

**Grainger County Schools**  
**Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 14, 2021**

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**

GCS adopted HMH Into Reading for the K-2 Reading Curriculum during the 2020.21 school year. HMH was on the state approved ELA adoption list and was approved by the Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission, and all instruction is aligned to the TN State Standards. In Grainger County, Kindergarten through 2nd graders receive a minimum of 150 minutes of core reading instruction including 45 minutes whole group foundational skills instruction and an additional 45-60 minutes of small group application of foundational skills.

Each lesson for students in kindergarten through Grade 2 includes foundational skills instruction. Throughout each module, students engage in daily systematic instruction to build skills in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, and spelling to develop a strong foundation for reading and writing. They also have opportunities to apply these skills to decodable texts. Following instruction in each of the strands, students engage in small-group learning, based on lesson content, students' learning needs, and student data provided by Into Reading assessments and reports. HMH Into Reading's Teacher's Guide phonics lessons follow a scope and sequence based on evidence from research from the Science of Reading.

Foundational skills instruction and routines in Kindergarten include:

phonological awareness to practice identifying, blending, segmenting, and manipulating sounds in oral language.

phonics to explicitly teach sound-spellings, practice decoding using sound-by-sound blending, and spell words through dictation.

word work to distinguish between sounds by sorting words and to practice spelling by building and changing words.

alphabet knowledge, including letter recognition and upper- and lowercase letter forms.

lessons to build automaticity with reading and spelling high-frequency words.

decodable text lessons to practice reading words with learned sound-spellings and high-frequency words in context.

Foundational skills instruction in grades 1 & 2 include:

Phonological Awareness lessons to have children identify, produce, and manipulate the sounds in spoken words and syllables.

Phonics lessons to introduce sound-spellings that help children associate consonants, consonant blends, digraphs and trigraphs, short and long vowels, vowel digraphs and diphthongs, and other common vowel spellings with the sounds they represent and to read words with these sound-spellings.

Make Minutes Count options to support children in targeted small-group instruction, based on need.

Fluency lessons to practice reading fluently with appropriate rate, intonation, phrasing, and expression and to practice self-correcting using context and decoding skills.

Spelling lessons to help children make decoding-encoding connections and practice handwriting skills.

Read Decodable Text lessons for practice decoding words and recognizing high-frequency words in context and to reinforce fluency skills.

High-Frequency Words lessons to teach and practice reading, spelling, and using high-frequency sight words.

One improvement for next year is to specifically label the instruction within the literacy block to specify the minutes spent on different sections like the foundational skills section. Since all K-5 teachers and instructional coaches will be attending the state provided two week Foundational Skills training, next year the district will use collaborative planning at individual schools to reinforce foundational skill practices learned from the training.

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

GCS adopted Great Minds Wit & Wisdom for grades 3-5 during the 2020.21 school year. Wit & Wisdom was selected from the state approved ELA adoption list and was approved by the Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Instruction is aligned to TN state standards. In Grainger County, 3rd-5th graders receive 90 minutes integrated reading instruction with at least 30 minutes daily embedded foundational skills instruction. Although daily instruction is not the same each day, all daily instruction includes the following components:

Welcome (5 minutes): Students independently engage in a task that prepares them for the lessons' learning.

Launch (3 minutes): The teacher introduces the lesson's Content Framing Question, and students interact with it in a meaningful way by unpacking terminology, or making connections to the Focusing Question, Essential Question, an/or text. The teacher ensures student understanding of the Learning Goals.

**Learn (60 minutes):** Through a variety of instructional routines and tasks, teachers support students as they engage in productive struggle as they develop skills and knowledge needed to answer the lesson's Content Framing Question. Students listen, read, write, think and speak about the text during the learn section of the lesson. Vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency instruction is embedded in this section of the lesson.

**Land (10 minutes):** The teacher facilitates student reflections on how they met lesson goals and answered the Content Framing Question.

**Wrap (2 minutes):** Closing activities

**Deep Dive (15 minutes):** The teacher explicitly teaches vocabulary, morphology, and grammar.

The fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills are not taught in isolation, but are embedded within the lesson to ensure connection. As a text-based curriculum, Wit & Wisdom teaches vocabulary both implicitly and explicitly using words in the core and supplementary texts. Through repeated readings of complex, knowledge-building texts, students learn many new vocabulary words including content-specific, academic, and text-critical vocabulary. Wit & Wisdom reinforces learned foundational skills to a lesson's reading or writing tasks about complex text. For example, some writing lessons have teachers review previously taught sound-spelling patterns that students are frequently misspelling, then give students time to edit their text-based writing based on those patterns. Wit & Wisdom provides fluency practice with selected passages from core texts. Students learn to read grade-level complex text through repeatedly reading short text excerpts from module texts which helps students to understand the texts and communicate more effectively about them. Deep Dives explicitly instruct language skills including conventions of English, language and style, and vocabulary. Foundational skills are embedded throughout the curriculum based on a consideration of the language demands of the major module writing tasks and the language found in the core texts

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

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - K-2, 4-5 Into Reading, Tennessee

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

Great Minds - 3-5 Wit and Wisdom

### **Additional Information about Instructional Materials**

GCS adopted HMH Into Reading, an approved state curriculum for ELA instruction, and we also purchased HMH iRead for all K-2 classrooms as a supplemental resource for reinforcing foundational skills. The district recommends teachers use iRead during one small group station daily for 15-20 minutes. Students use iRead to:

Build foundational skills at an independent digital center

Reinforce foundational skills during whole-or small-group instruction by interacting with iRead Interactive Learning Tools

Apply foundational skills to printable Decodable Books during small-group instruction, independent reading, or at home.

