

## Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Oak Ridge Schools uses EL, a literacy curriculum that is aligned to TN state standards, was rated green on EdReports and was approved through the state's textbook adoption process for our K-3 students. EL's Skills Block uses a structured phonics approach, grounded in the Phase Theory of Dr. Linnea Ehri. The Skills Block continuum is designed from grades kindergarten to grade two, focuses on specific behaviors related to the types of letter-sound relationships students can make as they learn to read and write, and is aligned to grade-level standards.

K-2 students have 120 minutes daily for ELA instruction. 60 minutes are dedicated to explicit and systematic foundational literacy skills instruction which includes whole group, grade-level direction instruction and practice. Instruction includes activities that build phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and sentence composition. Some teachers have supplemented phonological and phonemic awareness using TN's Sounds First curriculum. All teachers will receive training on this curriculum supplement during the 2021-2022 school year. Small group instruction during skills block is differentiated to meet the needs of students and provide students with additional practice on grade-level skills.

For example, during the third term, students in first grade are learning about "silent e". The first cycle with this pattern is dedicated to understanding how the 'e' can change CVC words with a short vowel sound, to CVCe words with a long vowel sound. Students engage in activities such as spelling to complement reading, interactive writing, and they have ample time to practice their new code knowledge using the curriculum's decodable readers. There are four cycles, or four weeks of instruction on this pattern using all vowels, including a cycle that teaches about dropping the "silent e" when adding inflectional endings.

The remaining 60 minutes of the ELA block are dedicated to building language skills, knowledge about the world, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing through high-quality, content-rich literary and nonfiction texts.

As part of our high-quality instruction materials implementation plan, teachers received training through an outside partner, Better Lesson, on implementation success. We will continue that training this year focusing on EL's Skills Block.

Oak Ridge Schools 3rd grade teachers also use EL, a curriculum that is aligned to TN standards, was green on EdReports and was approved through the state's textbook adoption process. Third-grade students have a 2-hour integrated ELA block. All strands of the ELA standards are formally taught and assessed. Foundational skills are authentically applied throughout the ELA block in reading high-quality, complex texts and writing in response to texts. Students spend most of the ELA block reading, discussing, and writing about texts that help them to build knowledge about the world in EL modules. The second hour is spent doing small group, differentiated learning with their teacher and their peers in ALL Block. ALL Block provides students with the opportunity for peer-to-peer interactions as they closely read their core texts, practice fluency, learn vocabulary, including morphology, grammar, and writing about texts.

In term 3 for example, third-grade students read multiple texts about the importance of clean water. They learn about access to water, demands on water, and water pollution. Throughout this module,

students learn how authors use reasons to support points. They read a variety of texts on this topic and contrast the different ways authors present points. Then they use their learning to create a PSA about why and how we can all protect the world's water supply. During ALL Block, students engage in learning and activities that increase their academic vocabulary such as analyzing the words organism and constructing. They set fluency goals and engage in language dives using a passage from "Real Lives: Angola, Africa". Students that need additional support work with their teacher to fill gaps in word recognition and spelling.

Fourth and fifth-grade teachers use Guidebooks, a curriculum that is aligned to TN standards and was approved through the state's textbook adoption process. Fourth-grade students have a 90-minute ELA block, while fifth-grade middle school students have an 80-minute ELA block or split reading and language arts classes. Foundational skills are authentically applied throughout the ELA block as they read high-quality, complex texts and write in response to texts. Students spend most of the ELA block reading, discussing, and writing about texts that help them to build knowledge about the world in the Guidebook's units. Students meet in small groups with their teacher to focus on foundational skills and writing instruction using the curriculum's foundational skills support lessons and writing videos.

In term 4 for example, fourth-grade students engage in a unit on hurricanes. Targeted small group support includes learning about inflectional endings, rereading an excerpt from one of the texts in the hurricane unit, and then practicing fluency with another excerpt that includes multiple words with inflectional endings.

As part of our high-quality instruction materials implementation plan, teachers received training through an outside partner, Better Lesson, on implementation success. We will continue that training this year focusing on the EL's ALL Block and differentiated, small group support in Guidebooks.

Oak Ridge Schools uses STAR as our Universal Screener for grades K-5 to assess reading and math in the fall, winter, and spring. K-2 students also take the EL curriculum Benchmark Assessment three times a year on areas such as phonological awareness, letter ID and letter sounds, decoding, encoding, and fluency. AimswebPlus is used for progress monitoring.

