

## Clinton City Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: February 23, 2024

Approved: May 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

In the K-2 master schedule, we surpass the minimum requirement of 45 minutes dedicated to explicit foundational literacy skills instruction using the CCS approved curriculum. Below is the detailed breakdown of the allotted time:

- Phonemic Awareness and Phonics: minimum 30 minutes daily
- High Frequency Words and Vocabulary Development: 20 minutes Daily
- Fluency: 20 minutes daily primarily practiced in small group reading and in whole group utilizing Foundations
- Comprehension 20-30 minutes daily

Our district utilizes a curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned with Tennessee ELA standards, as approved by the state's Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission (HMH Into Reading). Foundations, developed by Wilson Language, is also employed in kindergarten to teach all skills, alongside the adopted reading series, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt into Reading. In 1st and 2nd grade, Foundations is also utilized to instruct phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency, with students receiving additional practice through Houghton Mifflin Harcourt into Reading. For comprehension in these grades, the primary instructional tool is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt into Reading.

The Foundations curriculum is used for foundational skills instruction, with a designated time block for grades K-2. This instructional time encompasses activities aimed at building phonological awareness, phonics practice, fluency practice, and comprehension and vocabulary work (Word of the Day). During this instruction, teachers explicitly teach a sound, students practice the sound aloud (learning to produce pure and accurate sounds), the teacher models the letter/s combination, says the keyword, and produces the proper sound. He/she models writing the sound, students refer to their individual code chart to write the sound, and then apply the skill in independent practice (small group or individual). Students have the opportunity for meaningful practice—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (using both large and small muscles)—in daily systematic and explicit instruction. They have repeated opportunities to activate muscle memory when using decodable texts

(sentences and paragraphs) aligned with the sounds taught in explicit instruction. Weekly check-ups and unit assessments are administered to monitor progress and adjust instruction.

Our improvements for the upcoming year are anchored in the sustained designated time for teachers to collaborate, addressing problems of practice (such as refining opportunities for developing and practicing writing skills), and internalizing the instructional plan through unit-level and lesson-level preparation. Another illustration of alignment with TN state standards is evident in Foundations at the Kindergarten level. In an activity named Echo/Find Words, students encode and decode regularly spelled CVC words (K.FL.PWR.3d). During this activity, students segment sounds and identify the corresponding letter(s) for each segmented sound, utilizing finger tapping. The teacher dictates the word, students echo it, and then the word is tapped out together using their fingers. Next, students locate magnetic letter tiles to construct the word on their personal magnetic boards, with one student coming to the front to find the letters on the display board. Once all students have formed the word with their tiles, the teacher prompts someone to spell it orally and provide a sentence using the word. Subsequently, the teacher instructs students to 'clear the deck' or 'spell it away', with students returning each tile to its correct alphabetical position on their magnetic boards. An alternative to this activity is having students spell the word(s) either using whiteboards or writing paper.

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

For grades 3-5, at least 30 minutes daily is dedicated to teaching foundational skills using an integrated approach. The following materials are used to teach morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency.

- Morphology/vocabulary-Sadlier Vocabulary and iReady (15 minutes daily)
- Comprehension- iReady, HMH, and Sadlier Progress
- Fluency-iReady, HMH, and Sadlier Progress (45 minutes daily)
- Grammar- HMH Into Reading (10 minutes)
- Spelling/Phonics- HMH Into Reading (5-10 minutes)
- Foundations (Phonics instruction daily 3rd Grade Only)
- Small Group- (45-60 minutes)
- Writing-Teacher written prompts using SRSD method taught by TDOE. (2-3 full days in the ELA block are dedicated to the writing process. Writing is evidence-based from the text read.)

We are implementing Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's into Reading for grades 3-5. Our district has an integrated literacy block for grades three through five 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 that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a total of 120 minutes of ELA instruction. Although the daily schedule is not the same 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) for about 60 minutes per day and foundational skills instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, spelling, and writing for at least 30 minutes per day.

Our adopted curriculum also engages students in work around fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills are not taught in isolation, but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connections. For example, when the American Revolution is being studied in fourth grade using our adopted Social Studies curriculum, our teachers integrate several literary texts from Sadlier Progress on the same topic. The unit is planned to ensure that students learn how the craft and structure of a piece of literature contributes to their understanding of it. Another piece on the topic is then read to integrate knowledge and ideas from one or more texts. Close reading steps are followed for each text read. Questions and activities to reinforce all Reading Literacy and Reading Informational standards have been created. Also, literal and inferential short constructed response items and writing prompts have been created so that students must draw evidence from the sources read.

