

## **Bradford Special School District**

### **Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: May 13, 2021**

**Updated: April 25, 2023**

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. This year we have implemented curriculum from Benchmark Advance and supplemented with Wilson Foundations. Benchmark Advance curriculum has a designated block of time (60 minutes) for activities that build phonological awareness, phonics practice, and fluency practice in addition to comprehension and vocabulary work. During that instruction teachers explicitly teach a sound, the students practice the sound aloud, the teacher models writing the sound aloud, and students apply the skill in independent and small group practice (30 minutes).

For example, in the second nine weeks, students in Kindergarten will learn to decode short vowel sounds in closed syllable words. They will identify sound-symbol relationships for all letters in the alphabet. They will solidify their understanding during small groups and independent practice.

Our improvements for next year are grounded in the continued designated time for these foundational skills. However, we will transition our curriculum to reflect the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum as the core curriculum for instruction. We will be specific with scheduling and time allotments to ensure that 60 minutes will be spent on foundational skills and 60 minutes will be spent on listening and learning.

#### **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. During the integrated ELA block (90 minutes), our students spend time applying foundational skills through knowledge building and comprehension tasks. In addition to this comprehension work our students continue work in fluency, grammar and morphology.

For example, our third grade curriculum uses word study routines daily. These practices include identifying closed syllables in multi-syllabic words through syllable division practices.

- napkin=nap/kin, students divide word into syllables and identify each as a closed syllable with a short vowel sound

This curriculum includes vertical progression of knowledge-building unit topics. These topics begin in Kindergarten and continue through our 5th grade curriculum. All knowledge strands are grounded in science and social studies topics that are embedded into the reading comprehension curriculum.

The continued education and collaboration for our teachers to refine and develop their practices grounded in the science of reading will be a focus of improvements for our school district this coming year. All ELA teachers will be fully trained in the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum which is grounded in the science of reading. Small group ELA instruction will be refined based upon the training received to give teachers a stronger instructional focus in meeting the needs of their students with reading deficits. We will continue to ensure an adequate literacy block (90 minutes) for grades 3-5. The block extends to 120 minutes to include small group instruction.

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

Benchmark - K-5 Advance

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

Benchmark - K-5 Advance

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

Our district has adopted an approved curriculum for ELA instruction; however, we have chosen to supplement in several ways. In past years we have supplemented with Wilson Foundations, but our district will transition to using the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement to further address foundational skills in daily instruction. This supplement allows us to focus more deeply on the phonological awareness and advance phonemic awareness skills that are crucial for success all the way through second grade. We plan to encourage students and families to use all resources available through the Tennessee Foundational Skills Supplement Curriculum which adds additional reinforcement to daily lessons.

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

We will transition to the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

We also use the(PASS and PWRS) as additional screening for dyslexic tendencies.

## **Intervention Structure and Supports**

In the fall, students are given a universal reading screener to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are “at risk”. Our grade-level teachers, interventionists, and principal review universal screening data to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction. All students in grades K-2 are given a diagnostic assessment (PAS) to determine skill deficits in foundational reading skills to help with the appropriate placement and intervention provided for Tier II and Tier III. Students classified as Tier II or Tier III in grades 3-5 are given a specific diagnostic assessment (PWRS) to determine specific deficits in order to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. They receive daily, small-group intervention for 45 minutes in their area of greatest deficit.

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 Tier III interventionists have been trained in Wilson and/or SPIRE. These programs provide the core instruction for students with significant reading deficiencies. These programs are supplemented with hands-on/ multisensory activities that meet individual needs. Tier II and Tier III also use the Florida Center for Reading Research and West Virginia Phonics to provide systematic phonics instruction for intervention. These activities have been approved by core consultants from the state department. Intervention teams which include interventionists, classroom teachers, and principal meet quarterly to determine if a change in the intervention or person providing the intervention is warranted. The team also looks at other variables (attendance, discipline, classroom teacher input, and 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 uses a research-based supplemental program as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that the SPIRE / Wilson curriculum is used to support those students, as it is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for those students. Parents are met with as needed to further describe the intervention process and program that is used for instruction.

Intervention takes place daily during a grade-level time in the master schedule just for RTI. When students are in their RTI groups they work to strengthen their skill deficits. For example, students struggling with word reading proficiency levels, spend time learning the rules for decoding our language. They are given instruction in syllabication to learn the patterns of words and how to better decode and read fluently. As interventionists analyze survey level assessments and screeners, the intervention team works together to code students with the characteristics of dyslexia according to the Say Dyslexia Law. Programs are then used that meet the law’s requirements. Data

is taken weekly and growth is measured and recorded. Meetings are then held to decide if adequate progress is being made. As previously stated, parents are notified through letters and meetings.

### **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) after the district’s schools complete the fall universal screening. Students’ scores are communicated with parents through letters and/or parent meetings. Parents are notified of their placement in Tier II or Tier III if the team decides on that placement. Interventionists communicate the amount of time students will be in intervention classes and the skills they will be working on during those intervention times. The importance of the intervention is explained to parents. Parents are notified each 9 weeks of the progress their child has made or the lack of progress. The team then meets with the parents and decides whether further testing is needed or the intervention should be changed. Notes are taken on each meeting and given to parents.

Next year we plan to improve our practices by using our intervention team to adapt fidelity checks quarterly that will assess each student’s rate of improvement in his/her intervention. This data will then help to determine if the intervention has/has not been successful. If the intervention has not been shown to be successful, the team will make a decision on the next steps for that child. Our school will also work to provide additional resources for parents to help them reinforce deficit skills at home. These resources will be provided free of charge to parents by directing them to the state’s foundational skills resource site. We will also develop more in-depth resources on the characteristics of dyslexia to ensure that parents are aware of the needs of their child and what they can do to better insure the success of their child.

### **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/May 2021-All teachers of grades Pre-K through five 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.

May 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-5. The participating teachers will also include an interventionist. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.