reading curriculum which was chosen from the TN state approved list. Within this curriculum, which is based on the current Tennessee state ELA standards, foundational skills are taught through explicit and systematic research-based instruction. It also includes a purposeful scope and sequence with spiral review and repetition cycle, frequent application to real reading and writing experiences, and built-in differentiation. Within each lesson, foundational skills instruction is provided within categories such as metacognitive, comprehension, vocabulary, shared reading, phonics/phonemic awareness, small group reading, and independent reading. Some lessons provide explicit and systematic foundational skills instruction within a mini-lesson. Other skills such as vocabulary and fluency are often taught within a text that is used to also teach specific content knowledge. Students also have daily opportunities for independent reading where they are able to practice newly learned strategies and skills using texts at their instructional levels. Small group reading provides a time for appropriate scaffolding and monitoring of student progress. The K-2 teachers are very pleased with the Benchmark curriculum. At this time there are no plans to make any changes for next year. However, all of the K-2 teachers will be attending the two week summer training for Reading 360. Afterwards, they will decide how to incorporate this new curriculum into the daily instruction at some level. That decision will be addressed after the training. Attached is a master schedule along with a sample planner for grades K-2 that shows the specific time allocations for each grade level's ELA lessons.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

In reviewing the master schedules for 3-5, these grade levels spend a minimum of 45 minutes of the 90 minute ELA block per day on foundational skills instruction. This is the first year using the newly adopted Benchmark Advance reading curriculum which was chosen from the TN state approved list. Within this curriculum, which is based on the current Tennessee state ELA standards, foundational skills are taught through explicit and systematic evidence-based instruction. It also includes a purposeful scope and sequence with spiral review and repetition cycle, frequent application to real reading and writing experiences, and built-in differentiation. Within each lesson, foundational skills instruction is provided within categories such as morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and

fluency. Some lessons provide explicit and systematic foundational skills instruction within a mini-lesson. An example of this might be a grammar lesson on concrete and abstract nouns, which would be explicitly taught but then supported and practiced within a text. Other skills such as vocabulary/word study and fluency are often embedded within a text that is used to also teach specific content knowledge. Students have daily opportunities for independent reading where they are able to practice newly learned strategies and skills using texts at their instructional levels. Small group reading also provides a time for appropriate scaffolding and monitoring of student progress. Daily mini-lessons in writing are also provided by the teacher followed by independent writing practice. The 3-5 teachers are very pleased with the Benchmark curriculum. There are no plans to make any changes for next year. However, all of the 3-5 grade teachers will be attending the first week of online summer training on Reading 360. Afterwards, they will decide how to incorporate this new curriculum into their daily instruction at some level. Attached is a master schedule along with a sample planner for grades 3-5 that shows the specific time allocations for each grade level's ELA lessons.

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:

EasyCBM

This screener complies with RTI2 and Say Dyslexia requirements.

- All students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grades are tested using the easyCBM screener. EasyCBM measures early literacy skills and provides data on students' foundational literacy skills. This screener helps identify specific skills deficits.
 - The kindergarten easyCBM assessment contains Letter Naming, Letter Sounds, Phoneme Segmenting, and Word Reading Fluency.
 - First grade easyCBM assesses Letter Sounds, Phoneme Segmenting, Word Reading Fluency, and Passage Reading Fluency.
 - All students in grades 2-5 are tested using easyCBM on ELA in the areas of Passage Reading Fluency, Vocabulary, and Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension.
- EasyCBM meets the requirements for a dyslexia and RTI screener.
- If a student is identified as having dyslexia characteristics, they may also be given the PASS or PWRS assessment to further identify skills deficits and to help with their intervention plan.
- EasyCBM is given three times a year, in August, December, and April.

- The TE21 Case Assessment is a standards-based assessment that is also given to the 2-5 grades. It provides teachers with valuable data on individual student's mastery of grade level standards.
- The ELA component of the TE21 Case assessment consists of a writing prompt/assessment. This writing assessment is used as our 2-5 grades universal screener for written expression.

