



Richfield Public Schools Read Well by Third Grade Literacy Plan

Inspire. Empower. Excel.

“The unread story is not a story; it is little black marks on wood pulp. The reader reading it, makes it live: a live thing, a story.”
– Ursula K. LeGuin

Introduction

Richfield Public Schools’ district Literacy Plan outlines our commitment that each and every student in Richfield Public Schools is reading well by third grade. Research consistently proves that weeding well by third grade predicts high school graduation and later success in life. This plan meets the requirements of [MN Statute 120B.12](#).

For Richfield Public Schools, reading *proficiency* is defined as students who score at or above grade level benchmarks on various measures of assessment, and who perform at or above grade level expectations in the classroom. Further, proficient readers read confidently and enjoy the written word. Reading proficiency encompasses early literacy skills, including the ability to apply letter sound associations, blend sounds to create words, read fluently with prosody; it encompasses comprehending texts at multiple levels and for different purposes, including learning new concepts. Reading proficiency is a priority in Richfield Public Schools and will be ensured by both formal and informal assessment, data-driven decision making, collaborative team efforts, and a tiered intervention approach.

A child’s reading skills are important to their success in school and work. In addition, reading can be a fun and imaginative activity for children, which opens doors to all kinds of new worlds for them. – University of Michigan, Reading , Literacy and Your Child

Statement of Literacy Plan Goals and Objectives

- **ALL** students who are not reading at grade level will be identified through multiple measures and supported through tiers of intervention to successfully perform grade level benchmarks.
- **ALL** students who are exceeding grade level literacy benchmarks will be supported through enriching and challenging curriculum to make projected growth in reading.
- **ALL** early childhood and elementary programs in Richfield will work together to promote strong literacy readiness for all children.
- **ALL** students in Richfield Public Schools, K-12, will receive quality core instruction that is aligned to the K-12 MN ELA Standards. Those standards are the core curriculum for all students, and any materials used are resources to ensure grade level proficiency.

- **ALL** staff in the district will provide outreach, education and support to parents to help them support their child's/ren's development of literacy at home. The new district strategic plan will include a component of family outreach to provide a strong partnership between school and home.
- **ALL** district teachers and principals, will receive regular communication in multiple formats about ELA and literacy standards implementation. Ownership of MN K-12 ELA Standards must not rest with ELA teachers alone, but rather with all teachers across content and grade level.

