

Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: January 3, 2024

Approved: July 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

Currently, our K-2 teachers utilize the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Curriculum with complete fidelity as the primary form of instruction. This curriculum aligns to TN State standards. CKLA consists of a "Skills Block" and a "Knowledge Block." The "Skills Block" is an uninterrupted, 60-minute block of time designed for explicit phonics instruction, which includes phonics, phonemic awareness, and phonological awareness. During this block, teachers also work on other foundational literacy skills such as fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The "Knowledge Block" is an uninterrupted, 60-minute block that utilizes foundational literacy skills with a heavy emphasis on comprehension. The knowledge units are very content-rich in Science and Social Studies.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Our current schedule for students in grades 3-5 is similar to K-2. Teachers in grades 3-5 are departmentalized. The 3rd and 4th Grades are set up the same. We have two teams of two teachers. One of the teachers focuses on Literacy, while the other focuses on Mathematics and Science. The Literacy teacher utilizes the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Curriculum with complete fidelity. Teachers in 5th grade have one team of four teachers. One of the teachers focuses on Literacy: ELA/Reading, and one of the teachers focuses on Literacy: ELA/Writing. One of the teachers focuses on mathematics, and the last teacher focuses on Science and Social Studies.

The Reading Literacy teacher utilizes the Core Knowledge Language Arts Curriculum (CKLA) with complete fidelity. For example, in our third-grade classrooms, the scholars recently completed a unit on Native Americans. The first two lessons review prerequisite topics covered in the previous grade bands. After the two review days of activating prior knowledge, scholars are then introduced to new vocabulary that is not only discussed in the single lesson but will permeate throughout the whole unit (this includes vocabulary station work as well as independent reading). Students in this grade band are transitioning from learning to read into reading to learn. Most lessons include a read-aloud. The read-aloud can be a mix of choral reading and teacher modeling. Teacher modeling can include correct inflection, pronunciation, and think-alouds, thus ensuring understanding of the topic being read. As the lesson progresses, the students will learn the meaning of the vocabulary words.

Root words, as well as prefixes and suffixes are introduced in this grade level. In the time block given, scholars will not only expand upon their vocabulary, but they will also build upon their knowledge of Native Americans. Both small groups and independent stations are utilized with fidelity. These small groups are where differentiation and scaffolding of the comprehension questions occur. The implementation of the read-aloud as well as the in-depth and content-rich lessons, help provide the scholars with a well-rounded literacy education. During the small group time, scholars work together to read and understand stories related to the CK topic that is being taught. This is where students who still need extra support in their phonics skills receive extra help in foundational skills specifically for that group. Foundational skills instruction is embedded in all aspects of the literacy blocks for a minimum of 30 minutes each day and is dedicated to developing students' holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently, as recommended by research. Instruction is aligned to the TN state standards and includes morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

i-Ready Suite K-5

We also administer the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to students in third grade for the Spring Benchmark.

Intervention Structure and Supports

Our RTI² Reading Intervention Structure is very clear, specific, and aligned to the TN RTI² Manual. Currently, we use i-Ready as our universal screener. After students take the i-Ready diagnostic in August, the screener data along with other data sources, is analyzed to determine which students classify as Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III. All Tier III students are placed in a small group with a heavy focus on foundational literacy skills. Reading RTI takes place 5 days a week for 45 minutes. During this time, students are placed with other scholars with similar learning needs and assigned to a teacher who has been trained in foundational literacy interventions. Students are assessed frequently to ensure that instruction continues at their instructional need.

For our students who are classified as Tier II, RTI support takes place with their classroom teacher. RTI instruction for Tier II also takes place 5 days per week for 45 minutes. During this time, classroom teachers group students according to similar needs and use a variety of approved resources to instruct and fill gaps in learning. These resources include the CKLA Intervention Tool Kit, the i-Ready teacher toolbox, i-Ready Tools for Instruction, and the Sounds to Spelling curriculum.

School-level data teams, made up of the principal, assistant principal, instructional coaches, scholar success coach, grade level teachers, and the school counselor, meet every 4 ½ weeks to determine if

a change in the intervention, intensity, or the person providing the intervention is needed. The data team also looks at other variables, such as attendance, classroom participation, etc. as part of the decision-making process. Additionally, after each i-Ready diagnostic (taken three times a year), data teams meet to see if any students who may not have been in the RTI process now warrant additional interventions and support. At this time is also when students who have made growth are able to move up tiers.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

We send home a parent letter with information after each i-Ready diagnostic, benchmark assessment, and again if a child's tier changes. In this literacy report, not only will parents be informed on how their child performed on the assessment, but they will also be informed about the additional services their child will be receiving. Our letter provides clear explanation of skill gaps and the depth and extent of student need and information about how those gaps will be addressed during intervention. We include no-cost activities for families to support learning at home, information on the importance of 3rd grade reading proficiency, and 4th grade promotion pathways. This information is communicated with parents three times a year in grades K-3 and annually in grades 4 and 5.

Another support we are implementing to support our families is data conferences. Our teachers conduct "data chats" with our families to ensure parents are well informed of how to read the data as well as ways to support literacy at home. In addition to assessment information, we will also provide a monthly newsletter to all families in English and Spanish with the importance of 3rd grade reading proficiency, literacy tips, reading intervention activities, and current literacy research/important information.

Professional Development Plan

Professional development will play a key role in the success of our literacy skills plan.

- We will have monthly PLC meetings for K-2 and 3-5, plus individual and small group coaching sessions depending on the support needed. These PLC meetings will be centered around utilizing foundational literacy skills in different settings.
- Seventeen of our teachers, along with our principal and assistant principal, have successfully completed the Tennessee Early Literacy Training. We have a plan for new teachers to complete this training as well.
- Other professional development trainings will be led by CCSE's Principal and instructional coaches, using materials from online modules and Core Knowledge Leadership training, which was offered onsite at CCSE. Teachers are required to implement important aspects into their classrooms. The administration and the academic coaches will follow up to ensure literacy-rich classrooms are present across the building.