

ELIZABETH FORWARD SCHOOL DISTRICT CURRICULUM UPDATES

SEPTEMBER 2025

95 Phonics Core Program UPDATE

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The school year is off to a wonderful start, and we are so proud of the hard work our students and teachers are already putting into learning. We are excited to share an important update about literacy instruction in Kindergarten through Grade 2.

This year, the district has adopted the 95 Phonics Core Program, a resource fully aligned with the Science of Reading and principles of Structured Literacy. This research-based program provides systematic and explicit instruction across multiple aspects of literacy, including phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Lessons are carefully sequenced so that students not only learn how to decode words and understand spelling patterns, but also apply these skills in meaningful reading and writing experiences.

As part of this shift, you may notice a change from the traditional weekly spelling word lists. Instead of memorizing a set list, students will focus on learning the patterns and rules of spelling so they can apply this knowledge more broadly. Student progress will be assessed in a variety of ways including classwork, writing tasks, and ongoing formative assessments to provide teachers with a more complete picture of each child's growth.

By implementing a program that addresses all components of literacy, our teachers can more precisely identify student needs and provide targeted support. We are confident this new approach will strengthen early literacy development and set students up for long-term success.

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting your child's learning!

Dr. Mary Carole Perry
Assistant Superintendent

Multi-Tiered System Support (MTSS)

You may hear us refer to MTSS, which stands for Multi-Tiered System of Support. MTSS is a framework our district uses to make sure every child receives the right level of academic and behavioral support.

- Tier 1: High-quality classroom instruction and positive schoolwide practices that all students receive.
- Tier 2: Targeted small-group interventions for students who need a little extra help in academics or behavior.
- Tier 3: Intensive, individualized supports for students who need more significant support.

MTSS also works hand-in-hand with PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports). While MTSS looks at both academics and behavior, PBIS focuses specifically on creating consistent expectations for behavior, recognizing positive choices, and teaching students the skills they need to succeed socially and emotionally.

Importantly, all supports provided through MTSS are based on data and each student's individual needs. Our goal is to ensure every child gets the right help at the right time so they can thrive in a safe, positive, and engaging school environment.

