

Promise Academy Spring Hill

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: July 3, 2023

Approved: May 7, 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

Promise Academy Springhill uses a foundational skills curriculum aligned to Tennessee ELA standards and approved by the State Textbook Commission. The curriculum uses foundational skills as the primary form of instruction and has designated blocks for each component. The curriculum divides the foundational skills into 2 sections: Skills (Phonological Skills, Vocabulary, & Fluency) and Knowledge (Comprehension & Vocabulary). Each section is approximately 60 minutes each. During instruction, teachers use the VAKT methodology (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile), which is systematic and sequential. The teachers explicitly teach a sound, the students practice the sound aloud, the teacher models writing the sound, and then students apply the skill in independent practice. Promise Academy also uses small group reading daily for an additional 90 minutes to support foundational skills. Students are pulled out to receive 45 minutes of Reading Intervention.

All teachers participate in extended monthly planning time to collaborate with each other, the MCL, and their instructional coach. During this time, the teachers refine their instructional practices through internalization of the curriculum, building content knowledge, and teach-backs. Teachers also receive weekly PLCs (sessions include data and student work analysis, curriculum planning, etc.), weekly extended planning time, and monthly learning labs.

Our improvements include the adoption and implementation of the Multi-Classroom Leader model through the Opportunity Culture. The Multi-Classroom Leader (MCL) role allows teachers with a record of high-growth student learning and leadership competencies to both teach part of the time and lead small, collaborative teams with co-teaching, pulling small groups, facilitating and guiding planning internalization, and data meetings. This model enables excellent teachers to reach many more students, primarily by leading teaching teams while continuing to teach.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Promise Academy's 3rd-5th grade has an integrated block of time for 3rd-5th grade literacy. We selected a curriculum aligned with the Tennessee ELA standards and approved by the State Textbook Commission. The curriculum includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and grammar. The 3-5 schedule includes 180 minutes of daily instruction. 45 minutes for listening and

learning (comprehension and vocabulary), 45 minutes for skills (grammar, morphology, and writing), and 60 minutes for reading instruction using decodable readers (comprehension, fluency, advanced phonics, and vocabulary instruction). Fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are not taught in isolation but are embedded within the lesson to ensure continuity, cohesion, and connection. The 3rd-5th grade teachers use direct instruction, collaborative learning, and research-based projects for literacy instruction.

For example, the fourth-grade students are studying the American Revolution which is part of the CKLA curriculum. They start by activating prior knowledge and reading independently. After reading, the students summarize the content through discussions and writing, complete word work that unpacks essential vocabulary related to the domain and write responses to inferential questions that require the students to use evidence from the text to support their answers.

All teachers participate in weekly planning time to collaborate with each other and their coach. During this time, teachers refine their knowledge and delivery of content standards through internalization, teach back practice sessions, and student work analysis.

Our improvements include the adoption and implementation of the Multi-Classroom Leader model through the Opportunity Culture. The Multi-Classroom Leader (MCL) role allows teachers with a record of high-growth student learning and leadership competencies to both teach part of the time and lead small, collaborative teams with co-teaching, pulling small groups, facilitating and guiding planning, internalization, and data meetings. This model enables excellent teachers to reach many more students, primarily by leading teaching teams while continuing to teach.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Promise Academy has also adopted Orton Gillingham for ELA instruction for supplemental teaching. This supplemental time will allow us to focus on phonemic awareness, phonological code, fluency, and comprehension for students in Kindergarten through Second grade. This curriculum will use the VAKT (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile) methodology and culturally relevant decodables to read and apply the previously taught skills. Once the students read the decodable for 2 days, the decodables are sent home to read with their families.

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

Promise Academy will use the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, AimswebPlus for our K-5 students. The assessment results help teachers determine how students are performing on important reading skills.

Intervention Structure and Supports

In the fall, the administration of the universal screening of students in kindergarten through grade 5th grades in the areas of reading, mathematics, and written expression is the first step in working to identify students who are failing to meet grade level expectations and need additional interventions. The universal screening process works to identify students as being at risk for a reading deficiency or having a significant reading deficiency based on their universal reading screener composite scores. Students who score at or below the 15th percentile have a significant reading deficiency, and those scoring between the 16th and 40th percentile are at risk. Grade level teachers, interventionists, MCLs and Director of Special Populations review universal screener data to determine which students score between the 0-25th percentile. Students scoring in that range are classified as Tier II or III and in need of reading intervention support and are given a Survey Level Assessment (Phonological Awareness Skills Screener (PASS), Phonics and Word Reading Survey (PWRS), Developmental Spelling Inventories) 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 approximately 45 minutes a day, 5 days a week in their area of greatest deficit.

Promise Academy has research-based option for reading intervention support available to our students who are “at-risk” and/or have been identified with a significant reading deficiency. Our ELA curriculum (CKLA) 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 Orton-Gillingham and Heggerty) become an option. Data teams meet every 4 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.

Our 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. Our school uses Orton-Gillingham, a research-based supplemental program, as one intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. Our school notifies families of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia. Families are notified that the Orton-Gillingham curriculum is used to support those students, as it is an 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 just for RTI and are aligned with the expectations outlined in the RTI2 manual. 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.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Promise Academy notifies parents in grades K-5 if their child is “at-risk” for or has a significant reading deficiency (as evidenced by students scoring in the 0-25th percentile) immediately after the fall, winter, and spring universal screeners are administered (three times each year). In the letter, 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. Parents are informed about what intervention and the amount of time the student will receive to address the skill deficits. Lastly, the importance of reading on grade level by the end of third grade and the pathway to 4th grade is shared along with suggestions for no cost reading activities for families to use at home when students are having difficulty.

Promise Academy’s RTI team analyzes students’ progress monitoring data, conducts data team meetings every 4 weeks, and sends notifications home to inform parents about how students are assessed and subsequently their child’s progress or lack of progress. In the notifications, the RTI team notes any changes being made if the child is not showing sufficient progress as evidenced by progress monitoring and universal screener data.

Our network also holds Family Literacy Nights that are open to all families to educate our communities on reading foundational skills and how to best support these skills outside of the classroom at no-cost. Additionally, the ELA curriculum (CKLA) contains parent letters and pacing maps that outline the foundational skills and knowledge domains that are covered in each unit. 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. Also, teachers send home newsletters outlining specific skills and knowledge students are learning each week.

Professional Development Plan

Our approach to professional development is rooted in the belief that exceptional teaching has the power to narrow the achievement gap and drive student success. Therefore, we place a significant emphasis on offering comprehensive, ongoing, and intensive professional development opportunities for our teachers, principals, and school leaders.

Our professional development initiatives are carefully tailored to address the specific needs of our educators and are informed by a wealth of data sources, including assessments, walkthroughs, observations, and behavior reports. This data-driven approach allows us to identify areas for improvement and to design targeted professional development experiences aimed at enhancing teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

Our professional development journey begins in the summer with a two-week institute that provides extensive training, planning, and practice opportunities for implementing strong and effective foundational literacy skills instruction. All K-5 teachers have completed the Tennessee State Department of Education Reading 360 Literacy online training and a plan is in place for all new teachers to complete this training.



A key component of our professional development framework is the dedicated time reserved for teachers on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. During these sessions, teachers engage in a variety of activities, including whole-staff sessions led by school leaders, content team meetings, curriculum planning, data analysis, and instructional discussions. The goal is to equip teachers with practical strategies to enhance both their planning and instructional skills.

Additionally, our professional development extends beyond scheduled sessions. Content teams meet daily to collaborate on lesson planning and student work analysis.