Intervention Structure and Supports

All students K-8 are tested with a universal screener in the fall, winter, and spring. When analyzing the data, students who scored below the 25%ile are then considered "at risk." A score of 10-24%ile is considered Tier II, and a score of 1-9%ile is considered Tier III. Our District Team then meets to give input about the students under consideration for RTI. This team consists of the principal, instructional coach, Title I supervisor, and special education supervisor. Next, our Grade Level Data Teams meet. At this point, teachers are asked to give input using classroom observations, classroom assessments, standards-based assessments, etc. Teachers help to determine which students will receive interventions for Tier II and Tier III. They may also recommend other students for interventions as well. Then, students are placed into Tier groups. An RTI plan is designed and put into place in order to address each child's specific deficit area along with specific interventions that address that deficit. Progress monitoring is also discussed in this plan in order to monitor each child's progress in their deficit area. Tier II students are progress monitored every other week and Tier III every week. All K-8 grade levels have a 30 minute block of time during each day in order to conduct RTI.

During their RTI time the Tier II students are sometimes pulled into a small group setting using evidence-based materials from our state approved reading series, Benchmark Advance. While other times the Tier II students work on modules from Moby Max, Study Island, ABC Mouse, and other evidence-based computer programs that address their specific reading deficits. These groups are progress monitored every other week in this specific area in order to track their progress.

During RTI time the Tier III students are pulled into a small group setting and given direct teacher instruction in their specific deficit areas. The lessons and materials used typically come from the evidence-based interventions provided with our state approved reading series, Benchmark Advance. Sometimes, the teachers will focus on reading passages for fluency, high frequency words, phonics and phonemic awareness activities, or close reading activities for comprehension. The Tier III students are progress monitored weekly in their specific deficit areas in order to monitor their progress.

Grade level data team meetings occur every 4.5 weeks. During this time, the teachers and RTI coordinator look at each student's progress monitoring data to be sure that the interventions described on their RTI plan are producing positive results in order to close the gap. If the student isn't making progress, then the intervention plan will be changed. This change could include a different strategy, different materials, smaller group setting, or a one on one setting. It might also be decided that an S-team meeting is necessary to discuss the possibility of special education testing.

District Level RTI Teams will meet after each universal screener cycle in order to review the data and discuss student progress.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

When any K-8 student scores in the “at risk” category on the universal screener results, there are several procedures that follow, as far as parent notification. A letter is sent home to notify parents that from recent testing, their child is experiencing some challenges in reading and has been placed in Tier II or Tier III interventions. It tells the additional amount of RTI time each day, discusses the importance of reading, and gives some suggestions for at home activities. Parents also receive a copy of the Student Intervention Plan. This plan tells the specific area of concern, the skill gap to be progress monitored, the teacher, and the amount of daily intervention time. It also includes the type of research based intervention that the child will be receiving in order to address the skill gaps. Along with these items, the student’s benchmark data sheet from easyCBM is sent home. It is printed in color in order to make the bar graphs easier for the parents to understand.

Every 4.5 weeks, the parents will receive an RTI progress report. One type is a mid-term report. It tells the parents the name of the interventionist, whether it’s reading or math and if it’s Tier II or III, and also whether the student is making good – some – or insufficient progress. The other type of report that’s sent home is the Review of Progress report, which is sent home after the Grade Level Team meetings. It tells the parents whether the student is making good – some – or insufficient progress. Both reports also provide an additional area to write specific notes that may need to be communicated to the parents.

We have recently developed a Home Literacy Report that will be sent home any time a student qualifies for Tier II or Tier III. This report includes information that explains what RTI is, gives an explanation of each tier of RTI, and lists the components of the RTI Framework. This document is intended to help parents better understand the depth and extent of their student’s needs. It provides a list of ways that parents can support their students at home, which includes visiting our school’s website. Our website provides a link that includes all of the reading and math computer-based programs that students use at school, so that parents and students are able to access those easily from home with no cost to them. The Home Literacy Report also includes research on the importance of students being proficient in reading by the end of third grade. This report is posted on the school’s website in order to make it available for all.

Professional Development Plan

All K-5 grade classroom teachers are required to complete the first week of online training for Reading 360 during the summer of 2021. This foundational skills training is provided by the TN Department of Education. It is grounded in a phonics-based approach and provided by trainers with a proven track record of supporting districts. The training will include phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. The training is provided by the TN Dept. of Education; therefore, it should meet all of the listed requirements.

In addition to the summer training, foundational skills professional development will be provided by the instructional coach for grades K-5 for one hour weekly during the month of August. The instructional coach will complete the one week of online foundational skills training (Reading 360) during the summer of 2021. The content from the training will be redelivered. This will allow educators time to discuss and collaborate about the foundational skills instruction that is taking place within their classrooms or during their RTI time. This should help to solidify the learning from the summer training.