

Bristol City Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: November 2, 2023

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

Bristol City has a dedicated foundational reading skills block for grades K-2 rooted in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials, Wit & Wisdom and the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement, are selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. K-2 students spend at least 180 minutes each day in the literacy block. All daily Wit & Wisdom 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 90 minutes each day. A core lesson sequence includes a framework of text-specific content questioning to engage students in the module content and in the process of reading complex texts. Students engage in daily work around reading, understanding, and analyzing complex text. Students articulate their learning through speaking and writing about their knowledge of the topic of study. Students also have regular practice examining the crafts of writing, speaking, and listening through focusing questions where students develop responses to the texts they read and grow their critical thinking skills. Some daily lessons give students targeted fluency practice through activities such as reader's theatre, poetry readings, and student-led declamations. In addition to directly addressing grade level reading, writing, speaking and listening standards, core lessons provide embedded instruction in grade level foundational reading skills such as spelling, language, and vocabulary. Additionally, each day, students participate in isolated practice with grade level foundational reading skills in Deep Dives. The Deep Dives focus on vocabulary, morphology, and language conventions germane to the core lesson. In addition, students are engaged in 90 minutes each day of direct systematic foundational skills instruction aligned to the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement. Each day, students engage in 3-4 "mini lessons" aligned to the systematic scope and sequence of foundational skills in order to allow them adequate time to both learn and practice new skills that ultimately result in fluent reading, comprehension, and writing skill. The scope and sequence include direct instruction and aligned student practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, grammar, spelling, and writing. There are four guiding principles for the 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, TNFSCS 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

Bristol City has an integrated literacy block for grades 3-5 anchored in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials in Grades 3-5, Wit & Wisdom, are 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 minutes of core ELA instruction 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) and foundational skills instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, and spelling. The fluency, vocabulary, and morphology skills are not taught in isolation but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection. A core lesson sequence in grades 3-5 Wit & Wisdom includes a framework of text-specific content questioning to engage students in the module content and in the process of reading complex texts. Students engage in daily work around reading, understanding, and analyzing complex text. Students articulate their learning through speaking and writing about their knowledge of the topic of study. Students also have regular practice examining the crafts of writing, speaking, and listening through focusing questions where students develop responses to the texts they read and grow their critical thinking skills. Some daily lessons give students targeted fluency practice through activities such as reader’s theatre, poetry readings, and student-led declamations. In addition to directly addressing grade level reading, writing, speaking and listening standards, core lessons provide embedded instruction in grade level foundational reading skills such as spelling, language, and vocabulary. Additionally, each day, students participate in isolated practice with grade level foundational reading skills in Deep Dives. The Deep Dives focus on vocabulary, morphology, and language conventions germane to the core lesson. Grades 3-5 foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of this 90-minute block and is dedicated to developing students’ holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research. Grades 3-5 have at least 30 minutes of embedded or explicitly taught foundational skills. In addition, third grade has an added 30 minutes of explicit foundational skills instruction.

Additional Information

We plan to continue implementing both district and school level learning walks throughout the school year. The Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) will be used to provide feedback to teachers and establish school and district level instructional trends. These trends will guide professional development opportunities for teachers. In addition, we plan to begin Student Work Analysis PLCs this year at all grade levels at each school. School leaders and district administration will attend these meetings along with academic coaches. During these meetings, the SWAP protocol will guide discussion and analysis of student working emphasizing student writing. The district has committed funding to place an academic coach at each elementary school. The coaches' role is to implement coaching cycles with teachers, lead lesson preparation PLCs, and provide on-going, job-embedded professional development to all teachers.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom (waiver)

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Our district uses the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement to further address foundational skills in daily instruction in K-2. This supplement allows us to focus more deeply on the phonological awareness and advanced phonemic awareness skills that are crucial for success all the way through second grade.

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

Star Literacy Suite Pre-K, 4th-5th

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) K-3rd

In addition to AimsWebPlus, we also use the STAR Literacy Suite in K-3.

Intervention Structure and Supports

BTCS envisions intervention as instruction designed to accelerate student learning and progress in the general education curriculum to the fullest extent possible. In the fall, students are given the universal screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk". Our grade-level teachers and principals review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-40th percentile. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of high dosage tutoring, Tier II or Tier III instruction. Students are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. Students receive daily, small-group intervention for 30-45 minutes based on their tier in their area of greatest deficit using the high-quality instructional materials. We have research-

based options for reading intervention support available to our students who are “at-risk” and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our adopted ELA curriculum, TNFSCS, contains an assessment and remediation guide that includes activities that directly address targeted skill gaps. Data teams meet regularly to determine if a change in the intervention is warranted. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance, engagement) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider. Our students receive explicit instruction in their area of deficit in small groups using research-based materials and strategies. These students are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who do demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law’s requirements. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia.

Intervention takes place daily during a grade-level time in the master schedule just for learning acceleration (high dosage tutoring and RTI). When students are in their groups, they work on activities and assignments that make them stronger in that skill. For example, students who need instruction in comprehension may read a new text and answer scaffolded questions, all related to the knowledge-building unit they are studying in Tier I instruction.

Additional Information about the Assessment & Remediation Guide (ARG) and Intervention Toolkit: Specific to grades K-2, the Assessment and Remediation Guide (ARG) and Intervention Toolkit provide 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 words 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 to support structuring instruction, the focus is to provide students with ongoing support and feedback.
- **Games for Reinforcement:** The ARG includes games for reinforcement. The games are designed to help students apply and practice targeted skills.
- **Progress Monitoring Assessments:** Resources for progress monitoring are included in the foundational skill strand. The data generated by these assessments can guide and inform instruction for individual student progress. Placement and Student Performance assessments are provided in the Teacher Guides. To supplement these, the ARG provides progress monitoring assessments specific to each skill teachers may be targeting for remediation. Monitoring for success involves the following:

Tier II

- Progress is monitored bi-weekly in area of need
- Tutoring groups monitor data monthly

- School teams review data quarterly

Tier III

- Progress is monitored weekly in area of need
- School teams review data quarterly Special Education
- Data is monitored and reviewed as indicated in the student's Individualized Education Plan

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Bristol City Schools provide Home Literacy Reports to notify and engage parents and families in their child's literacy progress each time the Universal Screener is administered. All students' parents are provided with the Parent Report after the in the Fall, Winter, and Spring test administration. 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 0-40th percentile) or demonstrates characteristics of dyslexia. This communication comes immediately after district schools complete each 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, and information about promotion pathways.

The district defines for families 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 quarterly data team meetings. In the parent notification/communication, data teams note the intervention(s) and 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). Additionally, the TNFSCS 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.

Professional Development Plan

All PK-5 reading teachers, special education teachers, tutors, interventionists, school principals, program assistants, and literacy coaches received initial training in the district adopted high-quality instructional materials. All K-5 teachers in our district completed at least one approved foundational literacy skills course which fulfills the Tennessee Literacy Success Act requirement. In addition, most K-3 teachers also completed the second foundational literacy skills course developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. The early literacy courses on foundational literacy skills instruction are available at no-cost to teachers in kindergarten through grade five (K-5) and includes training in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. Upon completion of the course, teachers demonstrate their knowledge through a competency based and performance-based assessment. Nationally trained experts have developed online, self-paced

modules as well as a week-long in-person training. PK-5 teachers participate in ongoing PLCs throughout the school year focused on effective internalization and delivery of their Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement and Wit & Wisdom lessons. PreK-5th grade teachers receive the following literacy professional development: collaborative lesson preparation with school level instructional coach, professional learning communities focused on unit preparation, coaching cycles, focused professional development from district, and literacy walks using the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG).