

## **Franklin Special School District**

### **Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

**Approved: June 1, 2021**

**Updated: June 2, 2023**

**Updated: December 12, 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**

During the 2020-2021 school year, kindergarten, first, and second grade instruction in the FSSD included a larger portion of foundational skills instruction than required by the state. Our literacy block include 60+ minutes working on foundational skills during tier one instruction. Our instruction is aligned to the TN state academic standards and is considered the critical content for students in grades K-2. All three grade levels provide an additional 30-45 minutes of foundational skills instruction for students receiving tier 2 or tier 3 intervention. The FSSD supports the findings of the National Reading Panel and follows the science of reading. This can be seen in our commitment to provide systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers in grades K-2 provide explicit instruction in foundational skills following a lesson framework that was taught during our Reading Academies. Our literacy coaches support this work through weekly planning with teachers. The newly adopted Wonders materials provides more support for foundational skills instruction by continuing the focus of instruction over a two-week period. (The planning framework is provided with schedules in question 6.) Our focus on foundational skills has been more intense this year and is our primary focus in grades K-2. This will continue into 2021-2022 school year. Students lost instruction due to the pandemic, so we increased focus and ordered supplemental intervention materials to fill gaps for our youngest learners. Teachers participating in Read 360 training may wish to use the materials and training provided at the Read 360 training. That will be permitted, if they choose to use foundational materials. Many of our schools have ordered 95% group materials to supplement. One school is supplementing with Wilson Foundations. Normally, we would not prefer this diversity in supplements, but teacher buy-in was an important consideration during this difficult year. Administrators report that teachers are faithfully implementing the core materials and the supplemental interventions they have ordered.

#### **Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5**

Foundational skills instruction for grades 3-5 are aligned to the TN state standards and include morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency. Instruction in these areas in grades 3-4 occurs during whole group and small group Wonders instruction. Our newly adopted materials provide excellent materials for this purpose. Instruction for foundational standards occurs during grammar, spelling, fluency, and vocabulary instruction for the most part. For students with deficits in foundational skills, additional instruction occurs during intervention. Foundational skills materials

for grade 5 students in our district are provided in our adopted materials, Open Up or EL Education. During the ALL Block portion of Open Up, instruction, reinforcement, and practice is provided for essential components of reading (phonics, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and writing). Among these components is Word Study and Vocabulary, Reading and Speaking Fluency, Writing Practice, and Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics. Students work with on these components for a minimum of 30 minutes daily. In the 2021-2022, we hope to extend the ELA block in one of our schools from 90 minutes to 120 minutes. Additional foundational skills instruction occurs during tier 2, tier 3, and sped intervention times. During intervention, students with deficits in foundational skills receive instruction to fill these gaps using district approved intervention materials/programs. Students receive daily, small-group intervention beyond core instruction (30-45 minutes), targeting the specific identified reading deficit. Students identified for such intervention receive explicit, targeted instruction utilizing vetted resources as prescribed to address the specific gap in skills. (FSSD has compiled a list of research-based options for reading intervention available to students who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency.) Intervention providers use diagnostic and placement assessments to tailor plans to meet the needs of RTI students, and closely monitor progress on a biweekly (Tier II) or weekly (Tier III) basis. Building data teams meet every 4 ½-6 weeks to determine if the intervention is effective or if a change is needed. Decisions made during data team meetings bring into consideration additional sources of data (attendance, engagement) before making changes such as pacing of the program, increased number of minutes, change in program or provider. In the fall, students are given our universal reading screening measures. Students who fall below designated cut scores are given additional survey level assessments to screen for dyslexia. Following fall screening and school-level data team meetings, letters are sent to all parents of students who have been identified as a student in need of a dyslexic-specific intervention. This letter outlines the process for screening, plan for intervention (including the provider and times/schedule), specific area(s) of deficit the intervention will focus on, and access to resources for parents via the state of Tennessee's "Say Dyslexia" bill.

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

McGraw Hill - K-5 Wonders

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

McGraw Hill - K-5 Wonders

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

We use a supplemental explicit phonics program in K-2 called 95% Core Phonics. Grade 5 uses Open Up EL Education - no waiver required.

