

**District 745**  
**Albany Area Schools**  
**Local Literacy Plan**

**District Mission Statement**

*Albany Area Schools cultivates and nurtures engaged critical thinkers who are lifelong learners.*

The purpose of this literacy plan is to ensure all students who attend Albany Area Schools will achieve grade-level proficiency in order to continue their development as engaged critical thinkers. The ability to read well is essential to our mission as educators at Albany Area Schools

**Literacy Plan Summary**

The focus on literacy development begins with our youngest learners. Early childhood educators utilize curriculum and instructional practices to begin development of phonics and phonemic awareness as well as oral language development. That development continues in kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers work with students to master recognition of upper and lowercase letters, the letter sounds, concepts of print, rhyming, and kindergarten sight words among other beginning literacy skills. Kindergarten students are introduced to the district's K-5 reading curriculum resource, Wonders by McGraw Hill. Grades 1 and 2 continue literacy development utilizing Wonders. A balanced literacy approach incorporates whole group instruction using a grade-level mentor text, small group instruction focused on application of skills and strategies using text at the readers' instructional levels, and independent practice for all students. Teachers in grades 3 and beyond continue to develop reading proficiency in all students. Driven by state standards in the area of English and Language Arts, teachers use Wonders curriculum resources in addition to other tools to build students' independent reading and critical thinking skills.

The measures of proficiency for all students PreKindergarten through 5 include assessments from the FASTBridge suite. Teachers benchmark students in fall, winter, and spring using FAST assessments. That data, in addition to classroom formative and summative assessment, is used to drive decision making for student interventions. Both classroom and pull-out interventions are used to address the needs of students who do not meet benchmark scores or who show a need based on classroom assessment.

Students in grades kindergarten through five receive a minimum of 90 minutes of reading instruction per day in addition to a thirty-minute intervention block. The intervention block may include direct instruction with an interventionist, guided work within the classroom, or individualized instruction with the classroom teacher.

The goal of the Albany Area School District is to ensure that every student is proficient in the standards identified by the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts. The

district measures its progress toward this goal with the performance of students on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment of Reading in grade 3-8 and 10.

**Universal Expectations**

- All students will make progress in reading each year with a minimum target of one year’s growth for each child.
- Administrators and teachers will ensure proficiency for all students through continued implementation of standards-based instruction, evidence-based instructional practices, and strategic response to assessment data.

**District Identification Procedures**

Students in grades prekindergarten through grade 10 participate in benchmark assessments for reading in fall, winter, and spring. Teachers and administrators examine the data at fall and winter data retreats. Elementary teachers and administrators also look at data during monthly grade level meetings. Students with benchmark scores below expected levels are assigned to interventionists as available. Teacher teams work to problem solve the needs of those students who cannot be placed in pull-out interventions. Students in interventions are then progress monitored and discussed at grade-level team meetings monthly. Adjustments in instruction are made according to the data coming from progress monitoring as well as formative assessments from the classroom.

<b>Standardized Assessments of Students’ Level of Reading Proficiency</b>	
PreKindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAST earlyReading in fall, winter, and spring</li> </ul>
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAST earlyReading in fall, winter, and spring</li> </ul>
First Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAST earlyReading in fall, winter, and spring</li> </ul>
Second Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAST aReading, AUTOreading, and CBMReading in fall, winter, and spring</li> </ul>
Third Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAST aReading, AUTOreading, and CBMReading in fall, winter, and spring</li> <li>• Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)--Reading in spring</li> </ul>
Fourth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAST aReading and AUTOreading in fall, winter, and spring</li> <li>• Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)--Reading in spring</li> </ul>
Fifth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAST aReading and AUTOreading in fall, winter, and spring</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)--Reading in spring</li> </ul>
Sixth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STAR Reading in fall, winter, and spring</li> <li>• Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)--Reading in spring</li> </ul>
Seventh Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STAR Reading in fall, winter, and spring</li> <li>• Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)--Reading in spring</li> </ul>
Eighth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STAR Reading in fall, winter, and spring</li> <li>• Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)--Reading in spring</li> </ul>
Ninth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STAR Reading in fall, winter, and spring</li> </ul>
Tenth Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STAR Reading in fall, winter, and spring</li> <li>• Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)--Reading in spring</li> </ul>

At each grade level, benchmarks are established based on norm-referenced and/or criterion-referenced performance measures for the specific assessments. See below for the specific assessments and target scores for Albany Area Schools students.

