

## **Cocke County Schools**

### **Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 27, 2021**

**Updated: May 5, 2023**

**Updated: March 21, 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**

Our district uses a foundational skills curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. This curriculum uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time (60 minutes daily) for foundational skills instruction in grades K-2. Our Academic Coaches and teachers have worked this year to develop guides for each unit that highlights standards/skills that are new in blue and spiraled standards/skills in black. These are included as an appendix to our pacing guides. These are to be used by teachers to ensure that all Tennessee State Standards have been taught during the school year.

One hour is committed to foundational skills instruction and one hour is committed to knowledge. Important elements in the CKLA foundational skills lessons include: decoding and encoding, explicit teaching of letter-sound correspondences, a systematic approach to phonics, focus on phonemes, staircase of complexities, and deliberate consistent practice. We will also be using the state training on foundational skills in supplement to our CKLA.

CKLA includes foundational skill instruction that has a designated block of time. Sixty minutes of daily foundational skills instruction is required in K – 2 classrooms. The CKLA Skills Strand provides comprehensive instruction in foundational reading skills, such as phonological awareness, phonics, and word recognition and language skills, including conventions of English, spelling, and grammar. In addition, lessons include fluency practice, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing instruction. During instruction, teachers explicitly teach a sound, the students practice the sound aloud, and the teacher models writing the sound. Then the students refer to their individual code chart on which they write the sound, and students apply the skill in independent practice.

We plan to continue to improve in our implementation of CKLA for next school year. Common PLCs for teachers in grades K – 2 will allow time for teachers to collaborate and solve problems of practice. We also hope to implement knowledge learned from the Tennessee Early Literacy training which teachers will complete this summer.

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

Our 3-5 schedules reflect instruction in reading, grammar, morphology, fluency and writing with 30 minutes of embedded foundational literacy skills instruction.

Our district uses CKLA for our literacy block in grades three through five. The CKLA curriculum is aligned with Tennessee State Standards and meets all foundational skills requirements. The CKLA program that we have chosen meets the approved curriculum by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission.

The integrated ELA block provides an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons. Our students receive a total of thirty minutes of foundational skills instruction daily which is embedded. The daily foundational skills instruction is aligned to the Tennessee State standard and includes morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency. An evidence-based approach is used to teach foundational skills. The foundational literacy skills are not taught in isolation but are embedded within the lesson to ensure connection, continuity, and cohesion. Specific supports for fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are included.

For example, the fifth grade students will be beginning the domain on Chemical Matter. They will begin this domain by recalling prior knowledge and reading 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. In the vocabulary lessons teachers provide explicit support for vocabulary needed to access the complex text. Students will be able to use word knowledge skills as they engage in group discussion and writing activities. Foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of the ninety minute block and is dedicated to developing students’ holistic literacy approach to grammar, spelling, writing, fluency, and comprehension as recommended by research.

### **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**

We will be supplementing the foundational skills piece with any additional materials received at the Reading 360 training.

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

Cocke County administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, aimswebPlus, to students in grades K-5.

## **Intervention Structure and Supports**

All Cocke County intervention supports, schedules, and structures align with the expectations in the RTI<sup>2</sup> Manual. Interventions are evidence-based, differentiated by Tier, and address specific skill gaps. Data teams use progress monitoring data to inform decisions about duration, material, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress.

Beginning in August, students will be given the universal screener to determine which students have a reading deficiency that is significant and are “at-risk”. School RTI<sup>2</sup> data teams including RTI<sup>2</sup> school leaders, classroom teachers, and principals will review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. These students will be placed into Tier II or Tier III instruction. These students will be given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific learning needs. Students will then be placed in small-group interventions for at least forty-five minutes in the area of greatest deficit. In grades K-5 all students are given AIMSwebPlus as the Universal Screener.

Research-based interventions are available for reading intervention support. Schools have strategic interventions such as Exact Path and S.P.I.R.E. These interventions as well as CLKA Reading can be tailored to the needs of RTI<sup>2</sup> group students. Data teams meet every four and a half weeks to determine if changes need to be made with either the intervention, person providing the intervention, or the amount of time in the intervention. Data teams also take into consideration other variables such as participation and attendance in the data team meeting before a change is made to the intervention or provider.

Students who are determined to have characteristics of dyslexia according to screening criteria will also receive a researched based intervention. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. They will be notified which intervention their child will be using for support, either CKLA Reading or S.P.I.R.E. Students will work in a systematic, explicit, and phonics-based intervention.

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

Our district notifies parents in K-5 immediately after the fall universal screener has been completed and students have been identified as “at-risk” for having a significant reading deficiency. Students’ scores are communicated in parent-friendly language that provides a clear explanation of student skills gaps. Parents are informed which intervention their child will receive and the amount of support daily. Also in the letter is an explanation of the importance of reading by the end of third grade. These important literacy letters are sent home at least three times each school year.

In addition, parents are notified of their child’s progress, or the lack of progress, after each four and a half week data meeting. The notification/communication states any changes being made to the intervention based on the student’s progress monitoring and universal screening data. Recommended activities to support students in the area of deficit are also communicated to parents.

The CKLA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming domain. Families can better understand how to support their student(s) through questions about text and through an awareness of what foundational skills their child(ren) is (are) learning within the classroom.

Each school has sets of decodable texts and other books that can be sent home for additional practice between student and parent. We have also partnered with Save the Children to build an ABC Bus (Arts, Books, and Creativity). This bus will travel around the district both during the school year and summer to offer opportunities to families to interact with their child and state standards.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Cocke County will offer two weeks of the state training on foundational skills. Other teachers will be offered to complete the online modules throughout next school year and attend the one week training during the summer.

We are also a part of the Early Literacy Network and the Implementation Network, which will focus on providing professional development in foundational literacy skills instruction (ELN) and refinement with high quality instructional materials (LIN).

Ongoing professional development topics will be introduced in the summer and will continue as the focus topic throughout the school year.

Topics include:

- Best Practice for small group, chaining, and decodables for K-2 teachers.
- Intellectual Prep & Lesson Rehearsal and Student Work Analysis for 3-5 teachers.

### **Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

We will work with teachers over the next year to blend the materials and information from the state training into the CKLA curriculum.