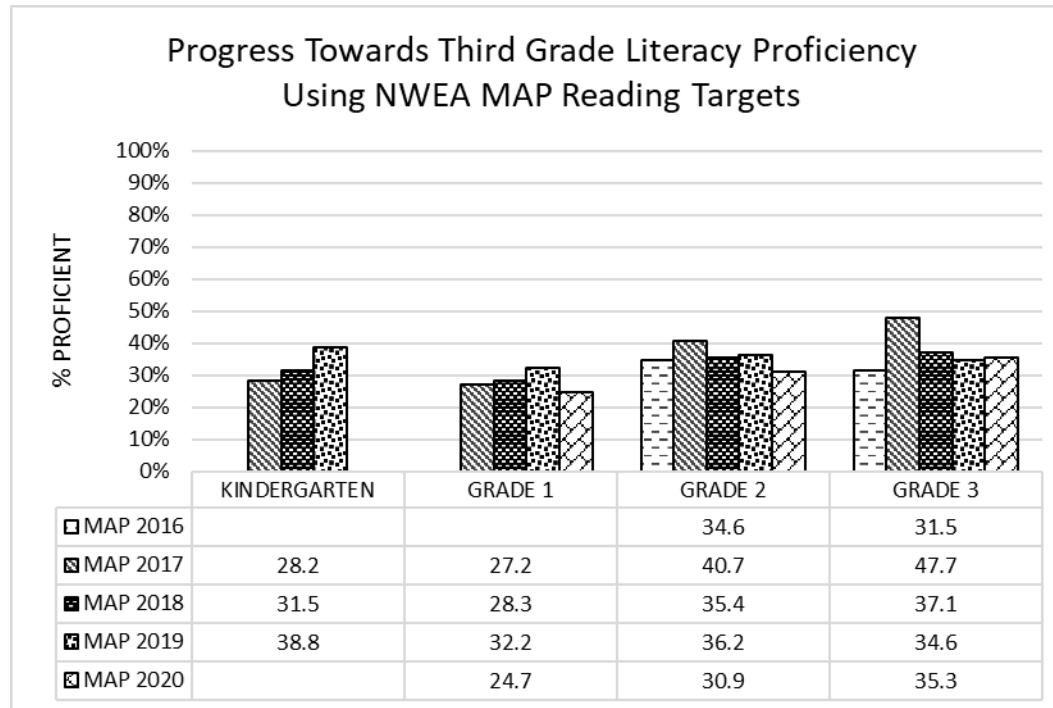
Assessment of Progress to Achieve Goals

- To ensure grade level proficiency in reading by third grade, Richfield Public Schools begins in **early childhood**. Most district children go through our district's Early Childhood Screening Program. We encourage families to have their children screened by 3. Referrals are made for students in the areas of speech and/or cognitive development. For those students who qualify, we provide services through our Early Childhood Special Education Department. The district assesses children utilizing literacy components including picture naming, alliteration, and rhyming. Data gleaned from these measures are provided to parents/families. The assessment used for pre-school-age children for 2020-2021 will be the Teaching Strategies Gold (TS Gold) for literacy, which assesses phonemic and phonological awareness, concepts of print, letter sounds and names, and early writing. Richfield's Early Childhood staff are working closely with early elementary teachers to create a strong vertical alignment of assessment and learning, ensuring that the transition from early childhood to kindergarten is strong and seamless. Beginning with the 2020 school year, all four elementary schools in Richfield Public Schools will house early childhood; additionally, there will be early childhood special education, Birth-3, Early Childhood Family Education, and our 3-year old program which will be housed at Central School.
- Professional development for building leaders and teachers continues to focus on quality core instruction through the district's Four Instructional Agreements (Quality Teaching Point, Clear Lesson, Guided Practice, and Closure). The district's system of instructional support includes directors at the district level, instructional and literacy coaches at the building and program level, and intervention support at the grade level. The district continues its integrated services model of intervention, meaning that more direct service to students is provided in the general education classroom and tightly aligned with core instruction and standards-based learning. Literacy interventionists are at every elementary building. For 2020-2021, there will continue to be an early childhood instructional coach, four elementary instructional coaches, and two secondary coaches. At the elementary level, literacy-specific interventionists work with both students and teachers to create a strong MTSS system for students who are struggling in reading. Licensed reading teachers at the secondary level provide intervention for students as well as support for teachers. These staff provided targeted support for struggling readers K-5, 6-8 and grades 9 and 10. Additionally, continuing in SY 20-21, the district is focusing intently on a strong pre-K-12 schoolwide literacy model, including disciplinary literacy. Support for this will be through professional learning for teachers and the continuation of seminar courses for each core content area (ELA, social studies, science, and math).

