Bradley County Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: July 11, 2025

Approved: June 16, 2026

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

All Bradley County Schools (BCS) Kindergarten through second-grade classes have a 120-minute minimum daily literacy block with a minimum of 90 minutes devoted to foundational skills. In alignment with the Tennessee Academic Standards, five components comprise the primary form of foundational reading instruction in every BCS K-2 classroom - phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Writing instruction is also provided, including spelling, grammar, and language structure. These components are explicitly taught through a combination of whole and small-group lessons and supported with multiple practice opportunities via interactive written, spoken, and physical practice via paper-pencil and technology-based activities.

In Kindergarten, a special focus of instruction is for students to develop strong phonemic awareness as a foundation for phonics and other elements of reading. Phonemic awareness activities provide students with practice in discriminating the sounds that make words. Oral blending and segmentation are used to teach phonemic awareness. Students also explicitly and systematically explore the alphabetic principle to understand how sounds relate to letters and writing. Read-alouds are used to develop speaking and listening skills and build concepts of print. Students learn to apply their developing literacy skills to read and write simple sentences by the end of kindergarten.

In 1st grade, students are provided explicit and systematic phonics instruction to learn sound/spelling relationships and combine the sounds represented by letters to blend and pronounce words. The connections between blended words and word meanings are constantly reinforced so that students recognize that blended sounds form words they know from spoken language. Students are taught to transfer knowledge of isolated letters and words through sentence blending and reading and application to grade-level text. Knowledge of sounds and spellings, coupled with blending and reading connected texts, develops independent readers by the end of 1st grade.

By 2nd grade, students have had much practice and application of basic and intermediate phonics skills. Thus, instruction focuses on mastery of advanced phonics with heavy practice in fluency and comprehension. Using decodables, students focus on critical phrasing, intonation, and expression

that support meaning. As students move from decoding words to reading sentences fluently, they are expected to point out where they find answers to comprehension questions. As the emphasis moves from phonics to morphology, students learn to identify and read meaningful chunks of words rather than individual spellings. This word analysis also supports vocabulary development. The result is that students can read and comprehend a passage of text and write a related paragraph by the end of second grade.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

All BCS third through fifth-grade classes have at least 120 minutes daily in their literacy block, with a minimum of 45 minutes devoted to foundational skills in third grade and 30 minutes in fourth and fifth grades. In alignment with the Tennessee Academic Standards, multiple components are explicitly taught in each classroom's reading instruction time, including morphology, spelling, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Writing and grammar instruction are also provided and are highly integrated with comprehension work. These components are taught through whole-group differentiated lessons and supported with multiple practice opportunities via interactive written, spoken, and kinesthetic experiences via paper-pencil and technology-based activities.

By 3rd grade, students have had much practice and application of phonics instruction but need opportunities to become fluent with complex words and sentences. Practice with fluency and comprehension increases along with the rigor of student-facing texts. Using decodables, students focus on critical phrasing, intonation, and expression that support meaning. As students move from decoding multi-syllable words to reading lengthy sentences fluently, they are expected to point out where they find answers to comprehension questions in the text. As the emphasis moves from phonics to morphology, students learn to identify and read meaningful chunks of words rather than individual spellings. This word analysis also supports the growth of vocabulary and writing. Writing development is further supported through teaching sentence and text composition and exercising comprehension skills. By the end of third grade, instruction builds a student's ability to read multiple passages of text and write a cohesive and complex paragraph.

As students have more practice with morphology in the 4th and 5th grades, they apply their word knowledge to unfamiliar words to expand their vocabulary and understand multisyllabic words. Spelling regular and irregular multisyllabic words is practiced regularly in conjunction with vocabulary and morphology instruction and is further integrated with writing instruction. Additionally, unknown words are embedded in text to develop students' use of affix meanings, sentence structure, context clues, and apposition. Students are taught to embrace language found in text and deepen their experiences with new learning through writing. Vocabulary, comprehension, and writing instruction are thus heavily intertwined with one another. By the end of fifth grade, students are prepared to read complex text from multiple genres accurately and efficiently. Furthermore, their writing abilities include using appropriate sentence structure and English language conventions to produce multiple cohesive paragraphs.

