

South Carolina Department of Education  
Read to Succeed Elementary Exemplary Literacy Reflection Tool  
St. Helena Elementary School

**Directions:** Please provide a narrative response for Sections A-I.

**LETRS Questions:**

- How many eligible teachers in your school have completed Volume 1 ONLY of LETRS?: **3**
- How many eligible teachers in your school have completed Volumes 1 and 2 of LETRS?: **14**
- How many eligible teachers in your school are beginning Volume 1 of LETRS this year (or have not yet started or completed Volume 1)?: **4**

**Section A:** Describe how reading assessment and instruction for all PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students in the school includes oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to aid in the comprehension of texts to meet grade-level English/Language Arts standards.

- Pre-K teachers use *Teaching Strategies GOLD* to document and assess student progress based on the South Carolina Early Learning Standards. These standards are aligned with the 38 Objectives for Development and Learning found in *The Creative Curriculum*, which is the primary curriculum used. The teachers document the students' progress over time using a variety of pieces of evidence (pictures, writing, video, etc) to show mastery. Lessons within *The Creative Curriculum* follow a developmental continuum designed to teach foundational literacy skills. These include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—all essential for beginning reading. These skills are integrated in the lessons and throughout the day. Additionally, Pre-K teachers use the *Handwriting Without Tears* program to help students develop foundational handwriting skills as they begin learning how to write.
- **iReady Diagnostic:** Students in grades K-5 take the iReady Diagnostic as a common assessment tool. This diagnostic evaluates literacy skills, helping to create a personalized learning path each student works on weekly to close any learning gaps. Teachers use the data from iReady to address specific needs in small groups. To further identify precise learning gaps, teachers administer the *LETRS Word Reading Survey*. This survey helps teachers group students by specific phonics needs, allowing for differentiated instruction. Additionally, students in grades 3-5 take district benchmark assessments to measure their progress toward grade-level standards. All teachers use common assessments to gauge students' understanding of grade-level standards and texts.
- **HMH Into Reading Curriculum:** Kindergarten through 5th-grade teachers use *HMH Into Reading* as the core curriculum for English Language Arts. This curriculum aligns with the South Carolina College and Career-Ready Standards, providing rigorous, high-quality instruction in reading, foundational skills, vocabulary, and writing each day.
- **Intervention Programs:** Interventionists work with students in Tiers 2 and 3 using the *SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words)* program in pull-out groups to provide targeted support.

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**Section B:** Document how Word Recognition assessment and instruction for PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students are further aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy and foundational literacy skills.

- Pre-K teachers use *The Creative Curriculum* to develop foundational word recognition skills, embedding these skills into literacy lessons and small group activities. For individualized instruction and assessment, teachers also use *Ignite by Hatch*, which tracks student progress across 38 key developmental objectives. This data is documented in *Teaching Strategies GOLD* to keep parents updated through progress reports.
- K-5 teachers use the foundational skills component of *HMH Into Reading* to teach word recognition. These lessons are systematic, direct, and explicit, following a structured scope and sequence. Skills are practiced in isolation and reinforced with decodable texts to allow students to apply what they've learned. The curriculum builds upon skills through repetition from unit to unit and year to year. Teachers assess students' progress using HMH assessments and the iReady Diagnostic, which is administered three times a year. iReady provides additional insights for teachers to support word recognition in both whole-group and small-group settings.
- Interventionists use the *SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words)* program to support students at various instructional levels, targeting their specific word recognition needs. This multi-level program follows a structured literacy approach with a clear, systematic scope and sequence. Lessons include explicit routines focusing on phonological awareness, spelling-sound relationships, and sight words. The program is grounded in the idea that early literacy is most effectively taught through two complementary strands: one for language comprehension and the other for word recognition.

**Section C:** Document how the school uses universal screener data and diagnostic assessment data to determine targeted pathways of intervention (word recognition or language comprehension) for students in PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade who have failed to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency.

- Students who score below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile on the iReady Diagnostic are targeted for multi-tiered supports in our MTSS program. Students who are in Tier 1+ and Tier 2 receive small group intervention from their classroom teachers. Students who are in Tier 3 are pulled out and served by our interventionists, using the SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) program. Has a placement assessment that determines which kit they will work out. These students receive 45 minutes of small group instruction at least 3 times per week.
- Kindergarten teachers give the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) to all kindergarteners in the first 45 days of school to assess the students' readiness levels. This assessment has a literacy component, which gives the teachers some information about the foundational skills that the students come to kindergarten with. This assessment helps the teachers form their initial groups with the students until they acquire more data on student progress.
- Pre K teachers uses the Dial 4 assessment as a universal screener to determine which students need to attend pre-kindergarten to prepare them for kindergarten.
- When a student is being considered for intervention in MTSS, an If/Then chart is used to determine the interventions that would be best for the students.