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

The universal screener for grades K-1 literacy is the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, aimswebPlus. We also administer aimswebPlus to our third grade students for the spring benchmark. The universal screener for students in grades 2-5 is iReady. In addition to the initial screener, all students in grade K-8 complete a spelling screener (to meet the state requirement for encoding screening). All students in grades 1-8 also complete a written expression screener, to meet state requirements. Students who score below district expectations on

our universal screener, spelling screener, or written expression screener receive the complete FSSD dyslexia screener as described in our district's dyslexia plan. A snapshot of our screener is included in item 20. Students in KG complete all assessments needed to meet requirements of dyslexia screening with the exception of spelling, which our district includes for kg. The FSSD Dyslexia Screening includes the following screening areas for all grades K-8: sound-symbol recognition, phonological and phonemic awareness, decoding skills, encoding skills, and alphabetic knowledge and rapid naming.

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Tier 2 is in addition to the instruction provided in Tier 1. Students who score below the designated cut score on the universal screener will receive more intense intervention in Tier 2. These cut scores are based on national norms, at a minimum, and identify students who are at-risk. Tier 2 interventions are systematic, research-based interventions that target the student's identified area of deficit (basic reading skill(s), reading fluency, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics problem solving or written expression). Interventions will be developed based on the unique needs of students. There will be evidence that interventions are more intense than Tier 1. Students below the 25th percentile are considered "at-risk" and will be immediately placed in Tier 2 B or Tier 3 Intervention. In K-8, the interventions in should be provided daily. Progress monitoring is used to assess a student's academic performance, to quantify a student's rate of improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. A dyslexia screening is helpful in determining a student's deficit areas. This is used to determine appropriate instruction and materials as well as to establish realistic goals for a student. Parent communication is an essential component of RTI2, communication with parents is expected every 4.5 weeks. The FSSD has two main documents to guide teachers and coaches in selecting the appropriate intervention for students. One of our documents is the FSSD Suggested Intervention Materials. This document includes district approved resources by tier and grade. The second tool we use is the Dyslexia Specific Interventions list. This tool provides interventions and intervention suggestions for the areas assessed in the FSSD Dyslexia Screener: sound-symbol recognition, phonological and phonemic awareness, decoding skills, encoding skills, and alphabetic knowledge. In grades K-2, our tier 3 interventions are SPIRE, 95% group, Wonderworks, and Sound Sensible. In grades 5-8, we have added a few more options for intervention - Just Words, Reading Assistant Plus, and Rewards. The primary intervention for students in grades K-8 for students with significant reading deficits is SPIRE. Following each screening window (fall, winter, and spring) and school-level data team meetings, letters are sent to all FSSD parents of K-5 students who have been identified as a student who should receive reading intervention to address a specific area of deficit (identified by scoring below the 26th percentile). This letter sent to parents identifies the screening process, specific plan for reading intervention (including the provider and times/schedule), the area(s) of deficit the intervention will focus on, and access to resources to support parents. The letter is accompanied by a report detailing the child's scores and outlines the specific gaps in the student's reading skills. For students who participate in reading intervention, parents receive a report from aimsweb that details student literacy progress every 4 ½-6 weeks, typically at progress and end-of-the-quarter reporting times. Classroom newsletters, family tip sheets, and school wide family reading nights are used to provide information on the importance of reading proficiency by third grade as well as engage and encourage family participation in their child's journey towards reading proficiency.

## Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Parent contact is an essential component of RTI2 and reinforces the culture of collaboration. A variety of means to reach parents may be used, including: phone calls electronic mail, US Mail, student-delivered communications, ABST correspondence, and progress reports/report cards. District-wide parent contact will be made at the beginning of the school year to communicate details regarding the FSSD RtI2 process.

- Step 1: District-wide parent contact letter is sent home with every FSSD student.
- Step 2: Intervention groups are determined for reading, math and/or both.
- Step 3: Parent contact will be made by either a phone call or an email to notify parents of academic intervention status. In addition, parents will be informed that progress information will be sent home every 4.5 weeks. For behavior, refer to your school's RTI2-B Implementation Manual for specific procedures regarding parent contact.
- Step 4: District RTI2 progress letter will be sent home every 4.5 weeks. \*Follow steps three and four for any student entering intervention after initial placement.

At a minimum, contact with parents should be made for each of the following reasons:

- Before initiating tiered interventions
- When discontinuing tiered interventions Communicating progress-monitoring data in writing every 4.5 weeks for students receiving tiered interventions (progress reports/report cards).

In the FSSD, we notify all parents of our process for monitoring data and providing intervention based on universal screening results. Parents are notified of the student's progress every 4 weeks. If a student meets our district requirement to receive the FSSD Dyslexia Screener, we complete the screener and notify parents of those results as well. Some students require dyslexia specific interventions based on our dyslexia screener and some do not. In addition to these notifications, we also provide a notice to parents of students in grade 3 about the proficiency requirement. We notify parents several times per year and offer tutoring for third grade non-proficient students.

