

Benton County Schools
Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 12, 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

Kindergarten through second grade students spend an hour in foundational skills instruction daily. K-2nd grades utilize the CKLA evidence-based foundational piece. The CKLA foundational literacy piece is aligned to TN state standards and received an “all green” rating on ED Reports. This implementation began in the 2020-21 school year. Plans are to continue to use CKLA foundational skills materials through the life of this ELA adoption period. In the 2021-22 school year, CKLA foundational skills program will be implemented in the Pre-K classrooms as well. This will provide a solid foundation for our youngest learners and allow them to easily transition into the kindergarten foundational skills program. The CKLA foundational skills program follows the sounds-first approach to reading instruction. Students receive explicit instruction and practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Students in grades 3-5 spend 90 minutes on ELA instruction daily. This 90 minute block includes an integrated approach to foundational skills and knowledge-building content instruction. Grades 3-5 utilize the CKLA evidence-based program for this integrated approach to reading instruction. CKLA scored “all green” on ED Reports. This program is aligned to TN state standards and provides opportunities for students to receive instruction in foundational skills grounded in the science of reading such as spelling, grammar, morphology, writing, and fluency while also engaging in knowledge-based reading instruction that builds background knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

Additional Information about Instructional Materials

K-2 uses CKLA foundational skills piece and Wit Wisdom as their knowledge piece.

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

aimswebPlus

Intervention Structure and Supports

Benton County has specific procedures and protocols that are reviewed and distributed annually by the district RTI2 coordinator and school level RTI2 coordinators. The district RTI2 team meets a minimum of 5 times per year and consists of the district RTI2 coordinator and school level RTI2 coordinators. The district team also consults with the SPED and ESL supervisors. The district team participates in ongoing collaboration and training and redelivers to administrators and at school staff meetings. In addition, the district RTI2 coordinator keeps school administrators abreast of current information, improvement, and goals at district leadership meetings. Benton County also consults with the Northwest Core coordinator.

A nationally normed, skills-based universal screener (Aimsweb) is used 3 times per year at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. The screener can be administered to students in pre-kindergarten. Students identified as at-risk are administered survey level and/or diagnostic assessments to determine levels and specific deficits to best assign small group intervention. Both the universal screener and progress monitoring tools are utilized for RTI2 in the following areas of skill deficit: Basic Reading, Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, Written Expression, Math Calculation, Math Reasoning/Problem Solving, and Characteristics of Dyslexia. The Rapid Naming test is used as an additional screener to meet the requirements of the "Say Dyslexia" law. Our district uses research-based programs for interventions for students with characteristics of dyslexia (Wilson, Foundations by Wilson, and Spire). The district data coach supports the school level RTI2 coordinators and data teams in analyzing benchmark data. All elementary schools have data teams that monitor data and meet at 4 ½ week intervals to review progress and adjust programming based on student needs.

Students identified as at-risk receive 30-45 minutes of intervention daily during a grade level time in the master schedule just for RTI. Small group intervention is specific to the area of student need. Daily logs are kept by each interventionist. Administrators and the district RTI2 coordinator conduct fidelity checks to ensure Tier implementation is aligned with district protocol and monitoring requirements.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Parents of students in grades K-5 are notified that their child has scored "at-risk" for a significant reading deficiency (scoring in the 0-25th percentile) immediately following the completion of the fall universal screener. Scores are communicated to parents in parent-friendly language that includes information about small group instruction that will directly align with their child's skill deficits and that research-based materials to address these deficits will be used.

Parents are notified of their child's progress, or lack of progress, after the 4 ½ week data team review. Any changes being made due to lack of sufficient progress as shown by progress monitoring

and universal screening data are communicated to parents. And, that these changes will support their area of deficit. Progress monitoring communications go out to parents every 4 ½ weeks.

The ELA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that inform parents of the foundational skills and knowledge on which the students are working. Parents and families can better support their children when they are informed.

Professional Development Plan

Benton County teachers can benefit from a variety of literacy professional development opportunities. Many k-2 teachers completed the foundational skills mini-course training last summer provided on the Achieve the Core Website. Additionally, 44 teachers in grades k-5 have registered for the two-week foundational literacy training currently being offered by the state. Many teachers have begun the self-paced on-line portion. Teachers will participate in week two (hosted here in Benton County at Camden Central High School) in July 2021 upon completion of the online requirements.

In addition, in mid-April, 2021, our district offered a 3-hour training course for teachers in grades K-5 on writing instruction. This training was provided by our CKLA partners. Teachers learned how to preview a unit with a focus on the writing pieces in that unit. This deeper look at the writing expectations will help teachers in planning future lessons with more intentionality.

May 2021 professional development plans include K-2 Enhancing Planning and Instruction in CKLA focused on foundational skills planning as well as a 3rd-5th grade Enhancing Planning and Instruction in CKLA. In addition, CKLA will also facilitate a Small Group Instruction professional development opportunity for teachers in grades K-2 and 3-5.

Pre-K teachers will also receive a day of CKLA professional development tailored to the new Pre-K CKLA foundational skills program that our Pre-K classrooms will implement in the fall of 2021. Plans are also being made for Pre-K teachers as well as Educational Assistants to receive a day of professional development in the fall tailored to meet a specific need determined through observations. This PD will focus on building Pre-K students' language skills and vocabulary through intentional conversations. This is still in the planning stages, but will tentatively occur in early August 2021.

Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

*Benton County Schools has applied to participate in the Early Literacy Networks opportunity offered by the state. We look forward to partnering with an outside vendor to further assist our PK-2 teachers in improving their foundational literacy skills and knowledge of HQIM implementation which will in turn lead to greater success for our students.

*The RTI progress letter is used for students receiving RTI services in grades k-12.

*The "Dyslexia" letter is used for students once the need is recognized through testing. Dyslexia characteristics are communicated with parents through this letter.