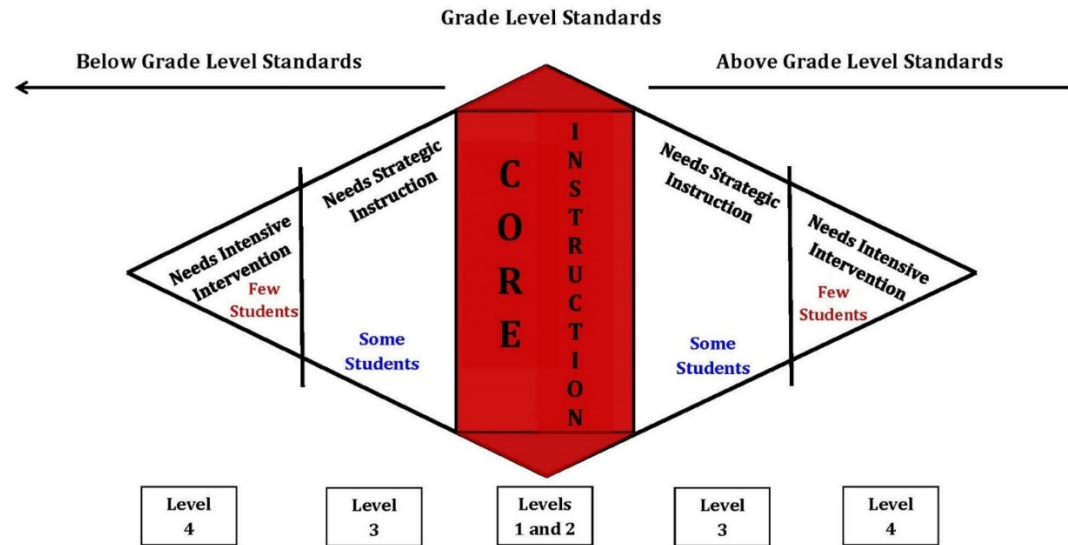
- The Teaching and Learning Department, in collaboration with the building instructional coaches, created a K-12 vertically-aligned English Language Arts (ELA) scope and sequence which is aligned to the MN K-12 ELA Standards. At the secondary level, during a typical school year, the unit bundles have been created with writing at the core; Richfield Public Schools has identified as the “essential standards” the CCSS writing standards covering all three genres of writing (narrative, informational, and argument), recognizing that reading and writing are inextricably linked and all reading standards will support the writing standards, and vice versa. Further, Richfield High School aligned the genres of writing to grade levels. All three genres are taught at all four grade levels, but one genre has a greater depth of learning. Reading standards in literature and informational text continues to be aligned to create the system of connections that students need to become successful readers and writers.

At the **elementary level**, the district has aligned reading, writing, and phonics through the acquisition and implementation of the Units of Study in Reading, Writing and Phonics, materials created through the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) at Columbia University. These frameworks utilize a Readers/Writers approach to literacy instruction, providing natural scaffolding and differentiation within the core classroom time. In SY 19-20, K-1 teachers implemented the Units of Study/Phonics for the first year, which units are tightly aligned with the reading and writing Units of Study; teachers received scaffolded professional development on implementation of the phonics units. Additionally, in K-1, the district utilizes Heggerty Phonemic Awareness curriculum for additional learning and support. Beginning in SY 20-21, second grade will implement the Grade 2 Units of Study/Phonics to all students who have been identified as needing this additional intervention. At the Richfield Dual Language School, all language instruction in K-1 is in Spanish, with additional EL supports in English. This school will use the Grade 2 Units of Study/Phonics curriculum with the grade 3 students, which is the year that English reading and writing is introduced in that school for the first time. Teachers will continue to receive professional learning opportunities on the implementation of the Units of Study in Reading and Writing, and the district will continue its support of materials for the classroom to successfully implement all Units of Study. Additionally, the district uses a variety of assessments at the building and classroom level, such as the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Assessments, Northwest Education Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), CBM-Rs and running records with comprehension checks and miscue analysis. The data for MAP is housed in the district’s electronic data warehouse and available to all teachers. In SY 19-20, the district began implementation of the NWEA MAP Spanish, which replaced the Children’s Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA) through the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) in Spanish for K-2 students at the district’s Dual Language Immersion (DLI) school. This assessment will continue for the 2020-2021 school year. This assessment will also be available for incoming students at all schools whose native language is Spanish and who have indicated participation in formal schooling in their native country. The goal is for all students to perform at or above proficiency level on the third grade MCA-III, and the district is passionate about achieving that goal as quickly as possible for every single student.