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**Section D:** Describe the system in place to help parents in your school understand how they can support the student as a reader and writer at home.

To support parents in fostering reading and writing skills at home, St. Helena Elementary provides various resources and engagement opportunities:

- **Communication with Parents:** Weekly or monthly newsletters inform parents of current learning topics and ways they can support their children at home. Quarterly report cards, mid-quarter progress reports, and access to PowerSchool keep parents updated on their child's academic progress. Teachers reach out to parents if students are struggling in the classroom.
- **Curriculum Parent Night:** At the start of each school year, the school hosts a Curriculum Night to outline grade-level expectations across all subjects. Parents receive packets with state standards presented in a parent-friendly format and suggestions for supporting learning at home. Additionally, parent-teacher conferences are held at least twice a year to review student test scores, progress toward grade-level standards, and, if necessary, discuss retention based on the student's progress and performance.
- **Family Engagement Nights:** Each month, Family Engagement Nights focus on literacy, offering parents hands-on activities and strategies to support reading at home. During Curriculum Night at the beginning of the school year, parents learn about new grade-level standards, see examples of how these standards are taught and assessed, and receive additional resources.
- **Curriculum Support:** K-5 teachers send home family letters from the *HMH Into Reading* curriculum, providing an overview of each unit and offering strategies for reinforcing skills at home.
- **MTSS Parent Meetings:** At the end of each intervention cycle, the MTSS coordinator holds meetings via Zoom, phone, or in person to review student progress. Progress reports are sent home for all intervention tiers, and parents confirm receipt by signing and returning a form. If a student is not making adequate progress, an in-person meeting with the intervention team is required to discuss and revise intervention strategies. Throughout the year, parents can request a conference to discuss their child's progress at any time.

**Section E:** Document how the school provides for the monitoring of reading achievement and growth at the classroom and school level with decisions about PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade intervention based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading.

- St. Helena Elementary systematically monitors reading achievement and growth at both the classroom and school levels, leveraging data to make informed decisions for PreK-5th grade interventions and ensure students achieve grade-level proficiency in reading.
- **Classroom-Level Monitoring:** Teachers in grades K-5 utilize formative and summative assessments from the *HMH Into Reading* curriculum and the iReady Diagnostic, administered three times annually, to assess students' progress in foundational skills, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. These assessments, along with additional common assessments, provide a clear picture of each student's reading development, allowing teachers to tailor instruction and small-group interventions based on real-time data. Pre K teachers utilize Ignite by Hatch to monitor student progress and provide individualized instruction based on the data. Teachers also document student progress through

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observational data with anecdotes and pictures to show progress. This data is housed in the observational system, Teaching Strategies Gold, to show ongoing progress toward goals.

- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS):** Students scoring below the 25th percentile on the iReady Diagnostic are identified for MTSS support:
  - **Tier 1 and Tier 2:** Classroom teachers provide targeted, small-group interventions to students needing reinforcement in specific reading areas.
  - **Tier 3:** For students requiring more intensive support, interventionists conduct pull-out sessions using the *SIPPS* program. These students receive 45 minutes of instruction at least three times per week, with a placement assessment used to determine the most appropriate level of SIPPS instruction.
- **Data Review and Decision-Making:** The school conducts regular data reviews, including monthly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) led by the State Reading Coach and the MTSS coordinator. During these meetings, teachers and staff analyze classroom, diagnostic, and intervention data to identify trends, adjust instruction, and determine next steps for individual students and groups. MTSS parent meetings at the end of each intervention cycle further support this process by engaging families and updating them on progress, while ensuring parents understand and contribute to intervention strategies.

By integrating classroom assessments, tiered intervention data, and regular data analysis, St. Helena Elementary ensures that all available information is used to support student growth and guide intervention decisions, fostering grade-level proficiency in reading across PreK-5th grade.

**Section F:** Describe how the school provides teacher training based in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to support all students in PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade.

- **LETRS Training for K-3 Educators:** Teachers and teacher assistants in grades K-3 are required to complete *LETRS* training to deepen their understanding of the science of reading and incorporate these practices into their teaching.
- **Weekly Professional Development with the State Reading Coach:** K-3 teachers participate in weekly job-embedded professional development led by the State Reading Coach during PLCs. In these sessions, teachers learn and apply research-based instructional and intervention strategies for whole-group and small-group instruction. The coach also supports teachers in analyzing student data, forming targeted groups, setting goals, and monitoring progress.
- **Early Childhood LETRS for Pre-K:** Pre-K educators are being considered for *Early Childhood LETRS* training, which would provide them with essential skills for early literacy instruction.

