

## **Invictus Nashville Montessori Charter School**

### Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

First Approved: July 11, 2025

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**

At Invictus, our literacy approach is grounded in the science of reading and structured literacy, supported by evidence-based research and enriched through Montessori pedagogy. This approach ensures that all students develop the foundational skills, knowledge, and confidence needed for lifelong reading success. K-2 classrooms implement Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) curriculum in conjunction with Montessori and materials. This model is aligned to Tennessee State Standards and leverages the strengths of Montessori and CKLA. Literacy instruction is embedded throughout the school day with students receiving targeted foundational skills instruction for a minimum of 75 minutes each day as evidenced in our daily schedule. Instruction occurs during the individual and small- group based Montessori 3-hour interdisciplinary work cycle as well as the use of CKLA's "knowledge strand," ensuring a balance of structured and explicit instruction and student-driven exploration.

Montessori lessons are delivered one-on-one or in small groups, followed by independent or peer practice. Teachers model strategies, observe progress, and guide students through practice as they demonstrate readiness. CKLA instruction is conducted in whole-group settings, particularly for the knowledge strand, which includes interactive read-alouds to build oral comprehension, vocabulary, and background knowledge in alignment with state standards.

Literacy learning begins with strong phonemic awareness, as students engage in daily lessons and activities that help them hear, segment, and manipulate the individual sounds in spoken language. This foundational skill lays the groundwork for phonics, where students receive systematic instruction in letter-sound relationships and spelling patterns. Teachers model these connections using both CKLA materials and Montessori tools such as sandpaper letters and chaining charts, allowing students to explore the structure of language through hands-on, multisensory experiences. As students grow in decoding skills, they begin building fluency through repeated readings of phonetically controlled texts, supported by guided practice and regular check-ins with teachers. These opportunities to read aloud, track their progress, and hear fluent models help students develop both accuracy and confidence as well as allowing teachers to make adjustments in support and methods. Vocabulary development is embedded across the day. Through domain-based units, songs, poems, and interactive read-alouds, students encounter and explore rich, academic

language. Teachers revisit key words often, encouraging students to use them in conversation and writing, and helping them deepen understanding through context and connection. Comprehension is nurtured through intentional instruction and modeling of critical thinking. Teachers guide students to analyze texts, explore themes, and evaluate the perspectives of authors. High level questioning encourages students to make meaning, draw on background knowledge, and express their own ideas in response to what they read and hear.

During work cycles, teachers rotate through lessons, monitor understanding, and provide real time support. These instructional blocks are standards aligned, thoughtfully planned and observed weekly by administrative staff to ensure alignment and provide necessary support and feedback. Our integrated approach ensures that all students receive the structured literacy support they need within a rich, engaging, and student-centered environment.

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

We do not serve students in this grade band.

### **Additional Information**

Invictus is committed to advancing literacy achievement through intentional planning, aligned resources, and responsive instruction. In the upcoming school year(s), we will implement a comprehensive plan to strengthen ELA outcomes by focusing on staffing, curriculum, scheduling, interventions, and professional development. To guide this work, Invictus will develop a focused schoolwide Literacy Improvement Plan. This plan will outline key data points, identify student groups in need of support, and specify actions to close gaps. As initial literacy data becomes available, school leaders will analyze student needs to determine where additional support is needed. Coaches will conduct classroom calibration walks to identify trends in instruction and student actions. These observations will guide real-time coaching and help align instructional decisions with student needs. Each K-2 classroom will implement a minimum of 75 minutes of foundational skills instruction daily, embedded within the Montessori work cycle and supported by Amplify CKLA. Literacy instruction will include explicit teaching in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension ensuring students have a strong literacy foundation. RTI<sup>2</sup> intervention blocks will be protected to ensure targeted, small-group support based on data. Finally, targeted professional development will be provided to help teachers strengthen their ELA practice and meet the needs of all learners. Through this multi-tiered approach, Invictus will ensure that all students build strong foundations in reading and language.

### **Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2**

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

### **Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5**

We do not serve students in this grade band.

### **Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5**

NWEA MAP Suite K-2

## **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Invictus aligns all reading interventions and student supports with the expectations outlined in the Tennessee RTI<sup>2</sup> Manual. Students identified as having a significant reading deficiency receive layered, evidence-based instruction tailored to their specific skill gaps through Tier II and Tier III supports. Invictus uses Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Suite for its universal reading screener in grades K-2. This screener aligns with RTI<sup>2</sup> and Say Dyslexia requirements.

