



**McKenzie Special School District**

**Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 25, 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**

Our K-2 teachers have a 90 minute literacy block each day. Our kindergarten teachers use Wonders by McGraw Hill, and 1st-2nd use Benchmark Advance. Both are aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Their focus is to teach daily foundational skills through a systematic, explicit approach while incorporating instruction and student practice in fluency, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, phonics, and comprehension. The scope and sequence of the curriculums is based on research of effective instruction for struggling readers. The adoption of high quality instructional materials has changed how our teachers plan for and deliver instruction. Teachers are spending much less time gathering resources and more time implementing instruction. Our goal moving forward to next year is to provide all K-2 teachers with an intensive and comprehensive training in teaching reading. When equipped with this training, instructional tools, and high quality materials, our teachers will provide students with the reading skills they need to successfully master Tennessee's academic state standards.

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

Our 3rd-4th teachers use Benchmark Advance and have a 90 minute literacy block each day; these grades are housed on our elementary campus. The curriculum material was selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Teachers have daily read alouds, mini lessons to focus on vocabulary development, whole and small group instruction, and writing and grammar. Benchmark Advance provides gradual release opportunities to enhance student learning and engagement. Our 5th grade is located at our middle school and is a 60 minute block. We use Wonders by McGraw Hill, and our curriculum materials were selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. We teach foundational skills through a systematic, explicit approach while incorporating instruction and student practice. Foundational Skills are taught through instruction, practice, and assessment of phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and word recognition to remediate identified gaps in skills. Spelling and writing are included daily. Wonders focuses on student-centered learning, small-group teaching, and mini lessons with embedded supports for differentiation. Both of our curriculums for our 3rd-5th grade band include daily lessons aligned to TN state standards where instruction includes morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, fluency,



vocabulary, and comprehension. Although the daily schedule is not the same each day, all daily instruction includes components for knowledge-building (to build and improve the ability to comprehend complex texts and apply that knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak). Our teachers include daily practice with read alouds and silent reading for grade-level and challenging texts. They implement daily activities for building comprehension skills that include but aren't limited to summarizing the text with a partner, writing in response to an essay question while citing text-based evidence, unpacking difficult vocabulary through the use of context clues, and engaging in group discussions through higher-level questions. Our improvement focus for next year is improving our implementation of high quality materials. This was our first year with our newly adopted materials, and we plan to provide intensive 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**

McGraw Hill - K-5 Wonders

### **Additional Information about Instructional Materials**

I could only choose one answer above, so our district uses:

K - Wonders

1-4 Benchmark Advance

5 - Wonders

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

Aims Web Plus

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

We administer universal screeners to all students using Aimsweb Plus. For students scoring lower than the 25th percentile in reading subtests, we go a step further and administer survey level assessments, the PASS and PWRS, so we are able to drill down and find the student's specific area(s) of deficit. Based off these assessments, students are placed in intervention classes and provided with instruction in their deficit area(s).

Some of the intervention pieces we use with our students include Sounds Sensible and SPIRE, Read Naturally, and Reading Rewards. We've also just trained our interventionists in a week long comprehensive Orton Gillingham training. Our short-term goal is to train all intervention assistants during the late spring 2021/early fall 2021.

Progress monitoring in all schools takes place bi-weekly. School-level data teams consisting of the administrator, classroom teacher, interventionist, and EL Teacher (if needed) meet every 4-5 weeks and review each student's progress monitoring data and any other data deemed necessary to make



informed decisions to ensure success for the student. Students may stay in their current tier, move to a different tier, have their intervention changed, be dismissed from tier II or III, or be referred for a comprehensive evaluation based on these meetings. Communication is reported to parents every 4.5 weeks about their child's progress.

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

We will be sending home our newly revised (attached artifacts) parent notification letter anytime a student is placed in Tiers II or III clearly describing the deficits the student is demonstrating, how we plan to help the student in a small groups setting and how we plan to help the student with skills-based interventions. This letter will be sent after universal screeners are administered three times a year (Fall, Winter, and Spring). The letter also highlights the importance of developing foundational skills and being a reader by third grade as well as includes literacy tools parents or guardians can use at home to increase their child's foundational skills. In addition, we send home progress monitoring reports every 4.5 weeks clearly indicating the progress being made. We send home benchmarking results three times a year. Teachers have continuous communication with parents throughout the year. At parent teacher conferences that take place once in the fall and once in the spring, we use multiple sources of data for meaningful discussions about the student. Part of the data we include is benchmarking and progress monitoring from Aims Web Plus. We send home a letter developed by AIMS Web describing the universal screening process each time we send home benchmarking results (three times a year).

### **Professional Development Plan**

We provided all teachers with intense training by the vendors of their adopted materials during this school year. We are also providing all SPED and K-2 teachers with a week-long comprehensive Orton Gillingham training that focuses on early literacy and foundational skills. These educators will come back and work with/train 3rd-5th teachers during PLC and after school meetings. We will include instructional strategies for reading, foundational skills, differentiation, and the science of reading during our fall inservice. We have K-5 general and special education teachers participating in the Reading 360 literacy training. They have just completed online modules and will receive in-person training in late summer at a neighboring district. We are also planning to implement vertical planning strategies for closing gaps in foundational skills for our K-5 teachers this fall. During these activities, we will work alongside our NW Core office.