

Germantown Municipal Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

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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 K-2 students spend approximately 90 minutes focusing on foundational literacy skills primarily through the use of Saxon phonics (whole class) and small group reading. Saxon phonics lessons provide daily opportunities for students to review and practice previously learned decoding and encoding skills in addition to daily learning of new sounds and spelling rules. Saxon provides explicit, systematic instruction in the following foundational skills:

- Effectively provides instruction in Foundational Skills (Print Concepts, Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Spelling), Comprehension, Vocabulary Acquisition and Use, Writing, and Speaking and Listening Letter- sound correspondence
- Long and short sounds, vowels, alphabetizing
- Decoding skills
- High- frequency words, grade appropriate spelling, handwriting, and vocabulary
- Distinguishing similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of letter that differ
- Grade appropriate vocabulary, word analysis
- Promotes oral reading fluency
- Ensures that students are reading with purpose and for understanding

Kindergarten focuses heavily on phonemic awareness, alphabetic understanding, and producing the most common sounds for consonants and vowels. Weekly, students are provided decodable books that allow them to apply and practice new and previously taught sounds. Each lesson includes practicing phonetic skills orally and in writing.

First grade begins with a review of letter sounds taught in kindergarten and further expand students' phonetic understanding. Students are introduced to blends, trigraphs, r- controlled vowels, and multiple long vowel patterns beyond the basic -cve pattern. Students also learn spelling rules (such as "Use -ck at the end of a one syllable short vowel word.") Students also learn to recognize/decode/understand common prefixes and suffixes. As the year progresses, students

begin learning syllable division rules. Daily lessons begin with phonemic awareness practice. Daily lessons incorporate oral and written practice into the lessons. Decodable books are provided weekly for students to practice introduced phonics skills.

Second grade reviews first grade skills and focuses heavily on syllable division and additional prefix and suffix work. Daily lessons continue reinforcing the phonemic awareness skills previously taught.

At each grade level, students have daily opportunities to apply learned phonics skills through decoding and spelling. "Cold" spelling tests are administered weekly to see if students can apply the skills that have been taught. These tests include sounds/letter combinations learned throughout the year.

Small reading groups provide time for students to read and apply the learned phonics skills in decoding, fluency, and comprehending texts. Daily opportunities are provided for students to apply their phonetic knowledge and comprehension skills in written responses to texts read and discussed.

Our adopted reading curriculum (Wit & Wisdom) includes daily Deep Dives. These fifteen minute lessons primarily focus on grammar skills that support students' speaking and writing.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

In grades 3-5, students receive 45-60 minutes of foundational skills instruction daily. Wit & Wisdom deep dives provide daily morphology, vocabulary, and grammar practice that is connected to the texts being read in class. Foundational skills are also developed in the daily reading lessons. Through the use of appropriate texts, teachers are able to strengthen students' phonetic skills, fluency, and basic comprehension strategies. Grammar is also embedded in writing. Instead of simply teaching skills in isolation, grammar skills are taught or practiced as a need is seen in students' writing. We have purchased Mountain Language for teachers to use as brief, daily, repetitive reviews of foundational literacy skills.

GMSD is committed to providing Orton Gillingham training to as many of our K-3 teachers as possible. Those who attend the intermediate training have a clearer understanding of the importance of morphology and resources to effectively provide systematic and implicit instruction to their students.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Approved waiver for other materials

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Great Minds - 3-5 Wit and Wisdom

Additional Information about Instructional Materials

Each of our K-5 schools has a reading library where teachers can check out books to use during reading instruction. Teachers have access to Mountain Language (online), which provides brief, systematic review of foundational skills.

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

Our district administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to our students in grades K-5.

Intervention Structure and Supports

In August, students are given a universal screener, to help identify students who have a significant reading deficiency. RTI coaches identify students who score between the 0-25th percentile and complete additional drill-down assessments, such as the PASS, to determine a student's specific skill deficit(s). Students scoring in between the 0-25th percentile are placed into a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention group. These small groups meet daily for 45 minutes. Instruction focuses on explicit instruction in the area of deficit. Students also receive a dyslexia screener to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Teachers and interventionists working with these students have completed at least one Orton-Gillingham course and received certification. Lexia (online program) is also used to provide specific and differentiated foundational skills support to students receiving intervention. SPIRE is a resource used with our Tier 3 students. Various intervention groups include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and written expression. During the literacy block, teachers also work with students in small groups providing skill support and just right texts to help all of our students become successful readers.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

After students have completed our universal screener, our RTI coaches notify parents in writing if their child scored in the 0-25th percentile. These notifications provide parents an explanation of the specific skill deficit(s) in which their child will receive focused intervention during the daily RTI period. Parents will be informed of what intervention (curriculum, online program, technique) their child will receive. Parents are also notified concerning the importance of being able to read by the end of 3rd grade. Parents receive an update every 4 1/2 weeks concerning their child's progress following the school's RTI data team meeting. If the student has not demonstrated progress with a particular intervention, the team will determine changes to the student's current interventions. Schools will communicate with parents ways they can support their child's reading journey at home (sight word flashcards, reading to child every night, listening to their child read, rhyming games...) These communications are provided to parents of K-5 students three times a year. Tier 1 teachers also communicate with parents how they can help their child at home with foundational skills and reading in their weekly notes which are posted in Schoology and/ or email.

Professional Development Plan

Professional Development for Teachers: All K-5 teachers will receive foundational skills instruction grounded in a phonics-based approach. All GMSD teachers who are licensed to teach K-5 reading will complete the TDOE online literacy course by August, 2023. We continue to encourage our teachers to participate in the in-person literacy courses provided by TDOE.

These courses will be facilitated by highly qualified and certified trainers. The training will include training in: phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. Teachers will be required to demonstrate knowledge and competency at the end of the course.

Each elementary building also has some teachers who have attended Orton Gillingham training through IMSE (beginning/ intermediate/ or both courses).

Saxon Phonics PD - GMSD has purchased Saxon PD hours to help support teachers' foundational skills instruction as needed.

Monthly RTI Coach meetings provide opportunities for us to share new research and information that will equip schools with information and resources needed to identify and support students with characteristics of dyslexia.

Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Since its inception, GMSD has recognized the importance of ensuring our students receive a strong early literacy foundation and are committed to providing our teachers and students with research-based, high quality materials that will enable our students to become strong, confident readers. We will participate in the State's summer book distribution to provide our youngest readers with additional books to read. It is our belief that receiving these books will continue to foster a love of reading in these students.