At Invictus, reading intervention begins with high-quality Tier I instruction that develops both skills-based and knowledge-based competencies aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards. Instruction is grounded in evidence-based practices and delivered using a combination of Amplify CKLA and Montessori language materials. Tier I instruction is differentiated through the use of multiple data sources to proactively identify and respond to student needs. All K-2 students are universally screened three times per year using MAP Growth Reading. Results are analyzed to inform flexible small-group instruction within the classroom. If Tier I differentiation is not sufficient in closing skill gaps for some students, those students are referred for Tier II intervention. Tier II interventions are provided in addition to Tier I instruction and are based on the specific skill deficits identified through MAP data and additional diagnostic tools. Interventions are systematic, explicit, and research-based, focusing on one skill at a time until mastery is achieved. Students in Tier II receive 30 minutes of targeted instruction daily in small groups. They are progress monitored every two weeks using validated tools aligned to the skill being addressed. After three data points, if adequate progress is not evident, the intervention data is reviewed and adjusted accordingly. If students continue to show limited growth after intervention changes, they may be referred for Tier III support. Tier III intervention is designed for students demonstrating the most significant reading difficulties. These students receive 45 minutes of daily, intensive instruction, in addition to Tier I, in small groups of 2-4. Instruction is delivered by trained personnel using structured literacy programs, targeting phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. As with Tier II, Tier III students are progress monitored biweekly, with instructional decisions made based on student response. If three consecutive probes indicate no growth, intervention may be modified. Once students demonstrate mastery of the targeted skills, they may be recommended for movement between tiers.

Intervention decisions are made through RTI Data Team Meetings, which consider MAP scores, progress monitoring data, and teacher observations. These meetings ensure appropriate placement, materials, and scheduling are in place, and that interventions are being delivered with fidelity. Intervention blocks are embedded in the master schedule to meet time and intensity requirements outlined in the Tennessee RTI<sup>2</sup> Manual.

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

We are committed to transparent and ongoing communication with families about their child's literacy development. We ensure that families of students in grades K-2 are notified if their child demonstrates a significant reading deficiency, defined as scoring in the bottom percentiles on the MAP Growth universal reading screener. This notification is provided in family-friendly language and sent out within two weeks of each benchmark assessment window (fall, winter, and spring).

Invictus hosts a family orientation event before school begins, where we share information about foundational literacy, reading development, and the importance of reading by the end of third grade. Throughout the year, we continue to provide accessible resources that explain the Montessori approach to literacy, structured literacy practices, and ways families can support their child's learning at home.

Following each MAP screening, families of students identified with a reading deficiency receive a Home Literacy Report that includes:

- 1) A summary of the student's specific skill gaps, with clear explanations of the depth and extent of need
- 2) A description of the reading intervention the child will receive, including the instructional focus and how interventions will address the skill gaps
- 3) No-cost reading activities for families to do at home, such as phonemic awareness games, letter-sound practice, and read-aloud prompts
- 4) A reminder of the importance of reading proficiency by third grade and how it impacts future learning
- 5) A brief summary of Tennessee's 4th grade promotion pathways, even though we currently only serve K-2, to build parent awareness early.

Home Literacy Reports are issued three times per year for students in grades K-2, aligned to benchmark windows. Reports are translated as needed and followed up by teachers through phone calls, email, or in-person conferences to ensure that families understand the information and can partner in supporting their child's growth. If progress monitoring data indicates a lack of growth, families are contacted within a 4-6 week cycle to communicate adjustments in the child's intervention plan. In addition to these communications, we send home weekly or unit-based curriculum newsletters aligned to CKLA and Montessori lessons. These help families understand what their children are learning in foundational skills and knowledge-building domains and offer prompts for at-home discussion and practice.

### **Professional Development Plan**

At Invictus Montessori, we are committed to developing expert early literacy teachers who understand and implement evidence-based reading instruction. All K-5 teachers are required to complete the Tennessee Early Reading Training, a comprehensive, state-developed professional learning series grounded in the science of reading and aligned with the Tennessee Foundational Literacy Standards. To support successful completion of these asynchronous modules, Invictus has built dedicated time into the school calendar, including professional development days and weekly planning time. Leaders will monitor completion and offer coaching support to ensure understanding and classroom application.

In addition, all lead teachers are either trained or actively enrolled in Montessori certification programs, equipping them with a deep understanding of the Montessori approach to foundational literacy instruction. This includes multisensory methods, phonemic awareness, and early writing

practices that complement structured literacy.

Throughout the school year, teachers will engage in ongoing professional development focused on core components of early reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These sessions will be led by instructional coaches and Montessori-trained leaders, using real-time classroom data and observations to tailor support. Walkthroughs and coaching cycles will help ensure that reading instruction is both standards-aligned and developmentally responsive.