

American Classical Academy Rutherford

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Approved: July 29, 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

American Classical Academy Rutherford (ACAR) has adopted the Literacy Essentials curriculum for grades K-2. Literacy Essentials is an Orton-Gillingham based program that uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction. Elementary students are assigned 120 minutes per day for literacy instruction with 45 minutes specifically for foundation literacy. The curriculum covers the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, the alphabetic code, which includes 72 common English spelling patterns or phonograms, fluency, orthography, vocabulary, writing and grammar, reading from accuracy to automaticity, and reading comprehension. Additionally, the program provides instruction in both manuscript and cursive handwriting. As students grasp the basics of English literacy, the program lays a foundation in basic grammar and composition.

Our improvements for next year will continue to focus on using micro-phase data to address individual needs in small-group instruction. This will require teachers to assess and analyze benchmark data. This data will allow teachers to address individual foundational skill needs.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

ACAR has adopted the Literacy Essentials curriculum for grades 3-5. Literacy Essentials is an Orton-Gillingham based program that uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction. Elementary students are assigned 120 minutes per day for literacy instruction with 30 minutes for foundational literacy. The curriculum covers the areas of phonemic awareness, the alphabetic code, which includes 72 common English spelling patterns or phonograms, morphology, orthography, vocabulary, writing, fluency, and grammar, reading from accuracy to automaticity, and reading comprehension. Additionally, the program provides instruction in both manuscript and cursive handwriting. As students grasp the basics of English literacy, the program lays a foundation in basic grammar and composition.

Our improvements for next year will be the use of differentiated small group instruction to target the needs of all students in foundational skills and to utilize benchmarks to determine microphases if needed to pinpoint foundational skill gaps.

Additional Information

To address the educational hurdles encountered by schools we have crafted a strategic plan to strengthen reading and foundational abilities. This plan involves a targeted approach, utilizing reading specialists to support both large and small group instruction through planning, lesson studies, model teaching, and conducting classroom observations with the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) to pinpoint areas for improvement. Upon identifying key areas for improvement, specialists collaborate with the school's reading coach to devise and execute instructional strategies with teachers. This partnership ensures that the strategies are tailored to meet the specific needs of the school and are effectively integrated into classroom practices. This strategy guarantees personalized attention and professional expertise to foster students' reading proficiency.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Literacy Essentials—approved waiver

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Literacy Essentials—approved waiver

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

DIBELS 8 K-5: This screener is administered at least three times per year to track student progress and identify reading difficulties.

TNURS for 3rd as pathway: aimswebPlus

Additional Screeners

NWEA MAP K-5: Administered at least twice per year to assess overall academic growth in reading and other subjects.

Intervention Structure and Supports

Three times a year, students are given a universal screener (DIBELS 8) to determine whether students have a significant reading deficiency or are "at risk". Our intervention teams review universal screener data. Survey-level assessments are administered to identify the specific area of skill deficit. Upon evaluating the results of these and other student data sources, the intervention team determines the most suitable placement for the student, either in standards-based intervention or Tier 2/3 intervention. If a child scores between the 0-40th percentile, survey-level assessments are administered to determine a specific area of skill deficit. Based on those results the intervention team determines the most appropriate placement for intervention. Interventions occur daily for 30-45 minutes depending on tier.

Progress monitoring is carried out biweekly and is based on a combination of the outcomes from the universal screener and survey-level assessments. The RTI² Intervention Team's major work includes ensuring interventions are implemented with integrity, reviewing, and discussing student data/attendance, and correlating intervention to specific areas of deficit. Intervention teams meet

every 4 1/2 weeks to review students currently served in intervention discussing any possible movement or changes in intervention duration, intensity, or material and any new teacher referrals. Data teams focus on historical data as well as current progress monitoring data and attendance. Teams also discuss a student's responsiveness to the intervention based on district and school-level fidelity checks.

Interventionists are trained in evidence-based interventions depending on school-level availability. ACAR students receive explicit instruction in their area of deficit in small groups using evidence-based materials and strategies. Some students are also screened for characteristics of dyslexia. Students who demonstrate those characteristics receive intensive interventions as outlined in the Say Dyslexia Law using resources that meet the law's requirements. Families are notified of the results of the screener as well as other resources that might be beneficial for their child. Our interventions and schedules are aligned with expectations outlined in the RTI² manual.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

ACAR informs parents of students in grades K-5 if their child is identified as "at-risk" or has a significant reading deficiency. This determination is based on the results of the universal screener and historical data indicating a need for additional services. The students' scores are shared through literacy reports that are parent-friendly and available in multiple languages. These reports provide a clear explanation of the gaps in the student's skills and the depth and extent of the student's needs. This ensures that parents, regardless of their primary language, have a comprehensive understanding of their child's academic performance and areas for improvement. We also include no cost activities for families to do at home to support literacy as well as information on the importance of reading on grade level by third grade. Promotion pathway information is also included. We send these letters home three times each year for students in grades K-3 and annually for students in grades 4-5.

Professional Development Plan

All K-5 teachers will complete professional development training on the Literacy Essentials curriculum. Teachers will also participate in weekly common planning and data analysis time with grade or subject peers. Teachers are encouraged to attend a 7-10-day Summer Professional Development Conference hosted by Hillsdale College's K12 Education Office each summer. Teachers are also encouraged to pursue advanced degrees or additional certifications and professional licenses. In addition, our teachers have completed or will complete the Early Reading Training in foundational literacy skills instruction.