

**Chester County Schools**  
**Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 10, 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**

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 (CKLA Foundational Skills). This curriculum uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time (45 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 (small group or individual).

Our improvements for next year are based on the knowledge and skills that our teachers gain through the Reading 360 Foundational Skills training initiative which is currently in progress and continues into June 2021. Teachers will be implementing the strategies learned in order to achieve a higher level of efficacy when working on foundational skills with students.

**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 reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials are selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission (Grade 3-CKLA, Grades 4-5-Wit & Wisdom). 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 minutes of 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 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 curriculum also engages 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.

It is currently the district's plan to improve our teachers' foundational skills set by having the teachers complete the asynchronous first week of Reading 360 Foundational Skills training. That training is scheduled to be released by the State in mid-May. Near the time of release, district leadership will develop a plan for 3-5 teachers to participate in the training.

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

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

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

Great Minds - 3-5 Wit and Wisdom

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

Schools use Aimsweb as the universal screener, but the district is considering using the TN Universal Reading Screener once it is provided.

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

K-3

The students are placed in small groups with trained interventionists. Often the interventionists are teachers and some students are with special ed. teachers. We administer the Core Phonics Survey to pinpoint the specific phonics deficit. Then we use materials such as the "Barton Program", "Danco Phonics" and "West Virginia Phonics" to target those specific areas of need.

Students that score below grade level on CASE are then administered the Aimsweb benchmark in Reading and/or Math. We also have depended heavily on teacher recommendation this year since we are new to using CASE. Written Expression screener is given to all students in grades 1-3 three times per year.

4-5

If students score below the 25th percentile on any Aimsweb assessment they are considered for RTI. Tier 2- 24th percentile-10th percentile and Tier 3- 9th percentile- 1st percentile. When students are placed in RTI, a letter explaining the RTI process is sent home. Letters are also sent home after each round of RTI meetings. RTI Team meetings occur every 4.5 weeks to make changes to each student's intervention plan. The teacher input form is a very important part of these meetings. We also look at student progress monitoring data. Changes made could be group makeup, interventionist, type of intervention, tier level, etc. Progress Monitoring occurs weekly (usually on Friday). Assessments are one minute timed, with the exception of the Maze (3 min), Number Sense Fluency (8 min), and Problem Solving (8 min).

Phonics- If a student scores below 25% on ORF, we give them a core phonics screener to determine if there is a need for phonics instruction. When a student is placed in a specific phonics group, they are also monitored weekly on an untimed list of skill-specific words. Our primary phonics intervention is Danco Phonics. We also have West Virginia Phonics, and

Blast off to Reading. For those that have a more significant reading deficiency, we use the Barton Reading and Spelling System or SPIRE reading. Dyslexia screenings are completed upon request, but all of our interventions provided are considered dyslexia-specific interventions.

As a part of the RTI process, hearing and vision are also screened to rule out learning problems related to these areas. Fidelity checks are a critical part of the RTI process and are required when a student is referred for a SPED evaluation.

### **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 3rd 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 notifications/communication, 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 (activities are not tailored by child, but tailored by skill deficit generally). These communications go out to parents with students in grades K-3 three times annually and are shared in grades 4 and 5 annually or when there is any change in the student’s RTI program.

### **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 K-5 teachers is as follows: April 2021 – All teachers of grades in grades Pre-K through two will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series, asynchronously. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. We will ensure that participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to starting Week 2 work on June 21st. June 2021 – Our district has registered for the cohort-based, in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all teachers in grade Pre-K through second. The participating teachers will also include interventionists, special education teachers, elementary instructional coaches, and elementary principals. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. Teachers in grades 3-5 will (on a time-line later determined by the district, but as early as possible) receive the equivalent of one weeks foundational skills training by completing the Reading 360, Week 1, asynchronous training modules provided by the State.