### **Additional Supports**

Extensive professional development has occurred and will continue at all grade levels with specific attention to the grade levels in need of specific literacy support. ELA areas of need are provided to include a structure for instruction, intensive coaching, and alignment sessions to ensure lesson preparation is complete, rigorous, and focused. A coach has been added to support the needs of the educators to fill content gaps and support with planning and instruction.

Collaborative days are used to support PD with a focus on specific areas and subgroups. Individual grade levels and teachers are supported through our coaching program. New teacher academy is provided to all new teachers with a focus on planning and support.

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

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt into Reading

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

Approved waiver for other materials (grade 3)  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt into Reading (grades 3-5)

### **Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5. This screener complies with RTI2 and Say Dyslexia requirements**

We will administer the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, aimswebPlus, to all K-5 students. This screener complies with RTI and Say Dyslexia Requirements.

### **Supplemental Screener: Additional Information**

Easy CBM has been used as our Reading Screener until the 2024-25 school year. 3rd grade utilized aimswebPlus.

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Clinton City Schools uses an all-hands-on deck approach for each grade level in addressing RTI needs. Every grade level has a 45-minute block embedded into the daily school schedule. All instructional assistants work together with the teachers to address students' unique learning needs.

For example, in a grade level with four classes, there may be 9-10 intervention/acceleration groups when you include all staff involved. The grouping is flexible and is adjusted monthly in the RTI meeting. All students receive 45 minutes of intervention/enrichment based on their specific needs identified by the Universal Screener and other student data points. We ensure all intervention supports and schedules are aligned to Tennessee's RTI Manual.

Some students are also administered survey level assessments to identify specific deficit areas. Both Tier 2 and Tier 3 students receive 45 minutes of RTI daily which provides a support level beyond the required level for Tier 2. All Tier 3 students receive a multisensory, research-based approach to intervention. Tier 3 students receive intervention in groups of three students to one adult. For example, students in Tier 3 ELA use SPIRE as it is multisensory, and research based. Sound Sensible and Foundations Intervention are used at the Tier 3 level as well. In Mathematics, Tier 3 is addressed using Touch Math strategies with Ready Lessons on the student's instructional level.

Clinton City Schools uses several evidence-based intervention programs aimed at providing the support students need to increase their performance closer to grade-level expectations. We monitor student progress on their specific gaps and as a team use the information to inform our decisions for each student about the duration, material, and intensity of intervention changes if a student is not showing progress.

### **Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports**

Clinton City Schools notifies parents in grades K-6 if their child is "at-risk" for or has a significant reading deficiency as evidenced by results from the universal reading screener. 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 as well as information on the pathway to 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

The district defines how students are assessed and what a "significant reading deficiency" means. Parents are subsequently notified of their child's progress, or lack of progress, following a monthly RTI meeting. During each monthly meeting, data teams discuss the existing intervention plans and make decisions based on the needs of the individual student. Parents receive monthly notifications/communication describing student progress and outlining any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screening data. Schools provide a resource document with recommended activities (these activities do not require any purchase of resources) that will support students in their area of need.

These communications go out to parents with students in grades K-6 each grading period (at least three times a year). Additionally, a School Home Connect newsletter is provided monthly to all students with recommendations on how families can support their readers. Teacher newsletters, in the primary grades, outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip parents to work with the child. The school and district websites have links in

the parent tabs that support foundational and ELA skills using family-friendly language and activities.

### **Professional Development Plan**

CCS teachers have been provided professional development activities in the foundational skills beginning with Foundations, a Wilson Language product. All teachers PreK-3 continue to receive ongoing, job imbedded PD on phonics instruction. Regularly scheduled collaborative days and PLCs are used to deepen understanding in early foundational skills.

All teachers PreK-6th grade have received training on research-based vocabulary instruction based on the work of Beck and McKeown. Intermediate teachers have additionally received instruction on syllabication and its use in decoding and the craft of writing. They also completed a close reading refresher with the expectation that it be implemented within their ELA blocks.

CCS teachers have attended the professional development training provided by TDOE on foundational skills instruction grounded in a phonics-based approach. This early reading training is one week of extensive training. Phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary are covered in this training. Teachers must demonstrate competency at the end of training. A plan is in place for any new teachers to complete the training prior to teaching.

### **Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan**

Clinton City Schools is continuing our focus on Foundational Literacy. As we have worked to implement Foundations across grades K-3, our plans will always be driven by data and solid instruction.