- Because of the move to distance learning due to COVID-19, the state of Minnesota suspended MCA testing and Richfield Public Schools, like most districts, suspended spring standardized growth assessment. From 2016-2019, measures toward progress utilized spring assessment data. Not having that option, the 2020 data is from winter MAP assessment. Further, our kindergarten students were not scheduled to take an online growth assessment (MAP) until spring of 2020; therefore, there is not kindergarten data for this report. Below is the district progress toward our reading proficiency goal using what data was available at the time this report was written:



- The district in 2021 will continue its use of various diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments at the grade level and in the classroom. Various instructional supports and interventions will continue to be used in a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for those students who are struggling with literacy, K-12. In SY 20-21, the district will begin its fourth year of implementation of the Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites (PRESS) framework in all elementary buildings, a strong intervention framework. This framework is a result of a partnership between the Minnesota Center for Reading Research (MCRR) at the University of Minnesota, Target Corporation, and Minnesota Reading Corps (MRC), and is completely aligned to the research-based tenets of multi-tiered systems of supports (MTSS), beginning with intervention in the *core classroom*. New teachers will be trained in the summer on this framework of literacy decision-making, assessment and intervention, and this framework will be used in PLCs and with the partnership of classroom teachers and reading interventionists. Students will receive supports based on the results of screening and diagnostic assessments, and teacher recommendation through a multi-tiered response to intervention (RtI) system. For those students exceeding grade level proficiency, enrichment and acceleration will be provided to ensure target growth. Below is a visual of the general systems of support that the district uses:



- **Levels 1 and 2: Support in Core Instruction:**

All students, K-12, receive core instruction in Level (tier) 1. The core literacy curriculum in Richfield Public Schools consists of a balanced literacy framework, which includes differentiated instruction through a readers and writer’s workshop model and explicit phonics instruction at the early grades, providing explicit instruction and opportunities for students to practice their reading, writing, speaking and listening skill. This balanced literacy framework has been strengthened through the creation of a vertically aligned scope and sequence K-12 which is aligned to the MN K-12 ELA Standards. Richfield Public Schools believes that the MN K-12 ELA standards outline what students are to know, understand, and do, and the district is committed to using various culturally responsive and engaging resources to support proficiency with the standards. Within core instruction, Level 2 (or Tier II) support provides extension for those at grade level and support for those not quite at grade level. Richfield Public Schools utilizes instructional/literacy coaches for all elementary, middle and high schools, and these coaches at elementary level provide support for teachers in differentiating instruction for all students. They model, co-teach, and provide individual support for teachers with this work. In reading, students engage in whole group learning, they build additional skills in data-driven, flexible guided reading groups, and strengthen their skills through independent reading. At the elementary level, the district is in full implementation of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) Lucy Calkins Units of Study in Writing to as its writer’s workshop model, which provides *explicit* instruction in writing and the writing process for all students. In 2020-2021, Richfield Public Schools will be in its third year of implementation of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project

(TCRWP) Units of Study in Reading, which integrate naturally with both the Units of Study in Writing. For SY 20-21, we will continue our strong literacy alignment with the second year of implementation of the TCRWP Units of Study in Phonics in K-1, and will implement the Grade 2 Units of Study in Phonics for all students who are identified as needing that continued intervention. Literacy interventionists are in all elementary buildings and utilize both a push-in model of integrated services to provide targeted support aligned to core instruction and some pullout services to provide intensive intervention to small groups of students.

To strengthen this model, the district has adopted the Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites (PRESS) created by staff at the Minnesota Center for Reading Research (MCRR) at the University of Minnesota, which will continue to be implemented, and strengthened in implementation, in all classrooms, K-5, in SY 20-21. This framework begins first with the classroom teacher in the core classroom environment, and provides a decision-making tool for intervention at both a class-wide and individual level. In middle and high school, ELA classes utilize multiple text types, including novels, biographies, articles, speeches, poems, videos, artwork, and short stories. The units in these courses require students to consider relationships between many texts and engage in rigorous analysis of their content, structures and, ultimately, their meaning and impact on society. Secondary students receive additional support in the way of reading interventionists to provide additional support. Benchmark assessments are the key driver of change at the classroom level. Across all grade levels, increased integration of content with literacy and social studies/science was a strong focus in SY 19-20, and will be an even stronger focus in SY 20-21, with a continued focus on content area literacy in both social studies and science, K-12, especially with regard to text structure, writing and vocabulary. Curriculum writing time has been and will continue to be provided to strengthen the curriculum. The directors of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the instructional coaches, on disciplinary reading strategies for all content areas, will provide targeted professional development. Further, the district has outlined the plan for implementation of the new K-12 Science Standards at the secondary level, and will be working on the plan for implementation at the elementary level during the 2020-2021 school year. These standards have a strong focus on academic language, argument writing, and critical thinking.

