

Lincoln County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 25, 2021

Updated: June 2, 2023

Updated: March 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

Lincoln County Schools has a dedicated foundational reading skills block for grades K-2 rooted in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) was selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. K-2 students spend a minimum of 45 minutes each day engaged in direct systematic foundational skills instruction aligned to CKLA's research-driven scope of foundational skills. This instructional time includes explicit instruction, practice activities, and application within text to build phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. This primary foundational instruction is coupled with the Listening & Learning knowledge-building component to provide a comprehensive curriculum. The CKLA scope and sequence includes direct instruction and aligned student practice in phonics, grammar, spelling, and writing. There are four guiding principles for the CKLA skills strand:

- **Explicit Phonics:** Explicit, systematic phonics instruction is a more effective way to teach decoding than “whole language” or whole word methods.
- **Synthetic Phonics:** Synthetic phonics (or linguistic phonics), in which instruction is oriented from sound to letter, is an especially powerful way to teach phonics.
- **Repeated Oral Practice:** Repeated oral practice and oral reading are proven methods of improving fluency.
- **Intensive Practice:** Intensive practice with skills-aligned texts is essential in order to build reliability and automaticity in reading.

Additionally, CKLA engages students in ongoing reading fluency and comprehension practice with decodable readers aligned to the skills students are learning to make meaning from text and to produce the written word. These readers increase in length and complexity as students develop their reading and spelling skills.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Lincoln County Schools has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 anchored in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Amplify's Core Knowledge Language Arts, our

curriculum materials in Grade 3-5, was selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. During the integrated ELA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a total of 98 minutes of ELA instruction in grade three and 75 minutes of ELA instruction in grades four and five each day. Although the daily routine 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 curricula also engage 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.

A daily lesson sequence in grade 3 CKLA may include briefly activating prior knowledge and reading independently and/or aloud in partners or whole-group. 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 with both discussion and writing and write a response to an inferential question that requires students to use evidence from the text to support their answer. Students also receive vocabulary instruction where teachers provide explicit support for vocabulary needed to access the complex text. In some lessons, the students may study the root words to understand how they can use parts of words to determine meaning. Students use their word knowledge as they engage in group discussion and writing activities. Therefore, foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of a 120-minute block and is dedicated to developing students’ holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research.

In grades 4-5, a daily lesson sequence using Amplify’s Core Knowledge Language Arts typically includes whole-class instruction targeting grade-level standards for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language with complex texts. Whole-class instruction provides a space for students to think deeply about meaningful text, talk with other students to develop and refine their thinking about text, and write about their knowledge and understanding of complex text. Students also participate in small-group instruction during which they receive targeted instruction in morphology and spelling patterns, reading fluency, and grammar. Small group time may also be used to support students with vocabulary and additional knowledge building needed to fully engage with the unit texts, as well as personalized instruction in their writing.

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 encourage our families to access the interactive "at-home decodables" through the state's Best for All Central website. These decodables allow our students additional practice with their families and provide families with the sounds-support to connect school and home practice.

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

FastBridge is the universal reading screener for students in grades K-2 and 4-5. Our third grade students are given the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, aimswebPlus. These screeners comply with RTI² and Say Dyslexia requirements.

Intervention Structure and Supports

Lincoln County's tiered support system follows the RTI² Framework: building a strong foundation through early and continued screening, research-based and high-quality instruction for all, tier I remediation and differentiation, tier II and III progressive intervention, progress-monitoring, data team meetings, and planning PLCs.

A universal screener is used three times each year. School-level teams use this and other data to determine the needs of individual students within our tiered model of support. Discussion around reader performance also includes identifying characteristics of Dyslexia according to the Tennessee Dyslexia Resource Guide. When the need for tier II or III intervention is evidenced, diagnostic assessments and the Teacher Observation Questionnaire for Dyslexia are used to identify specific skill deficits and/or dyslexia characteristics.

When school teams determine that a student needs tier II intervention, additional tier III support, and/or exhibits characteristics of dyslexia; a notification letter with intervention specifics and information about reading are provided. Additional resources are also available upon request. Letters and information are sent immediately after screening or at any other time when the team identifies a skill deficit in need of intervention.

Intervention students receive a minimum of 45 minutes of small group, explicit, systematic intervention daily designed to address identified skill deficits along a hierarchical sequence. Progress-monitoring is used to determine progress toward mastery. Teams follow decision-making protocols to determine next steps according to each student's progress including changes in intensity, duration, or materials. Tier III provides greater support than tier II. School-level RTI teams meet at least every 4.5 weeks, and schools meet in PLCs at least monthly to discuss academic and non-academic data, interventions, and adjustments needed in tiered instruction, personnel, and or scheduling.

All intervention teachers have been trained in all evidence-based instructional materials and methods used in intervention. These range from additional support through the CKLA materials to the use of Orton Gillingham materials. Research-based options meeting State guidelines for reading intervention include, but are not limited to the CKLA Assessment and Remediation Guide,

Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham, 95% Group products, West Virginia Phonics, and Read Naturally. All programs and materials meet evidence-based criteria.

Additional Information about the CKLA Assessment & Remediation Guide:

The CKLA Assessment and Remediation Guide (ARG) provides multiple additional resources for teachers to use as they support students on their path to mastery of grade-level foundational skills:

- **Sample Lessons:** Samples of lessons are provided, as well as lesson templates to guide the planning to build lessons that fit the specific needs of individual students or small groups.
- **Word/Chaining Lists:** The ARG includes word lists and chaining lists that teachers can plan into a lesson for students to use for practicing the mastery of the letter-sound correspondences identified as weaknesses.
- **Activities for Reteaching:** The ARG includes activities to be used for reteaching. All of these activities are engaging and designed to be teacher-facilitated. Though there are worksheets for some activities.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Our district 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 complete the fall universal screening. Students’ scores are communicated in parent-friendly language 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 day the student will receive services. This is coupled with a description of the importance of being able to read by the end of third grade.

The district defines how students are assessed and what a “significant reading deficiency” means. Parents are subsequently notified of their child’s progress, or lack of progress, after the 4 ½ week data team meetings. In the parent notification, data teams note any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screening data as well as recommended activities (that do not require purchased resources) that will support students in the area of deficit. These communications go out to the parents with students in grades K-5 three times annually.

Additionally, the ELA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming weeks 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.

Professional Development Plan

Teachers in our district will participate in the free and optional Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Our plan for providing PD for all PreK-5 classroom, special education, and intervention teachers is as follows:

- April – Classroom teachers in grades Pre-K through two, interventionists and special education teachers who serve grades Pre-K through five, and instructional supervisors serving grades Pre-K through five will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series, asynchronously. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction grounded in a phonics-based approach. We will ensure that participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to starting Week 2.
- July – Our district has registered for the cohort-based, in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all classroom teachers in grades Pre-K through two, interventionists and special education teachers who serve grades Pre-K through five, and instructional supervisors serving grades Pre-K through five teachers in grade Pre-K. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

We plan to provide the training to the grade 3-5 classroom teachers during the summer.

Lincoln County will also participate in two literacy networks and teachers will collaborate in ongoing PLCs throughout the school year focused on effective delivery of their ELA lessons. Building curriculum coordinators and lead teachers will provide support based on building walk-throughs using the Tennessee IPG (Instructional Practice Guide).