**Albany and Avon Elementary Schools**

<b>Preschool Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
Letter Names [2]	Letter Names [13]	Letter Names [20]
Rhyming [6]	Rhyming [2]	Rhyming [6]
	Onset Sounds [8]	Onset Sounds [12]

<b>Kindergarten Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
Concepts of Print [7]	Letter Sounds [26]	Letter Sounds [41]

Letter Names [14]	Nonsense Words [6]	Nonsense Words [12]
Letter Sounds [3]	Onset Sounds [16]	Sight Words [13]
Onset Sounds [11]	Sight Words [9]	Word Segmenting [30]
Word Rhyming [6]	Word Segmenting [25]	

<b>Grade 1 FAST Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
Nonsense Words [10]	Nonsense Words [17]	Decodable Words [15]
Sentence Reading [12]	Sight Words [49]	Sight Words [65]
Sight Words [16]	Word Segmenting [31]	Word Segmenting [32]
Word Segmenting [28]	CBMReading [37]	CBMReading [66]

<b>Grade 2 FAST Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
CBMReading [56]	CBMReading [84]	CBMReading [101]
aReading [469]	aReading [481]	aReading [490]

<b>Grade 3 FAST Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
CBMReading [87]	CBMReading [110]	CBMReading [125]
aReading [490]	aReading [498]	aReading [503]

<b>Grade 4 FAST Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
aReading [502]	aReading [509]	aReading [513]

<b>Grade 5 FAST Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
Fall	Winter	Spring
aReading [513]	aReading [517]	aReading [520]

**Albany Area Middle School**

<b>Grade 6 STAR Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
Fall	Winter	Spring
STAR Reading [694]	STAR Reading [694]	STAR Reading [694]

<b>Grade 7 STAR Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
Fall	Winter	Spring
STAR Reading [841]	STAR Reading [841]	STAR Reading [841]

<b>Grade 8 STAR Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
Fall	Winter	Spring
STAR Reading [906]	STAR Reading [906]	STAR Reading [906]

**Albany Area High School**

<b>Grade 9 STAR Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
Fall	Winter	Spring
STAR Reading [977]	STAR Reading [977]	STAR Reading [977]

<b>Grade 10 STAR Benchmark Assessments</b> Assessment Name [Target Score]		
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Fall	Winter	Spring
STAR Reading [1045]	STAR Reading [1045]	STAR Reading [1045]

**Additional Identification Considerations and Procedures**

In 2016, the Minnesota Legislature mandated that schools annually report a summary of the district’s efforts to screen and identify students with dyslexia or convergence insufficiency disorder.

**Dyslexia Screening and Identification**

Dyslexia is defined in Minnesota statute 125A.01, Subd. 2, as

“a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent recognition of words and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.”

Albany Area School District efforts to screen and identify students with dyslexia are limited as the determination of dyslexia is currently a medical diagnosis. The district’s screening process provides tools to identify characteristics of dyslexia.

Albany Area School District teachers use the multi-tiered system of supports to work with students who are at risk based on benchmark screenings. Benchmark screenings within FASTBridge will flag students who are exhibiting phonemic awareness difficulties. If interventions are unsuccessful, students are referred to the Academic Support Team (AST) for problem-solving. The AST will use data as well as observations and response to interventions to determine whether the student is a candidate for child study. At this time or after, a parent may be referred to medical professionals for further assessments that would diagnosis dyslexia.

**Convergence Insufficiency Disorder Screening and Identification**

Student vision screenings occur for all students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 using the Welch Allyn SPOT Vision Screener. Students who are referred for special education receive a vision screening as part of their assessment. If eye strain, tracking, or other vision issues are detected, a referral for an eye doctor is sent home to parents/guardians.

If a student receives a diagnosis of Convergence Insufficiency Disorder, the district will review the information provided and assist that student through the multi-tiered system of supports in the district. Additional assistance through a 504 referral or special education referral will take place if appropriate.