GCS also purchased another digital tool, Amira, for all K-2 classrooms. Amira provides 1:1 reading practice and administers both an oral reading fluency assessment and dyslexia screeners. Not only does Amira assist teachers with assessing foundational reading skills, it also provides students with 1:1 tutoring. Amira employs more than 25 different micro-interventions backed by reading science.

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

Grainger County Schools uses easyCBM as its universal reading screener in K-5. The easyCBM reading universal screener is administered 3 times a year (fall, winter, spring). The screener complies with the requirements outlined in the TN RTI<sup>2</sup> Framework and complies with the state dyslexia screening requirements and is on the state's approved list for RTI<sup>2</sup> screeners.

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

GCS uses easyCBM as its reading universal screener. The screener is administered 3 times a year at the beginning of the year, mid-year, and end of the year. The fall easyCBM reading benchmark screener is used to identify which students are "at risk" or scoring below the 25th percentile. Instructional Coaches at each school lead RTI<sup>2</sup> meetings to review data and lead the RTI<sup>2</sup> team in making data-based for all students needing RTI<sup>2</sup> instruction including students who have characteristics of dyslexia. Other RTI<sup>2</sup> team members may include: (classroom teachers, RTI<sup>2</sup> instructors, special education case managers, school administrators, school psychologists, and/or speech pathologists). Students identified as needing additional Tier II or III instruction are given additional diagnostic assessments as needed to drill down to identify each student's specific reading deficits. Additional reading diagnostic tools include: PASS, PWRS, Spelling Inventories and additional dyslexia screeners. Students may also be given a specific intervention program screener to aid in correct placement within a specific program. All of these assessments are used to help the RTI<sup>2</sup> Team identify each student's greatest area of need in reading and determine a student's intervention placement.

After a school-based team has reviewed multiple sources of data in the screening process and identifies reading skill deficits in need of intervention, parents will be notified of the student's performance and the need for intervention. Parents will also be notified when a student is found to have a characteristic of Dyslexia, a skill deficit in one or more of the basic reading areas (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, written expression), and are placed in a Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading intervention group for basic reading skills. As with all students who are placed in intervention, a Student Intervention Plan will be sent home, progress monitoring will take place, and parents will receive information about progress every 4.5 weeks. Information about Dyslexia will be sent with the initial notification letter. School RTI<sup>2</sup> data teams meet every 4.5 weeks to monitor/review/discuss student progress, and adjustments are made as needed (change in intervention, RTI<sup>2</sup> instructor, or

time). The RTI<sup>2</sup> data team uses multiple sources of data including progress monitoring data, fidelity checks data and attendance records to help guide the decision making process. Tier II students are progress monitored every other week and Tier III students are progress monitored every week or every other week. Students are progress monitored using an easyCBM probe that matches their greatest area of need in reading.

Students receive 40-60 minutes of reading tiered intervention per day to address their area of greatest skill deficit. Intervention times are scheduled in each school to meet the grade level/tier guidelines in the state RTI<sup>2</sup> manual. This time is in addition to the reading instruction that takes place during core reading instruction.

Grainger County uses reading interventions that are researched based for RTI<sup>2</sup> small group instruction. We provide tiered intervention in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and written expression. Examples of Intervention programs used with students who have a reading skill deficits include:

Sound Sensible provides instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition

S.P.I.R.E.(Orton-Gillingham based program used primarily with students with characteristics of dyslexia) provides instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabetic knowledge, sound-symbol recognition, decoding, encoding

Linda-Mood Bell: addresses phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabetic knowledge, sound-symbol recognition, decoding, encoding

WonderWorks: provides instruction in fluency and comprehension

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

After a school-based team has reviewed multiple sources of data in the screening process and identifies reading skill deficit(s) in need of intervention, parents will be notified of the student's performance and the need for intervention. An easyCBM report that details the student's performance on the screener is sent home with every student.

Parents of students who score below the 25th percentile and are placed in a Tier 2 or 3 group are also provided with a copy of the Student Intervention Plan that details specific areas of concern, data-based decision tier placement, prescribed intervention program, name of interventionist, length of daily intervention instruction, and list of RTI<sup>2</sup> team involved in making the plan. Parents are notified when a student is found to have a characteristic of Dyslexia, a skill deficit in one or more of the basic reading areas (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, written expression), and are placed in a Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading intervention group for basic reading skills. Information about Dyslexia will be sent with the initial notification letter. This parent notification process is repeated with each benchmark screening (3 times a year) for students in K-5.

Progress monitoring data and information about student progress is sent to parents every 4.5 weeks. Data teams note any changes being made in a student's RTI<sup>2</sup> placement.

Next year, GCS will add two additional pieces of information to the parent literacy reports.

Explanation of the importance of being able to read by the end of 3rd grade

Reading intervention activities for families

### **Professional Development Plan**

Grainger County teachers in grades PreK-5 and instructional coaches will participate in the state's Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series. Our plan includes:

Spring 2021: All GCS PreK-6 teachers, Instructional Coaches, Interventionists, Special Education teachers, and ESL teachers will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training, asynchronously. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction that is grounded in a phonics-based approach. The district will require participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to attending week 2 of training.

July 2021: Reading 360 Early Literacy Week 1 Certificate must be submitted to Lisa Setsor, GCS Curriculum Supervisor

July 2021: Grainger County hosts Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training for county PreK-6 teachers, Instructional Coaches, Interventionists, Special Education teachers, and ESL teachers. Week 2 emphasizes practical application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

K-5 Teachers successfully completing Week 1 & 2 will be compensated by the state. PreK, 6th grade, ESL, and special education teachers along with instructional coaches and interventionists successfully completing Week 1 & 2 will be compensated by the district.