

Lawrence County Schools
Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: May 14, 2021

Updated: July 27, 2021

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

The Lawrence County School System (LCSS) utilizes Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), a foundational skill curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. CKLA uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction and has a designated block of time (60 minutes skills instruction daily) for foundational skills instruction in Grades K-2. Skills are taught in a systematic, comprehensive, sounds-first approach and build over time. Activities included phonological awareness building, phonics practice, and fluency practice in addition to comprehension and vocabulary work. Teachers explicitly teach a sound, students practice the sound aloud, teachers model writing the sound, students refer to their individual code chart on which they write the sound, and then students apply the skill in independent practice within small groups or individually. The explicit skills instruction is accompanied by 100% decodable readers.

LCSS's improvements for next year include continuing the focus of 60 minutes designated time for foundational skills instruction daily for all students in Grades K-2 as we strive to fully implement CKLA with fidelity. LCSS will also further develop this plan to include a more comprehensive PreK-2 ELA implementation plan with ongoing, spiraled literacy professional learning for teachers and leaders in both knowledge-building and foundational skills.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

The Lawrence County School System (LCSS) utilizes Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), a foundational skill curriculum grounded in reading science and aligned to Tennessee ELA standards as approved by the state Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. LCSS has an integrated literacy block for Grades 3-5. During the integrated CLA block that meets an evidence-based approach to applying foundational skills within daily lessons, our students receive a minimum of 90 minutes of Tier I ELA instruction. Although the daily schedule may vary from day to day, all daily instruction includes components for knowledge-building (to build and improve the ability to comprehend complex text and apply that knowledge as they listen, read, write, think, and speak) for about 60 minutes per day and foundational skill instruction that includes fluency, grammar, morphology, spelling, and writing for a minimum of 30 minutes per day. The foundational skills

instruction is embedded in all aspects of Tier I instruction to develop students' holistic literacy approach to fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension coherently as recommended by research. CKLA engages students in work around fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills not taught in isolation but embedded to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection within the lessons. CLKA also provides teachers with sidebar supports as well as fluency and decoding and encoding remediation guides to assist students who struggle with foundation skills or need additional help.

LCSS's improvements for next year include continuing the focus of 90 minutes as a minimum of Tier I ELA instruction daily for all students in Grades 3-5 as we strive to fully implement CKLA with fidelity. LCSS will also further develop this plan to include a more comprehensive ELA implementation plan with ongoing, spiraled literacy professional learning for teachers and leaders in both knowledge-building and foundational skills.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Amplify - K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts

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

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, the students in the Lawrence County School System (LCSS) are given a universal screener (K-2 easyCBM, 3-8 STAR) to determine which students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at-risk." LCSS RtI Coordinators, grade-level teachers, and principals review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. Those students demonstrating need are classified as in need of Tier II or Tier III instruction. Students classified as Tier II or Tier III are given a diagnostic assessment to determine specific deficits in order to best assign students to a small group with an intervention that will narrow skill gaps. Students receive daily, small-group intervention for at least 30-45 minutes depending on Tier level in the area of greatest deficit.

LCSS has research-based options for reading intervention support available to students who are "at-risk" and/or who have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Amplify's CKLA ELA curriculum was recently adopted and contains an assessment and remediation guide in which teachers can find activities that directly address skill gaps. They can tailor this to the needs of their RTI group of students. If that intervention is not proving to be effective, more comprehensive, strategic interventions (such as 95% group & SPIRE) become an option. Data teams meet every 4 ½ weeks to determine if a change in the intervention or the person providing the intervention is warranted. The data team also looks at other variables (attendance, engagement) as part of the decision-making process before a change is made to the programming or provider.

LCSS students receive explicit instruction in their area of deficit in small groups using research-based materials and strategies. These students are also screened using additional survey level assessments to determine if they have characteristics of dyslexia. Students who do demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive intervention as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using programs that meet the law's requirements. LCSS uses a research-based supplemental program as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Our district notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that the Barton, 95% Group or SPIRE curriculums are used to support those students, as it is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach of systematic, explicit, sequential, phonics-based instruction and is considered a strong support for those students.

Intervention takes place daily during a grade-level time in the master schedule designated just for RTI. When students are in their RTI groups, they work on activities and assignments that make them stronger in that skill. For example, students who need instruction in comprehension may read a new text and answer scaffolded questions, all related to the knowledge-building unit they are studying in Tier I instruction. For students who need fluency support, they may receive intervention using the SPIRE and/or Achieve3000 program.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

LCSS notifies parents in Grades K-5 if their child(ren) is "at-risk" for or has a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring in the 0-25th percentile) immediately after the district's schools complete the fall universal screening. 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(s) will receive and the amount of time each day the student(s) will receive services. This is coupled with a description of the importance of being ready by the end of 3rd grade.

LCSS 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, after the 4 ½ week data team meetings. In the parent notifications/communication, data teams note any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screening data as well as recommended activities (that do not require purchased resources) that will support students in the area of deficit (activities are not tailored by child, but tailored by skill deficit generally). These communications go out to parents with students in Grades K-3 three times annually and are shared in Grades 4 and 5 annually. Parents of students exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia are given an overview of the "Say Dyslexia" law.

Additionally, the CKLA ELA curriculum contains parent letters in the younger grades that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains for the coming week that will inform and equip parents to work with the child. Families can better understand how to support their student(s) through questions about their texts and through an awareness of what foundational skills their child(ren) are learning.

Professional Development Plan

LCSS teachers will participate in the free and optional Reading 360 Early Literacy Training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. LCSS's plan for providing PD for all K-5 teachers is as follows:

April - May 2021: All teachers in Grades Pre-K through five, as well as interventionist, RTI coordinators, special education teachers, and administrators working with students in this grade band, will engage in Week 1 of the Early Literacy Training series, asynchronously. This training will focus on foundational reading development and instruction and is grounded in a phonics-based approach. LCSS will ensure that participating educators earn a completion certificate prior to starting Week 2 work in June.

June - July 2021: LCSS has registered for the cohort-based, in-person training offered as Week 2 of the Early Literacy Training series for all teachers in Grades Pre-K - 2. The participating teachers will also include interventionist, special education teachers, RTI coordinators, administrators, and instructional coaches working in the Grade Pre-K through 5 grade band. This week will emphasize practical classroom application of research findings around strong instruction in phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

LCSS plans include training all new hires and new to this grade band during the summer of June 2022.

Additional Information about this Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

We are very excited about the training and networking opportunities being made available to our educators and look forward to seeing the benefits and impact of these opportunities on our students.

Thank you!