- **Level 3: Strategic Instruction**

Students who are both below grade level and above grade level in literacy need additional intervention. While these students are still supported at a level 2 in core instruction, additional support is provided for those below grade level through the following:

- Additional intervention teachers in the elementary schools. This additional support is provided either in the classroom during independent work time, or during a scheduled block. These interventions are research-based and specific to the reading challenges of the students. Examples of such intervention materials used are the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) materials. Embedded in the tiers of intervention is a strong continuous monitoring system, which includes standardized measures such as the MAP Reading assessment given three times a year to identify students. All students will be progress-monitored utilizing running records; some students will have a running record administered more frequently. Additionally, frequently planned assessments are administered that address phonics and fluency. The measures differ based on the age of the students.
- Additional intervention at the secondary level through the scheduling of additional licensed reading teachers to provide intervention at the middle school and high school level, and these courses will pre-teach critical vocabulary and text

structures to build success in all content area classes. Additionally, seminar courses at the high school level in all content areas will provide additional scaffolding and support in the area of disciplinary-specific literacy.

- The use of research-based interventions for the targeted skill
- Regular use of progress monitoring tools to guide instructional decision-making. Students will be continuously identified and will both receive and exit the additional intervention as the data dictates.

For students who are above grade level in literacy, strategic instruction comes in the form of acceleration, advanced-level texts, deeper level questioning and, depending on identified need, work with the talent development resource teacher on deeper understanding or advanced level discussion, such as Socratic Seminars. In SY 18-19, Richfield Middle school created Advanced Language Arts courses for identified learners, and the district will continue this model for SY 19-20, as it showed tremendous success. At the secondary level, additional electives, including college credit-bearing courses, are offered for advanced learners.

- **Level 4: Intensive Intervention**

Students who are extremely below or extremely above grade level need intensive intervention in the least restrictive environment possible. These students will be supported by specific programming, which often occurs through the integrated services framework by highly skilled special education, English Language and talent development teachers. More intensive pullout services are necessary on a case-by-case basis, which bases are identified by classroom and support staff (e.g. special education, EL teachers). At our highest needs school, Picturing Writing, a program specifically for our English Language (EL) learners, will be implemented as a targeted intervention during the school day.

Additional Instructional Time

Opportunities exist in Richfield Public Schools for students to learn outside of the school day and the school year. The district has after-school, targeted-service programs that align with regular classroom learning. For SY 19-20, the district will focus on targeted services after school, utilizing curriculum that supplements what students are working with during the school day. Additionally, the district is in its fifth year of a revamped summer school targeted services program to align tightly with MN ELA and math standards, and utilize project-based learning, with a continued focus for 19-20 on strong literacy instruction in the middle school program. Further, teacher-created units of thematic study focused tightly on science provide meaningful, hands-on learning tied to grade level learning that has occurred throughout the school year, and will continue to expand for SY 18-19. Transportation is available for this additional instructional time.

Support for Multi-Language Learners

- The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), in compliance with federal Title III funding, requires that students who are identified as English Learners (ELs) be served in an instructional program designed to meet the varying proficiency level needs of English Learners or bilingual learners. Richfield Public Schools provides instructional programs, which promote English

proficiency and build academic content knowledge. The district is in its fourth year of embracing a strong co-teaching model, bringing an English Language (EL) licensed teacher into the general education classroom to plan, model, and co-teach with the general classroom teacher, as the district believes that strong education in language development, and strategies utilized for the education of English learners, accelerates language learning for *all* students.