Oak Ridge Schools uses a variety of materials to meet students' deficiencies. The primary intervention material is Fountas and Pinnell's Leveled Literacy Intervention in K-5. Other resources are available and vary by individual elementary school, for example, Pioneer Valley Literacy Footprints Intervention Kits and Scholastic Comprehension Club. Fifth-grade intervention resources in middle school also include Lexia Core5 which targets phonological awareness, phonics, automaticity and fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

In 2021-2022 we will be piloting Amplify mCLASS and 95% Group in grades K-4. Amplify's mCLASS uses Dibels to determine specific skill gaps and prescribes the instructional path based on the areas of need. 95% Group uses PASI and PSI to determine foundational skill gaps and prescribes the instructional path. All classroom teachers in K-4 will also have access to Amplify Reading, a supplemental, adaptive computer-based program that also provides teachers with small group lesson plans based on the needs of students identified within the program.

Reading Specialists, certified teachers, and paraprofessionals deliver instruction during RTI periods. Tier 3 students receive the most intense intervention. Each day they receive 45 minutes of direct instruction

in a small group with weekly progress monitoring. Tier 2 students receive 30 minutes of daily, direct instruction intervention in small groups with bi-weekly progress monitoring. The academic areas that students receive explicit instruction and progress monitoring are determined by assessment results and classroom performance.

Oak Ridge intervention schedules are aligned with the expectations as outlined in the state RTI2 Framework.

RTI teams meet every 4.5 weeks to review data and evaluate intervention materials and placements. Multiple stakeholders such as classroom teachers, Reading Specialists, guidance counselors, and administrators make up the RTI teams. Progress monitoring data, grade-level classroom data, and intervention observational data are shared and discussed to determine if students are making progress. If there is limited progress, the RTI team makes a collective decision about what changes need to occur to meet the needs of students.

Knowing that early and intensive intervention is critical when children experience reading difficulties, Oak Ridge Schools provides parents with access to information about the importance of their child being able to read on grade level by third grade. We have provided parents with access to resources such as TDOE's newly released, free At-Home Decodable Reading Series. Our district holds parent conference days twice a year for teachers to share information with parents about their child's progress in reading and math.

Oak Ridge Schools notifies parents after the universal screener if their child will be receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention. The notification letters, sent three times a year K-8, provide parents with a brief description of the Tiers, the time spent daily in intervention, and the frequency of when progress is communicated. The notification letters provide information about the specific reading skills for which their child needs support, the importance of third grade reading proficiency, free resources families can use to support their child at home, and ways to get more information about RTI or the "Say Dyslexia" law. Parents are notified if their child's intervention services discontinue or change.

Our district also has a Family Guide to RTI that shares information with parents such as what the RTI framework is, what it looks like, its key components, and ways parents can support at home.

Since Oak Ridge Schools has already partnered with Solution Tree as part of our 21-22 school improvement plan, we will engage in the department's Tennessee Early Reading Training during the summer of 2022. All PK-5 teachers will engage in one week of asynchronous learning focused on foundational reading development and instruction that is grounded in a phonics-based approach. We will ensure that participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to the beginning of the in-person training provided by the department. PK-2 teachers will register for the second week of in-person training being offered by the department during the summer of 2022. If openings are available, Reading Specialists, special education teachers, PLC coaches, and grades 3-5 teachers will also register. This training will build a strong foundation in reading development and instruction for our teachers and will support the reading development of our students.

All K-5 teachers in our district participated in professional learning with our Better Lesson partners during the 2020-2021 schoolyear. In 2021-2022, teachers will continue learning with Better Lesson

focusing on Skills Block, ALL Block, and small group, foundational skills instruction in Guidebooks. Training dates with Better Lesson are July 26, August 25, and September 29.

In July 2021, every teacher in the district will attend PLCs at Work Institute by Solution Tree. In addition, PLC coaches are being placed at every building. K-2 collaborative teams will include using EL's curriculum foundational skills benchmark data, ongoing common assessments, and anecdotal evidence to monitor students' foundational skills acquisition and application. 3-5 collaborative teams will include using benchmark data and curriculum assessments to determine foundational literacy targets. One of our goals is to improve planning with our high-quality curriculum using a backward design model so that teachers can prepare to meet the needs of their students in all areas of literacy instruction. Another goal is to improve the use of data to inform teaching and reteaching, with a targeted focus on foundational skills in K-2. Solution Tree will continue to provide support to our PLC Coaches on ways to improve the PLC process.