## **Parent Notification and Engagement**

Teachers and administrators at Albany Area Schools communicate literacy development with parents/guardians in a number of ways. Each grade level works to make literacy development a shared effort between school and home.

<p><b>PreKindergarten</b></p>	<p>Assessment data is shared with parents at fall and spring conferences.</p> <p>Building Language Together (BLT) events, which occur three times a year, are parent involvement activities in which parents attend special events that focus on literacy.</p>
<p><b>Kindergarten</b> <b>Grade 1</b> <b>Grade 2</b></p>	<p>Results of fall and winter benchmarks are shared with parents at regularly scheduled fall and winter conferences. Information is mailed home to parents who do not attend conferences. Spring benchmark data is sent home with the end of year report card.</p> <p>Progress monitoring data for students receiving interventions is shared at regular intervals throughout the year. Concerns are communicated with parents on an “as needed” basis.</p>
<p><b>Grade 3</b> <b>Grade 4</b> <b>Grade 5</b></p>	<p>Results of fall and winter benchmarks are shared with parents at regularly scheduled fall and winter conferences. Information is mailed home to parents who do not attend conferences. Spring benchmark data is sent home with the end of year report card.</p> <p>Progress monitoring data for students receiving interventions is shared at regular intervals throughout the year. Concerns are communicated with parents on an “as needed” basis.</p> <p>Preliminary MCA Reading On-Demand Reports are sent home with a cover letter explaining the information as well as resources for summer learning one week after the close of the MCA window.</p>

<b>Grade 6</b> <b>Grade 7</b> <b>Grade 8</b>	Preliminary MCA Reading On-Demand Reports are sent home with a cover letter explaining the information as well as resources for summer learning one week after the close of the MCA window.
<b>Grade 9</b> <b>Grade 10</b>	Preliminary MCA Reading On-Demand Reports are sent home with a cover letter explaining the information as well as resources for summer learning one week after the close of the MCA window.

In addition to these district-wide communication efforts, individual teachers use additional methods of communication with parents. These include the online gradebook, individual email contacts, Accelerated Reader reports, classroom websites, and Seesaw.

Parents/guardians are notified by letter if their child is identified through the local assessment plan for small group or individual interventions at the Tier II level. A form letter is sent home to supply parents with information about intervention.

## **Reading Interventions**

Albany Area Schools provides a number of research-based interventions to students based on learners’ needs. From whole class intervention to intensive one-on-one intervention, teachers use a suite of instructional strategies and resources to increase reading proficiency for students.

### TIER I: WHOLE CLASS INTERVENTION

Core instruction in the classroom should serve the needs of at least 80% of the learners in the classroom. Formative assessment tools in the classroom as well as benchmark assessment data in FAST provide guidance to classroom teachers regarding the need for whole class interventions. Teacher teams work collaboratively to determine which whole class interventions will best fit the needs of the learners.

### TIER II: SMALL GROUP/INDIVIDUAL INTERVENTION

Students whose learning needs are not served by regular classroom instruction and whole class intervention will receive small group and/or individual intervention. These students are identified in data meeting and grade-level team meetings throughout the year. Teachers and administrators use benchmark assessment data to make these determinations. The intent of such interventions is to accelerate student growth toward grade-level reading proficiency.

### Potential Interventions for Students

- Leveled Literacy Interventions from Fountas and Pinnell
- Reading Recovery
- Early Success
- Read Naturally



- Reading Mastery
- Reading Milestones
- Repeated Reading
- Word blending
- Six Minute Solution
- MN Reading Corps
- WonderWorks
- Orton Gillingham
- SOAR
- Read180

## **Staff Professional Development**

Albany Area Schools provides opportunities for teachers to engage in flexible professional development as well as directed professional development. In the area of literacy, teachers have attended workshops with Jan Richardson and Donalyn Miller. Teachers have self-selected literacy book studies. Professional learning communities (PLC), who meet twice a month, may also be focused on literacy improvement as PLC goal.

Additionally, teachers are engaged in revising their standard alignment in the area of English and Language Arts. This revision process provides the opportunity for collaborative conversations, the sharing of evidence-based resources and instructional strategies, and grade-level gap analysis. Continued professional development in the area of standard alignment will include a vertical analysis of the standards and increased implementation of whole class interventions based on learners' needs.