- The district will continue to provide training for teachers new to the district on co-teaching, embedding language development and equity into that training. Throughout the year, the district will offer learning academies on co-teaching and language development to help strengthen general classroom teachers' skills in working with multi-language learners.
- The district has dedicated time both during the summer and throughout the school year for teachers to plan and write curriculum to be implemented in classrooms where co-teaching occurs. Summer writing for ELA, and for literacy in other core content areas (e.g. social studies and science at both the elementary and secondary level), includes a team of teachers, two of whom are special education and English Language (EL) teachers, to provide carefully planned differentiation within the general education classroom on a daily basis. Elementary teachers created specific units of study for social studies and science to integrate social studies/science and literacy standards.
- The district has implemented Picturing Writing, a research-based writing program integrated with the visual arts, for identified EL students K-5 throughout the district. This program consists of a much-scaffolded writing process with sentence stems, vocabulary acquisition, illustrating and publishing of work, and this targeted intervention will occur during the school day for identified EL learners.

Additional Work to Be Done

The 2019-2020 school year was severely altered in March, when the state of Minnesota went to a distance-learning model. Richfield Public Schools' last day for in-person learning was March 16, 2020. While the district responded quickly and well to the change of events, we know that learning was not optimal for many of our students. Below outlines the work prioritized for the 2020-2021 school year, much of which is already taking place at the writing of this plan:

- Identification of students who were disengaged in the distance-learning model, no matter the circumstances. All students were assessed remotely at the end of the 2019-20 school year and this data will move to the next grade level for analysis
- Identification of the most essential standard from which to start learning in the 2020-2021 school year, no matter the model. These standards are a carefully selected subset of the total list of grade-specific/course-specific standards that students must know and be able to do. This list will be created using the R.E.A.L. criteria: readiness, endurance, assessed (on state assessments), and leverage.
- Identify practices, beliefs, and assessments that ensure identification of preschoolers who may be "at risk" for not reading well by third grade. These practices, beliefs, and assessments must take into account students for whom English is not their spoken language in the home.
- Continue to provide professional development on the administration and analysis of reading/running records, in order to inform instructional decision-making in the classroom and collaborative communication with families
- Continue to provide families with ways they can help their children become stronger readers and writers at home

Parent Notification and Involvement

- Communication with families is a critical component for student success. Richfield Public Schools embraces its partnership with families and continues to strengthen that partnership through consistent communication of goals, objectives, and results.
- Beginning before kindergarten, families are informed of their child's/children's results on literacy assessments, what those results mean, and are provided with strategies to help improve literacy at home. This communication is provided in the family's home language. With the continued refinement of the RPS website, literacy resources will be uploaded consistently throughout the year to provide families help at home. Additionally, the district is moving to a different parent notification platform to provide more ease with which parents can access information on their child(ren).
- Once the child is in kindergarten, twice-yearly conferences are mainstays of formal communication on academic growth, including growth in literacy; however, parents can check their child's progress anytime through the data warehouse. Additionally, teachers communicate regularly with families on student progress and the district notifies families when students have been identified as at-risk, formally identified (grade two) as an advanced learner, or formally identified and subsequently qualified for English language services. Information is shared in multiple modalities, including electronically, by phone, letter, and email, and translated into Spanish and Somali. Face-to-face meetings are always encouraged and welcomed in Richfield. Translation and interpretation services are available in-district and utilized as needed.
- In all grades K-12, report cards are sent home to families – three times a year in elementary school and twice a year at the middle and high school, with informal reports available quarterly. Additionally, the district utilizes technology to provide a parent portal for grades, and utilizes Schoology at the secondary level and SeeSaw at the elementary level for students, teachers and families, so families can check grades and student work 24/7.

Strengthening Student Learning Through Quality Professional Development

Richfield Public Schools fully embraces the fact that learning never ends. In that spirit, staff and administrators are required to engage in professional learning opportunities that lead to increased student learning and achievement. The following are structures implemented or planned for implementation in SY 19-20:

- Professional learning communities (PLCs) are fully implemented in every building and at every grade level, with all PLCs taking place during the school day, leaving time for teachers to plan before and after school. These teams of teachers meet weekly to analyze student data and plan for student growth. This job-embedded professional learning opportunity is strongly supported by district level and building level administration, who visit PLCs regularly and help plan for the future.
- The Management Team in Richfield Public Schools (building and district administrators) has structured all administrative professional learning as a PLC as well. Administrators meet once a month during the school year to deepen their knowledge of research-based instructional strategies, the teacher development and evaluation rubric, and strong literacy instruction. Each meeting is a “train-the-trainer” model for building administrators to take back and implement with their staff.