Additional Supports

Support has been designed to improve academic growth for TVAAS levels 1 or 2, as evidenced by specific school/subgroup data from 2022 and 2023. Using job-embedded professional development

and monitoring, we will increase to levels 3 or higher. During the 2026-27 school year, the Elementary ELA Coordinator will provide individualized support to teachers who are new to their grade level, including training on HQIM with a focus on text-based writing, models of strategies and best practices, and observation feedback. Additionally, a specific PLC cycle will focus on writing instruction and how to thoroughly incorporate it into reading instruction in upper elementary grades. Walk-throughs by school-level instructional coaches will be used to monitor implementation.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

McGraw Hill Wonders K-5

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

McGraw Hill Wonders K-5

Supplemental Instructional Materials

McGraw-Hill Open Court Reading
SRSD Writing (Self-Regulated Strategy Development)

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

i-Ready Suite K-5

Our district administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to students in third grade for the Spring Benchmark.

Intervention Structure and Supports

The BCS District employs a universal screening process, incorporating I-Ready and Early Reading Tasks supplied by the TDOE, as the cornerstone for identifying students displaying reading deficiencies. This screening process occurs three times per year. It serves as a foundation for data teams to conduct data analysis and begin the identification process for students scoring "at risk" for literacy struggles.

When students score below the success thresholds, school-based data teams, including RTI personnel, instructional coaches, principals, and classroom teachers, collaboratively analyze student data to ascertain the subsequent actions. These actions include further investigation utilizing the district's progress monitoring tool, AimswebPlus, and the administration of survey-level assessments. The results of these additional tests help to determine a student's instructional level vs. grade level, which guides our data team to make decisions regarding proper placement for Tier II and Tier III support utilizing our RTI (elementary) programs. When test results indicate weaknesses that are specific to phonics and phonemic awareness, additional screeners for grades (K-3) PASS and grades (3-12) PWRS may also be utilized for additional information.

When the universal screening process, survey level assessment, and other screeners reveal significant deficits relative to phonics and phonemic awareness, a student may also be a candidate for testing to determine if characteristics of dyslexia are present, and to ensure targeted intervention (dyslexic-specific) is provided for these deficit areas. The BCS district utilizes a series of additional assessments that are grade-level specific and address certain components of reading. They are as follows:

- Students in grades K-3 who do not meet the success criteria for the baseline universal screener undergo supplementary assessments focusing on phonological and phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, sound/symbol recognition, decoding, and encoding skills. These categories are assessed to determine specific deficits and may also yield information to indicate if a student displays characteristics of dyslexia.
- Students in grades 4-8 who do not meet the success criteria for the baseline universal screener are assessed in the following areas: reading fluency (rate/decoding), reading fluency (accuracy, sound/symbol recognition), and encoding (spelling). Again, the focus is to determine specific student needs for placement in tiered intervention and to analyze results to determine if student performance is in alliance with characteristics of dyslexia.
- Students whose data reveal a need for reading support based on characteristics of dyslexia are placed into targeted interventions that provide best practices for building capacity in the areas of the basic foundations of reading. Students receive systematic instruction that is evidence-based and focuses on (phonological and phonemic awareness), the relationship between speech and print (sound-symbol correspondence and alphabet knowledge), and the accurate identification and reading of words (decoding) and spelling words (encoding). Students receiving intervention services are progress monitored weekly through AimswebPlus in at least one or more of the following areas:
    - Letter Naming Fluency
    - Letter Sound Fluency
    - Phoneme Segmentation
    - Nonsense Word Fluency
    - Word Reading Fluency
    - Letter Word Sound Fluency
    - Oral Reading Fluency
    - Vocabulary
    - Reading Comprehension
    - Silent Reading Fluency

Data teams gather routinely (every 5 weeks) to discuss and analyze data to design "next steps" for each individual student. Data teams review assessment results, classroom performance, attendance, behavior, and other relevant data in student decisions. Using these meetings as a caveat for designing and promoting opportunities for student success, data teams may choose to allow a student to begin the transition (either up or down) through the tiered levels of instruction, including a return to Tier I classroom instruction, or begin the referral process for special education services. Parents are also routinely notified of student progress via letter, chart, and/or graphs based on these meetings.

