

STEM Preparatory Academy

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: June 1, 2021

Updated: January 25, 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

N/A--We do not serve students in grades K-2.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

STEM Prep has an integrated literacy block for grades five (5) through eight (8) grounded in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. Our curriculum materials are culturally relevant and designed by Novel Educational Partners (formerly Achievement First). During the integrated ELA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a total of 100 minutes of ELA instruction with at least 30 minutes of embedded foundational literacy skills instruction. The breakdown is as follows:

- a. 100 minutes are dedicated to close reading, complex text and evidence-based research and writing which includes explicit morphology, grammar, spelling, fluency, and comprehension.
- b. 30 minutes of reading intervention or enrichment through Lexia Learning which supports Word Study (vocabulary), Grammar, and Comprehension.
- c. Spelling instruction is built into grammar structure. An example of the foundational skills being addressed during each of these blocks of time are depicted below.

Beginning the 2024-2025 school year, 5th grade students' ELA instruction will be restructured to include an additional literacy block.

Novel Education Partners:

- Students read independently during the ELA block and teachers can provide coaching to support them in applying decoding knowledge to grade level texts

- During Lexia Learning time, teachers pull small groups of students to work on targeted foundational skills, including phonics and word analysis work. Spelling instruction is embedded into instruction.
- Students in class read and reread grade level texts including both nonfiction and literature with Lexile range of 750-920 to develop both strong comprehension and fluency.
- Students will have daily opportunities to discuss texts.
- Teachers are provided with weekly coaching on how to encourage and support students in using the conventions of standard English grammar and usage.
- Students have daily opportunities to write about the texts they are reading. They also have explicit grammar instruction as well as opportunities to edit their writing.
- Students will receive direct instruction to unpack figurative language including devices such as similes and metaphors and then consistently be given opportunities to apply this knowledge to unpack the meaning of texts both in discussion and in response to text-dependent questions.
- Students receive direct instruction on tier 2 vocabulary for approximately 10 minutes daily. Vocabulary instruction ties to the grade-level text, and provides students opportunities to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words by looking at context clues and textual evidence.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

N/A We do not serve students in this grade band.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Approved waiver for other materials (Novel Education Partners)

Additional Information about Instructional Materials

We are using Novel Education Partners (formerly Achievement First curriculum). The waiver is a part of our Charter authorization.

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

We use multiple screeners including: NWEA MAP assessment (primary), easyCBM, and the state universal screening option.

Intervention Structure and Supports

Intervention and schedules are aligned with the expectations outlined in the RTI² Manual. For intervention, we use Lexia Learning. Lexia's adaptive blended learning model allows teachers to easily differentiate instruction and target skill gaps for students in Tier II and Tier III RTI. Students are leveled based on their specific needs by taking the Lexia benchmark assessment at the beginning of the year.

Students then progress at their own pace through personal learning pathways and adaptive instruction in Word Study, Grammar, and Comprehension. Students and teachers monitor student progress weekly through data collection and conferencing. Teachers plan small group instruction based on additional needs identified through the Lexia platform. Once students have mastered a skill level, they are given additional independent practice to support the application of the skill with new texts. It is important to note that our data teams use progress monitoring to inform decisions about the duration, materials, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress.

Lexia Learning provides:

- A combination of reading, writing, and phonics/word study
- Emphasis on teaching for comprehending strategies
- Explicit attention to genre and to the features of fiction and nonfiction texts
- Special attention to the disciplinary reading, literature inquiry, and writing about reading
- Specific work on sounds, letters, and words in activities designed to help students notice the details of written language and learn how words "work"
- Close reading opportunities
- Help for students in expanding their vocabularies
- Communication tools for informing parents about what children are learning and how they can support them at home
- Online resources for assessment, record keeping, lesson instruction, and home-to-school connections.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Communication with our STEM families is important to us. We provide information regarding student literacy scores to parents in parent-friendly language including a clear explanation of student skill gaps and the depth and extent of student need. We also provide information on how the gaps will be addressed during intervention. Additionally, we provide parents with explicit at home activities that they can engage with their student and materials that are free.

Information is provided to parents at least three times per year regarding their student's literacy/reading progress after the universal screeners have been given. Parents also receive information on their child's progress throughout the year via progress reports and report cards. Parents are given an additional letter if their student falls into the "at risk" category in reading based on the universal screener or for those who scored significantly below grade level on the 4th grade ELA TCAP. This letter states how students will be supported during intervention classes. Parents of STEM students are notified of the importance of reading on grade level and the disparate life outcomes associated when they do not. All communication sent to parents is translated into the families' home language.

Professional Development Plan

The PD Plan includes all PDs provided for teachers. Our teachers engaged in the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training which offered explicit training in foundational literacy skills instruction involving Phonological and Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Spelling.

The following professional development was provided to staff beginning the 2022-2024 school years:

- Science of Reading
- Tiered Vocabulary Instruction
- Understanding and Unpacking Standards
- Foundational Habits
- Lexia PowerUp and Goal Setting
- Introduction to Lexia Learning and Navigating Literacy Resources
- Foundations of Co-Teaching
- Differentiation of Instruction Within the Lesson
- Formative and Summative Assessment Creation
- Effective Independent Practice
- Unit Unpacking
- Effective Professional Learning Communities
- Analyzing Interim and Benchmark Data
- Effective Co-Teaching
- Strategies for Supporting ELL Students
- Understanding by Design