- The Management team convenes for two days after school ends to engage in a data retreat, analyzing data not limited to student achievement, but which also includes student survey, behavior, graduation rates, attendance, course pass rates, the TS Gold data for our early learners, and school climate data.
- Instructional and literacy coaches begin their contract early with a full day of professional learning facilitated by district directors, including the Directors of Literacy, Math, Multi-Language Learning, Technology, and Student Support Services. This professional development day is grounded in equity work, focusing on the Four Instructional Agreements, co-teaching and PLCs. The coaches, in turn, will co-facilitate professional learning experiences for new staff during new teacher workshop in August, and for all staff during workshop week in late August.
- All grade 2 classroom teachers at three of our elementary buildings required to attend one full day of training with a consultant on implementation of the Lucy Calkins Units of Study in Phonics. This training will occur in August during workshop week.
- Once a month for a half-day, instructional coaches engage in professional learning opportunities planned by the district directors. These meetings have already been scheduled into the school calendar and will have as its foundation literacy in all areas. Additionally, elementary instructional coaches will meet together as a group every Friday to support one another's work in buildings, by creating lab classrooms, co-teaching opportunities, etc.
- Once a month for a half-day, interventionists will engage in professional learning opportunities planned by the district directors. These meetings have already been scheduled into the school calendar, and will have at its foundation best practices in intervention in both literacy and math.
- New teachers will engage in 24 hours of professional learning designed just for them. For the 2020-2021 school year, twelve hours will take place prior to the district workshop week, and twelve hours will take place throughout the course of the school year to provide more scaffolded support for our newest teachers. Included in these hours is a menu of 75-minute professional learning sessions on different topics. Weaved throughout all sessions are literacy, equity, socio-emotional support and student engagement. The sessions will include one on co-teaching, one focused solely on writing throughout the school day, one on enhancing student learning through the use of technology, one on language acquisition, and one on strong implementation of PLCs.
- Richfield Public Schools' Learning Academy is a system of teacher-led and director-led professional learning opportunities growing organically based on communicated teacher need or desire. This system is part of the teacher Q-Comp plan from the Minnesota Department of Education, and provides various opportunities throughout the year for enhanced teacher learning. To be continued for SY 20-21 is a Learning Academy on implementation the workshop model in secondary classrooms and an advanced implementation of the workshop model in secondary classrooms; implementation of a balanced literacy model in elementary classrooms, strengthening co-teaching model in a general education classroom, and continued learning on the Units of Study and how they integrate with professional resources that teachers received the previous year. Additionally, learning academies will be facilitated by instructional coaches on reading strategies, common formative assessments, and word work.

In summary:

- All of these learning opportunities embed research-based literacy strategies to strengthen student learning across the school day, and utilize student data to help teachers plan strong instruction based on identified student need and strength.

- Richfield Public Schools believes in job-embedded professional development experiences whenever possible. Our areas of focus include continued teacher development in academic mindset, establishing a culture of growth mindset and pedagogical confidence, understanding and exploring belief systems to strengthen relationships and expectations of all students, and building the efficacy of teachers and leaders to reduce predictability of student achievement based upon race. Directors work closely with building administration, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders to provide opportunities to learn during the school day.
- Richfield Public Schools is committed to providing learning opportunities around early interventions to support our youngest learners, pre-K through early elementary.
- RPS teachers continue to participate in the West Metro Leadership Academy to deepen their own understanding of rigor and leading through equity. This participation allows teacher leaders to partner with other teachers from districts throughout the metro area, including Edina, Eden Prairie, Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Bloomington Public Schools, and to bring their learning back to share with staff across the district.