

Knowledge Academies

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: April 8, 2024

Approved: July 1, 2024

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

n/a

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Our district has an integrated literacy block for grade five (5) grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. We have an approved waiver for our curriculum materials. During the integrated ELA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a total of 90 minutes of ELA instruction. 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) for about 60 minutes per day and foundational skills instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, spelling, and writing for at least 30 minutes per day.

Our adopted curriculum, i-Ready, Ready Reading, also engages students in work around fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills are not taught in isolation, but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection. For example, our fifth-grade curriculum, allows students to begin by briefly activating prior knowledge and read independently and/or aloud. After the daily read aloud (or independent reading in on-grade level, complex text), the students may summarize the content (through a think-pair-share model), unpack the most essential vocabulary (“word work”), respond to a series of scaffolded questions, and write a response to an inferential question that requires students to use evidence from the text to support their answer. For example, in vocabulary lessons teachers provide explicit support for vocabulary needed to access the complex text. In one lesson, the students study the root “port” as in import, export, portable, etc. Students use their word knowledge as they engage in group discussion and writing activities. Therefore, foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of this 90-minute block and is dedicated to developing students’ holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

N/A

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Ready Reading—approved waiver 5th grade

Knowledge Academy and, subsequently, the replication charter for KA at The Crossing were granted use of unapproved books per TCA 49-6-2206 with our executed contracts with Metro Nashville Public Schools (see page 786 of application).

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

i-Ready Suite

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, students are given a universal screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are “at-risk”. Our grade-level teachers and principals review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-40th percentile. Additional student data measures are also used in determining intervention placement. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction. Students classified as Tier II or Tier III are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits in order to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps.

Students receive daily, small-group intervention for at least 45 minutes in their area of greatest deficit. We have research-based options for reading intervention support available to our students who are “at-risk” and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our ELA curriculum contains an assessment and remediation guide in which teachers can find activities that directly address skill gaps. They can tailor this to the needs of their RTI group of students. If that intervention is not proving to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions (such as SPIRE) become an option.

Data teams meet every 4 ½ weeks to determine if a change in the intervention or the person providing the intervention is warranted. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance, engagement) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider. Our students receive explicit instruction in their area of deficit in small groups using research-based materials and strategies. These students are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who do demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law’s requirements. Our district uses a research-based supplemental program as one intervention for students with dyslexia and notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that the SPIRE curriculum is used to support those students, as it is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of systematic, explicit,

sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for those students. Intervention takes place daily during a grade-level time in the master schedule just for RTI. When students are in their RTI groups, they work on activities and assignments that make them stronger in that skill. For example, students who need instruction in comprehension may read a new text and answer scaffolded questions, all related to the knowledge-building unit they are studying in Tier I instruction. For students who need fluency support, they may receive intervention using the SPIRE program.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

When students are not meeting reading proficiency, we notify our parents with a parent-friendly letter advising them that their student has scored below expected proficiency using our reading screeners. This letter is sent via the student, US Mail, email, and posted to their students Schoology communication log. In addition to the letter, the teacher reaches out to the parent to schedule a conference with our team.

In our letter, we discuss assessments their student has taken, what these assessments address, and the areas of concern based on performance. Using parent-friendly language, we review skills that determine student success in reading and explain their current placement. In this letter, we review our curriculum and classroom approach with parents to assist the student in meeting mastery. We discuss specific areas that we will target, the amount of time in each area, and the teacher(s) working with the student. We discuss how RTI works, explain additional focused instruction, monitoring, and pre- and post-testing. In addition, we provide a suggestion of free activities that students and families can access at home and offer literacy activities for our families (books, games, fluency probes, etc.). Our letter explains the importance of reading on grade level for future reading success. We present the need for proficiency and why we feel the extra services students receive are so important. We explain that we will track this data closely using a reading assessment three times a year, and the progress students can demonstrate with clearly articulated program plans throughout the year. This letter is sent annually.

Our letter supports our parents, discusses the availability for parent-teacher communication, and a commitment to build a stronger reader through targeted intervention and practice strategies. These resources are available in paper format and online through student laptops. In addition, we provide free after-school tutoring for students identified as at-risk and parent literacy nights for our entire faculty.

Professional Development Plan

Our teachers have completed Early Reading Training, which is available as an online, asynchronous learning experience through Best for All Central. All new teachers also complete this training. Teachers in 5th grade will continue to participate in Literacy based professional development that works with the five areas of reading. Professional Development, in the areas of Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension, will be utilized to increase core knowledge and teacher readiness. Within this training, teachers will be trained to assess student readiness and be provided tools to assist in literacy development. Using the Florida Center for

Reading Research, research-based topics can be explored, developed, and used to enhance reading instruction for all students. Teachers will also receive professional development from Lexia and I-Ready as benchmark data is collected. For subsequent school years, teachers will focus on small group instruction based on data collection from Benchmark Testing, I-Ready, and Lexia data. This data will allow teachers to receive instruction in areas that are needed for growth and development. Fluency instruction will also be a focus of instruction and tracking for the school year to assure that students have a solid foundation of Phonemic Awareness and Phonics developments. This process will allow us to identify and support EL and SPED learners in our building. Focusing on fluency will allow us to understand and develop teachers to support the needs of our students.