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**Section G: Analysis of Data**

Strengths	Possibilities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have a strong command of high frequency words</li> <li>• More than half of our staff in grades K-3 are fully LETRS trained</li> <li>• The new ELA curriculum has an abundance of high-quality informational text</li> <li>• PLC work revolves around ensuring that learning targets and lessons are aligned with new state standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased motivation and stamina in students when engaging in reading material</li> <li>• 29% proficiency in ELA for grades 3-5</li> <li>• Bulk of students performing in the Approaches category</li> <li>• Aligning classroom assessments with rigor of the state standards</li> </ul>

**Section H: Previous School Year SMART Goals and Progress Toward Those Goals**

- Please provide your school’s goals from last school year and the progress your school has made towards these goals. Utilize quantitative and qualitative data to determine progress toward the goal (s). As a reminder, all schools serving third grade were required to use Goal #1 (below).

Goals	Progress
<u>Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</u> Reduce the percentage of third graders scoring Does Not Meet in the spring of 2023 as determined by SC READY from <b>51 %</b> to <b>46 %</b> in the spring of 2024.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade SC Ready DNM: 51% No increase or decrease Goal NOT MET
<u>Goal #2:</u> Increase the percentage of K-5 students meeting their typical growth goal as determined by iReady Diagnostic from Spring 2023 45.3% to 50% by Spring 2024.	Percentage of K-5 students meeting typical growth (typical year’s growth): <b>53%</b> Percentage of K-5 students meeting stretch growth (1.5 year’s growth): <b>26%</b> Goal MET!!!

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**Section I: Current SMART Goals and Action Steps Based on Analysis of Data**

- All schools serving students in third grade MUST respond to the third-grade reading proficiency goal. Schools that do not serve third grade students may choose a different goal. Schools may continue to use the same SMART goals from previous years or choose new goals. Goals should be academically measurable. The Reflection Tool may be helpful in determining action steps to reach an academic goal. Schools are strongly encouraged to incorporate goals from the strategic plan.

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
<p><u>Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</u> Reduce the percentage of third graders scoring Does Not Meet in the spring of 2024 as determined by SC READY from <b>51 %</b> to <b>46 %</b> in the spring of 2025.</p> <p>Common assessment            Explicit instruction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish daily block dedicated to foundational reading skills, including phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.</li> <li>• Utilize evidence-based literacy programs (e.g., HMH Into Reading) to provide structured lessons.</li> <li>• Identify students needing additional support through initial assessments and ongoing progress monitoring.</li> <li>• Schedule intervention sessions at least three times per week for students requiring extra help.</li> <li>• Conduct a data review at the beginning of each quarter to identify students' specific skill deficits.</li> <li>• Form small groups based on assessment data (e.g., comprehension, vocabulary).</li> <li>• Implement targeted lessons focused on identified needs, adjusting groups based on progress</li> <li>• integrate reading and comprehension strategies into content area lessons.</li> <li>• Use informational texts relevant to other subjects to enhance reading skills and comprehension, ensuring exposure to diverse genres.</li> <li>• Professional development sessions focused on effective reading instruction strategies, assessment analysis, and data-driven decision-making.</li> </ul>

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Goals	Action Steps
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate peer observations and collaborative planning time for teachers to share best practices and strategies for improving student reading outcomes.</li> <li>• Host quarterly Family Literacy Nights to share resources and strategies for parents to support reading at home</li> </ul>
<p><u>Goal #2:</u>            Reduce the percentage of students in grades 3-5 scoring Does Not Meet in the Informational Text domain in the spring of 2024 as determined by SC READY from <b>64%</b> to <b>59%</b> in the spring of 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use SC READY data and ongoing classroom assessments to identify students in grades 3-5 who are struggling in the Informational Text domain.</li> <li>• Schedule targeted, small-group sessions focused on key informational text skills, such as summarizing, identifying main ideas and details, and interpreting text features (graphs, charts, etc.).</li> <li>• Monitor progress bi-weekly through formative assessments to adjust groups and strategies as needed.</li> <li>• Incorporate informational texts across subjects, including science and social studies, to increase exposure and practice with comprehension skills.</li> <li>• Provide access to a variety of high-interest informational texts, and ensure they are level-appropriate to engage readers and support comprehension.</li> <li>• Teachers have made their SLO goal around informational text to help focus their instruction based on grade level standards of informational texts.</li> <li>• Train teachers in evidence-based strategies specific to informational text, such as previewing text structures, annotating, and using graphic organizers to identify and organize main ideas and details.</li> <li>• Ensure that these strategies are consistently embedded in both whole-class and small-group instruction.</li> </ul>

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<b>Goals</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share best practices and strategies among teachers, including successful methods for teaching specific skills like summarizing or comparing information.</li><li>• Send home resources that provide families with strategies to support informational text comprehension, such as guiding questions for nonfiction reading or activities related to main idea and details.</li><li>• Review results in data meetings to adjust interventions and instruction as necessary, focusing on students who show minimal growth.</li><li>• Provide professional development sessions on teaching informational text skills, including analyzing text features, comparing texts, and understanding main ideas.</li></ul>