

## **Obion County Schools**

### Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: May 22, 2021

Approved: June 14, 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 Imagine Learning (previously Learn Zillion) EL, which is a foundational skills curriculum grounded in the Science of Reading 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, which is a minimum of 60 minutes daily for foundational skills instruction in grades K-2. This instructional time includes activities that build phonological awareness, phonics practice, and fluency practice in addition to comprehension and vocabulary work (“word work”). During that instruction, teachers explicitly teach a sound, the students practice the sound aloud (learning how to produce pure sound), the teacher models writing the sound, the students refer to their individual code chart on which they write the sound, then students apply the skill in independent practice in small group. Needs-based small group instruction is provided by an interventionist and the classroom teacher. In conjunction with the Imagine Learning EL curriculum, instruction using Heggerty is also used as a supplemental tool to teach phonics.

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

Our district has an integrated literacy block for grades three (3) through five (5) grounded in the Science of Reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials are Imagine Learning (previously Learn Zillion) Guidebooks, which were 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 90-100 minutes of daily ELA instruction. 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 at least 50 minutes per day and foundational skills instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, spelling, and writing for at least 40 minutes per day. Our adopted curriculum also engages students in work around fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, which are not taught in isolation, but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection. The HD Word supplemental resource is used

by teachers and interventionists to support students in needs-based small groups to close the gaps in foundational skills in these grades.

For example, the fifth-grade curriculum contains a unit on immigration. They begin the unit by activating prior knowledge and learning about the history of immigration, tenements, and how America became a melting pot. The daily lessons contain high quality, complex, informational, and fictional texts that are read independently and/or aloud. After a brief review of the previous day's learning, the lesson is standards driven. Teachers may teach essential vocabulary while students unpack vocabulary that is individualized to them. Students may also summarize the content, discover themes, participate in a Socratic seminar, or write constructed responses to demonstrate their learning. As an example, in one lesson students have a "Text Talk" where they discover how the title of the book relates to a chapter. Students use "Think-Pair-Share" to synthesize vocabulary, quote from the text, explore the main idea. Students finally write a constructed paragraph where the effective use of syntax must be demonstrated. Therefore, foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of the learning block and is dedicated to developing students' holistic literary approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research.

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

Imagine Learning EL Education (formerly LearnZillion Expeditionary Learning) K-5

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

Imagine Learning Guidebooks (formerly LearnZillion Expeditionary Learning) K-5

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

Our district has adopted an approved ELA curriculum that contains foundational skills instruction for grades K-5. Grades K-2 use EL and grades 3-5 use Guidebooks, both through Imagine Learning. In addition to the curriculum, our district uses Heggerty Phonemic Awareness in grades K-2 for sounds-first activities as our daily warm-up in all elementary schools. Additionally, in grade 3-5, we use HD Word to help close gaps in foundational skills. Because all students in third grade completed the lessons in HD Word, we will use the resource in grade 3 going forward. The students in grades 4 and 5 will use this resource in a needs-based only approach.

We will also use the decodable readers from the state's Foundation Skills Curriculum for additional support to supplement our adopted K-2 curriculum. We will encourage our families to access the interactive decodables through the state's website. These decodables will provide our students with additional practice with their families and the families with the sounds-supports to connect school and home practice with additional reinforcement to daily lessons. Our district also participates in ReadyRosie, Ready4K, and the Governor's Early Literacy Foundation (GELF). These resources offer free books and activities to support student learning in vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

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

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus): Grades K-5

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Students in grades K-8 are assessed using the AimswebPlus universal screener three times per school year. All students in grades K-8 that fall at or between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> percentile as indicated through our universal screener are identified as at-risk and receive reading intervention. For students who have been identified as having a significant reading deficiency, scoring 0- 15<sup>th</sup> percentile, we provide tier 3 intervention. After evaluating information from the teacher and/or parents, if students exhibit difficulties with one or more reading skills, then they will also receive reading intervention. Students who are placed in RTI groups receive small group instruction and intervention for 30-45 minutes each day depending on their tier.

Our school district uses various programs based on the needs of the students. Examples of these programs include SPIRE, Barton Reading and Spelling, EL Foundation Skills, Easy CBM, and the Wilson Reading System. Our RTI program provides daily reading interventions for students identified as Tier II or Tier III. Tier II students are provided 30 minutes of RTI in grades K-5 with a small group ratio of 1:5. Tier III students receive at least 45 minutes of intervention with a small group ratio of 1:3. Most students are progress monitored every two weeks; however, based on needs, some students are monitored weekly. All interventions are systematic, research-based and target the students' identified area(s) of deficit.

Students and parents are aware of their goals and kept informed of the progress that students are making. 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 looks at progress monitoring data and other variables (attendance, engagement) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider. All our intervention structures and supports are aligned to the TN RTI2 Manual.

Our students receive explicit instruction in their area of deficit in small groups using research-based strategies and materials. Students in Tiers II or III are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia 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 called SPIRE to support these students. This program is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for students with these needs.

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

Upon completion of the universal reading screener (3 times each school year), parents of K-5 students are notified by letter (home literacy report) if their child is considered at-risk or has a

reading deficiency. Our initial communication will explain the importance of being able to read by the end of 3rd grade, an explanation of their child's reading deficit, will provide a list of free reading intervention activities for families, provide details about the reading interventions provided by the school, and includes information on the promotion pathways to grades 4 and 5 that are appropriate for the individual student. We will also provide a webpage dedicated to reading resources for families arranged by grade level.

Parents are also notified of progress at least every 4.5 weeks by letter, have the opportunity to speak directly with teachers/interventionists at two conferences during the year, and may schedule a time to discuss reading deficiencies, goals, and progress as needed. Each of our schools has data teams that meet every 4.5 weeks and discuss student progress. Student needs and/or progress can be discussed in detail by request.

### **Professional Development Plan**

All reading teachers in our district have completed the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. We will also ensure that new reading teachers to our district have already completed the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training or require them to complete it.

Our plan for providing PD for K-5 teachers is as follows:

July – New teachers of grades K through five, as well as new interventionists, new administrators, and new special education teachers, will asynchronously engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. Each participant will provide a certificate to their supervisor upon completion of the training. All K-5 teachers will participate in data dive training prior to the beginning of the school year to learn how to utilize the new data warehouse platform for our district. This platform will allow our teachers to analyze all types of classrooms, universal screener, and benchmark data to support the individual needs of students.

September, October, November, January, February, March – K-5 teachers and school leaders will analyze Aimsweb Plus data to inform classroom practice and determine RTI<sup>2</sup> groups and needs. School administrators will be trained to conduct PLCs and IPG walks by district supervisors, who have previously been trained by contracted vendor with CORE office support. School administrators will lead PLCs in grade level meetings to discuss unit and lesson preparation, analyze data from classroom and benchmark assessments, and analyze student work. We will continue to provide additional grade-level professional development with an emphasis on increasing students' foundational literacy skills to support learning to read fluently. Professional development sessions regarding unit and lesson preparation will be held for teachers to collaborate with their district grade level team.