Communication used with parents includes

- Letter that explains dyslexia screening with areas highlighted that student is deficit in.
- Dyslexia Overview for parents explaining the law, what receiving the letter means, FSSD commitments based on student needs, and information about the continuum of support that the student will receive.
- Dyslexia myths and truths
- Area of reading difficulties described
- Summary of screening results
- Home Support for Parents: The FSSD provides a few options at no-cost for families to support learning at home. A few of the things we provide are: Description: Ready 4K – State initiative - Ready4K delivers three texts with fun facts and tips to provide your families with simple, engaging tips to help their students continue to learn while at home. The messages match each child's age, even if families have more than one child. Each pre-K through 3 family member (the family contact entered into the Ready4K dashboard) will receive a text message letting them know the Ready4K program is launching, and they will begin receiving weekly text messages. The state shared a toolkit, including a 1-pager, FAQ, draft emails and robo texts for your schools and parents. These resources are also accessible in your district's Ready4K dashboard. - Ready 4K - Summer Book Delivery – State initiative - Story Bus – Our district has a bus set up as a mobile library that visits locations around our district during the summer.

Students ages 4-12 are welcome to be signed in for 45 minutes to read with an FSSD employee. As students leave the bus, they receive a sack lunch and a free book. - Family Literacy Nights – each school sponsors literacy nights throughout the school year. Parents are invited to visit and learn more about how they can support students at home. Typically, there are free games and food provided.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Beginning in 2017, the FSSD began rolling out trainings to all schools that was presented by the literacy coach and the school psychologist. This information was in response to the “Say Dyslexia” law. We ramped up our efforts to provide more professional learning regarding dyslexia and foundational skills.

Professional learning provided include:

- 2017 – FSSD Part One of the Dyslexia Rollout
- 2018 – FSSD Fall 2018 Refresher
  - August FSSD Part Two Dyslexia Rollout
  - January MTSU – Assessment for Characteristics of Dyslexia in the School Setting
- 2019--FSSD Part Three Dyslexia Rollout
  - April 2019 – FSSD Dyslexia Specific Interventions
  - August FSSD Explicit and Multisensory Instruction
  - Oct/Nov 2019 2020 – Science of Reading
- Fall 2020 FSSD Dyslexia Screening for Sped
  - November 2021 – FSSD Dyslexia Update
  - May Read 360 – FSSD will have 50 teachers complete this training in the summer of 2021. As more training is provided, we will continue to participate.
- 2021-2023 – FSSD will continue to offer foundational literacy trainings and participate in the state provided Early Reading Training. All teachers holding a license that allows them to teach reading in grades K through five are required to complete one foundational literacy course to renew their license after 2023. We will work with trainers who have a proven track record of supporting districts.

In addition, none of our foundational literacy training will include reference to MSV or cueing (which is has not in the last 10 years.) Dr. Hirschmann – mentioned in greater detail later in the report- is one of our key providers. The FSSD will continue to participate in teacher training and professional development provided by the TDOE. Ensuring that current and future teachers receive adequate training and support in foundational literacy skills instruction is crucial for the success of this new literacy act. Current teachers in K-5th grades will complete at least one professional development course on foundational literacy skills approved by the TDOE to advance or renew their teaching licenses. For courses offered beyond those of the TDOE, FSSD will ensure that teachers complete an assessment of content presented in the course. This record will be provided to the TDOE office of licensure.

FSSD Reading Academies The most comprehensive professional development we've provided in the FSSD for foundational skills is Reading Academy. We partnered with the MTSU Dyslexia Center and provided full day sessions with content and practice with students. Our first year included only K-2 teachers. This was so successful administrators requested we expand to 8th grade. So, the following year reading academies were offered to K-2, 3-4, and 5-8. The content of our reading academies can be found in the artifact PD plan. For many years, we have offered professional learning for dyslexia and for our reading and intervention programs. This included foundational skills. In addition, we have provided specific foundational literacy PL for teachers in all grade levels. In the Summer of 2021, 50 of our teachers will attend the Read 360 training provided by the state. We are hosting the session in district. We are excited about supporting implementation of this learning in the Fall of 2021. In addition, we will be resuming the reading academies that were paused during 2020-2021. Dr. Melinda Hirschmann will continue to work with the FSSD to provide these sessions during the 2021-2022 school year. Dr. Hirschmann, along with other members of the MTSU Dyslexia Center Staff, are great partners with our district and are skilled providers of professional learning. Additional information about the work done with Dr. Hirschmann can be found in the artifact – PD plan.