

## **Trenton Special School District**

### Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

First Approved: June 1, 2021

Approved: June 27, 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**

Our district uses Benchmark Advance, a foundational skills curriculum grounded in the science of reading and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. This curriculum uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time for foundational skills instruction in grades K-2. Trenton Elementary School K-2 classes have literacy blocks that range from 90 to 120 minutes daily with a 60-minute block designated for foundational skills instruction. The foundational skills instruction contains activities and practices that teach the following foundational skills: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. We continue to focus on the transition from lesson planning to lesson internalization. The adoption of the high-quality instructional material has changed how teachers prepare for instruction. They are internalizing the quality material and preparing to implement it in their classroom. Many of our teachers have been formally trained in using Orton-Gillingham instructional strategies or received OG training through the Institute for Multi-Sensory Education. These strategies are used to support teaching foundational skills presented in our Benchmark Curriculum. An example of one of these OG strategies would be using the "Vowel Intensive" hands-on method for helping students learn vowel sounds. Our K-2 teachers also implement Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Instruction, a supplemental program, which is strictly focused on building letter sound knowledge. This is a scripted program that takes place daily during the literacy block.

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

Trenton Elementary School has an integrated literacy block for grades three and four grounded in the science of reading aligned to Tennessee ELA standards. The district adopted Benchmark Advance for grades three and four. The curriculum materials are selected from those approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Third and fourth grade students participate in a 120-minute literacy block daily where they apply foundational skills with the daily lessons for a minimum of 30 minutes. All daily instruction includes the components of reading: Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. These skills are taught through mini-lessons and

are embedded within the daily lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection. In addition to teaching phonics embedded in our curriculum, our 3rd graders, through Benchmark Advance, spend 21 days at the beginning of the school year reviewing and teaching the 7 syllable types. In 4th grade, all of our teachers provide instruction using REWARDS Intermediate which allows students to gain competency in decoding and morphology, spelling, fluency, and vocabulary through the systematic application of explicit instruction (I do, We do, You do) and the gradual release of responsibility leading to independent strategy use. We will continue to focus on the transition from lesson planning to lesson internalization. The adoption of the high-quality instructional material has changed how teachers prepare for instruction. They are internalizing instructional materials and preparing to implement it in their classroom.

Our 5th-grade students are at Trenton Rosenwald Middle School under different leadership. Fifth grade students receive 70 minutes of literacy instruction daily. We use LearnZillion Guidebooks for our Reading Curriculum. Although Guidebooks has limited opportunities for explicit instruction in phonics and word analysis, teachers embed foundational skills instruction through implementing grammar usage in speaking and writing for approximately 50% of instructional time. This ensures that students apply and build on the foundational skills acquired in grades K-4 in a meaningful way.

At this time, we do not plan to make any changes to the way we instruct reading. We feel it is important for our teachers to teach this high-quality curriculum with integrity.

### **Additional Information**

Our district is dedicated to improving student literacy and we felt the first place to start was to support teachers in lesson preparation. Much work has been done with our TNTP partnership on walk-throughs using the Foundational and Knowledge IPGs, internalizing the curriculum, and following procedures for instructional prep. We have seen improvement in teachers internalizing the curriculum, maintaining the focus of each lesson, and presenting instruction with integrity. The needs of students that fall into subgroups of concern are being addressed through tiered instruction. These students receive foundational skills practice to help build reading fluency.

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

Benchmark Advance

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

Benchmark Advance grades 3-4  
LearnZillion Guidebooks grade 5

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

Heggerty

### **Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5**

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) K-4

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Trenton Elementary School utilizes several research-based programs (Barton Reading and Spelling System, SPIRE, Sound Sensible, Rewards, and Lexia) for reading intervention in grades K-4 for students either identified at-risk for a significant reading deficiency or identified with a significant reading deficiency. Universal screening data, prior intervention outcomes (if applicable), and teacher observation data are used during RTI Data Team Meetings to determine placement, intensity, and scheduling of students into Tier III or Tier II. Students who are placed in Tier III receive the most intense intervention daily for at least 45 minutes and are progress monitored weekly. Students who are placed in Tier II receive intervention daily for at least 30 minutes and are progress monitored weekly. The universal screener determines the specific deficit in which the student will be provided support and progress monitored. Identified students will be provided a focused Tier II or Tier III intervention based on the student's deficit area in Phonological/Phonemic Awareness, Alphabet Knowledge/ Decoding Words, Oral Reading Fluency, and/or Vocabulary/ Reading Comprehension.

RTI<sup>2</sup> Data Team Meetings will be conducted quarterly and following the close of each universal screening window to evaluate student progress and either continue the intervention, change the intervention, or change Tier placement. 5th grade students' deficiencies are identified by using iReady Reading Diagnostic. We provide daily Tier II and Tier III interventions each day. Our Tier II students receive interventions from a certified and endorsed reading teacher and time on the iReady Reading program. Our Tier III students receive intensive interventions from a certified and endorsed reading teacher. All our intervention groups meet during our "Growl Time", which is an all-hands-on deck time. All students attend an intervention or enrichment group during this time.

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

Trenton Elementary School and Trenton Rosenwald Middle School notifies parents in grades K-5 if their child is "at-risk" for or has a significant reading deficiency/characteristic of dyslexia (as evidenced by students scoring in the 0-40th percentile) immediately after our school completes each universal screening administration. 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 and information on the pathways to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The school defines for families how students are assessed and what a "significant reading deficiency/characteristics of dyslexia" means. The notification letter includes links to websites where parents can find more information about significant reading deficiency/characteristics of dyslexia. We also include resources for no-cost activities that families can use to support learning at home. Kindergarten through 4th grade parents are subsequently notified of their child's progress or lack of progress at the end of each grading period (total of 6 times per year). Fifth grade students only receive this information following the initial benchmark assessment in the fall. In the parent notifications/communication, the data team notes the intervention(s) and any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal

screening. Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice per year. Parents of at-risk students are required to attend to discuss the students' progress toward their goals.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Each school year, our teachers receive a refresher on OG instructional strategies. In addition, all K-5 teachers have completed the Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. This training focuses on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. We also have a plan in place for new teachers to our district to complete the early reading training. In conjunction with the Early Literacy Training series, focused professional development will also be provided by our curriculum vendors: Benchmark Advance and LearnZillion. Training providers from both vendors are experienced with proven track records of supporting districts in understanding and implementing instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. All those in attendance will receive certification of completion. PreK-5th grade teachers will participate in PLCs and Walkthrough cycles followed by coaching conversations during the 2024-25 school year. PLCs and Walkthroughs will allow administration to determine the teacher's knowledge and competency of literacy instruction following the trainings they have received. Through our partnership with TNTP, teachers and administrators will participate in the LIN Network Monthly Webinar Series with focuses on highly effective literacy instruction. All trainings will be free of MSV or cueing strategies.