

Haywood County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 7, 2021

Updated: November 1, 2023

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 EL Education to engage students in learning K-2 foundational literacy skills. We devote 60 minutes daily to a content knowledge block to build students' knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. EL's Skills Block is rooted in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards for foundational skills. The Skills Block time is built over 60 minutes including 15 minutes devoted to whole group explicit instruction and three 15-minute-long small groups aligned to the microphases of the students. During whole group instruction, teachers teach grade-level phonological awareness, phonics, fluency skills, and comprehension. The teacher takes time to explicitly teach a sound or pattern, the students practice decoding or encoding using the skill being taught. Within small group time, teachers meet students based on their needs as prescribed through the EL benchmark assessment and aligned to the work within microphases. Our kindergarten students also have 15 minutes built into their intervention block that is dedicated to phonemic awareness. During this time, teachers use Heggerty's Phonemic Awareness supplemental curriculum to engage students in meaningful sounds first routines.

Through a partnership with Instruction Partners, next school year we plan to fully implement the "I am a Reader and Writer Project" for our K-2 students during our intervention time. This project will align with the work students are doing within the EL microphases. Teachers will assign learning targets aligned to the skills block cycles that will be progress monitored and track through the use of student portfolios. K-2 teachers plan small group instruction, engage students in meaningful center activities, and give push-in support guidance centered on the learning targets and goals of each student.

For example, in the second module and fifth cycle of 1st grade, students will be introduced to "o", "b", "j", "w", "x", "p", and "g". While working with these letters and sounds, students will use a variety of practice opportunities to apply new skills including: chaining, spelling to complement reading, interactive writing, decoding and spelling, and the decodable reader routine. A learning target associated with this cycle could be: I can build, read, and write words with 3 and 4 phonemes C5- o, b, j, w, and x such as box, jog, and how.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Haywood County Schools has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5. We are currently in the third year of implementation of LearnZillion Guidebooks. The adopted curriculum is grounded in reading science, Tennessee ELA standards, approved by the State Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission, and ranks among highly effective curricula on Ed Reports. During the ELA block, students receive 90 minutes of daily instruction that meets the evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills. The daily instruction builds knowledge to improve the students' ability to comprehend complex text and apply the knowledge gained as they listen, read, think, speak, and write. LearnZillion Guidebooks also creates opportunities for students to exercise vocabulary, morphology, language, writing, and fluency skills. The skills addressed, are not taught in isolation, but strategically embedded within each lesson to solidify the connection.

For example, third-grade students in Haywood County have recently began a module of study titled, *Because of Winn Dixie*, in which students build connections through multiple texts centered around unlikely friendships. The unit engages students in complex text through student-to-student conversations, character analysis, summarizing, connecting key ideas, vocabulary study, word structures, grammar, scaffolding questions, text evidenced responses, and writing.

To satisfy RTI2 requirements, our most "at-risk" students participate in 45 minutes of intervention daily to strengthen foundational literacy skills such as: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

LearnZillion - K-5 Expeditionary Learning

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

LearnZillion - 3-5 Guidebooks

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

Our district administers the TN Universal Reading Screener (AimsWeb+) to our students in grades K-5.

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, students are identified as having a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk" through the use of a universal screener (AIMSWEB +). This screener meets the requirements of TN Code §49-1-229 and is on the recommended list in Tennessee's RTI2 framework manual. Students who have scored between the 0-25 percentile demonstrate a need for the support of a research-based systematic intervention program. These students are classified as Tier II or Tier III and are provided the specific support needed as identified by a diagnostic assessment which determines 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. Each school's master schedule includes an intervention block that is time reserved for addressing specific skill deficits. (Sample schedules are attached.)

Research-based options for reading intervention support students who are “at-risk” and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our adopted ELA curriculum contains an assessment and remediation guide (designed with the help of Instruction Partners) which allows teachers to provide students explicit instruction in small groups based upon their identified needs. If that intervention proves through progress monitoring not to be effective, a more comprehensive, strategic interventions become an option. Students are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive intervention as outlined in the SAY Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law’s requirements. These interventions include: Sound Sensible, Spire, or SRA Corrective Reading. All interventions are based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and are considered strong support for those students. Our most intensive Tier III students are supported through the use of Wilson Reading. Parents receive notification if their child is identified as having the characteristics of dyslexia and receive regular updates on their child’s progress following each data review.

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, etc.) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Haywood County Schools notifies parents in grades K-5 if their child is “at-risk” for or has a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring in the 0-25th percentile immediately after the district’s schools administer the fall universal screening benchmark. Student results are communicated to parents in simple terms. That provides a clear explanation of student skill gaps and the depth and extent of student needs. The parents are told what intervention their student will receive and the amount of time each student will receive daily. The letter includes the importance of being able to read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade.

The district defines how students are assessed and what a significant reading deficiency means. Parents are notified of their child’s progress following the 4 ½ week data team meeting with a copy of the student’s data. This report is accompanied by a letter that informs parents of the data team results. Students may move to a higher or lower level of intervention or receive a new interventionist.

Additionally, the ELA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip parents to work with the child. Families can better understand how to support their student(s) through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their child(ren) are learning. Every 4 ½ weeks parents receive their child’s data and opportunities to support their child’s reading with no cost activities. Haywood County also subscribes to iReady diagnostic assessments and learning paths, and parents are encouraged to use this with their student.

Professional Development Plan

This summer the Tennessee Department of Education will provide 25 hours of self-paced online modules and a week of in-person training to deepen teacher knowledge of foundational skills such as: phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. These trainings will be led by state-selected experts. Most HCS K-2 teachers, all K-2 administrators, and all district administrators will attend. Any additional spots will be allotted for 3-5 teachers who wish to participate. Teachers will demonstrate knowledge and competency on the post-test at the end of the online modules.

All K-5 staff, teachers, and educational assistants are required to participate in district professional development days and in-services. During this time, the staff engages with the curriculum they teach to unpack the content, protocols, and instructional strategies. All district trainings will be grounded in reading science and absent of cueing or MSV strategies. Alongside school and district administration, K-2 teachers will continue to expand their internalization in the phonics-based work of the "I am a Reader and Writer Project" as well as EL's Skills Block to address the foundational skills students need to be readers. Teachers in grades 3-5 will also work to unpack modules within LearnZillion Guidebook's curriculum to backward map instruction. These sessions focus on the development and application of foundational literacy, comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, grammar, and writing skills. Teacher knowledge and competency will be assessed through collaborative conversations, walkthrough observations, student work, and review of student data.