The interventions/materials utilized for dyslexia-specific intervention are outlined below. The intensity of the intervention escalates with extended instructional periods and/or adjustments to the student/teacher ratio. Our RTI teams are strategically devising methods to ensure coherence in linking tiered instructional support with Tier I instruction. Examples of this integration include using decodable readers, sight words, high-frequency words, and sound/spelling cards.

Heggerty (Tier II)

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Decoding skills
- Encoding

Reading Mastery (Tier II/III)

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Alphabet knowledge
- Sound-symbol recognition
- Decoding skills
- Encoding
- Rapid Naming

Corrective Reading (Tier III)

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Decoding skills
- Encoding
- Rapid Naming

Open-Court Intervention Guide (K-3) (Tier II/III)

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Alphabet knowledge
- Sound-symbol recognition
- Decoding skills
- Encoding
- Rapid Naming

EIR (Tier II/III)

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Alphabet knowledge
- Sound-symbol recognition

- Decoding skills
- Encoding
- Rapid Naming

Phonics for Reading (3-5) (Tier II/III)

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Sound-symbol recognition
- Decoding skills
- Encoding
- Rapid Naming

Read Live (4-5) (Tier II and III)

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Alphabet knowledge
- Sound-symbol recognition
- Decoding skills
- Encoding
- Rapid Naming
- Sound-symbol recognition
- Decoding skills
- Encoding
- Rapid Naming

The district offers various tailored programs for students needing support, all meeting the criteria for dyslexia-specific intervention.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

After each administration of the iReady Universal Reading Screener, printed copies of the TN Home Literacy Report are sent to the families of students in grades K-3 and any students in 4-5 who have been identified as having significant reading deficiencies. These reports are provided to K-3 and identified 4-5 parents as accompanying documents to progress reports and grade cards that are sent home in September, January, and May annually. Additionally, these results are discussed at fall and spring parent-teacher conferences.

For third and fourth-grade students at risk of retention, personal notification via meetings and phone calls supplement the communication channels used with the general population. While individual communication is designed to answer questions and support clarity regarding student performance and T.C.A. § 49-63115(a)(1), all K-3 families and families with 4th and 5th graders with significant reading deficiencies receive the following information via written Home Literacy Reports:

- List of student's skill gaps with descriptions of the depth and extent of needs
- Provided reading interventions and how deficits will be addressed through them

- Free at-home reading activities for families to support their child's literacy
- Description of importance of reading proficiency by the end of grade 3
- 4th grade promotion pathways information

Professional Development Plan

All current K-5 teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators have completed Early Reading Training Course 1, and many have completed Course 2 for continued literacy learning. BCS also ensures that all newly hired educators seeking to obtain, renew, or advance a license with an endorsement to teach K-5 reading complete the Reading 360 asynchronous course.

At the onset of each school year, new teachers in grades K-5 are trained by the district's Elementary ELA Coordinator. Throughout the year, the Elementary ELA Coordinator continues this support through learning walks, individualized feedback, and grade-level Lesson Studies designed to further develop lesson planning and instruction in foundational literacy skills. Learning Walk data is collected with a focus on TDOE's Instructional Practice Guide and curriculum-based instructional routines. Instructional Coaches and the Elementary ELA Coordinator collectively compile data from Learning Walks to track progress at the school and district levels. School-level instructional coaches conduct bimonthly PLCs with all K-5 teachers. Additionally, they are trained monthly by the Elementary ELA Coordinator to guide their ongoing learning as they support teachers. A consultant from our HQIM-adopted vendor is also contracted to provide classroom-embedded support.