

South Carolina Department of Education
Read to Succeed **Primary and Elementary** Reading Plan
2026-2027

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

LETRS Questions:

- How many teachers in your school have completed Volume 1 ONLY of LETRS? 20
- How many teachers in your school have completed Volumes 1 and 2 of LETRS? 16
- How many teachers in your school are beginning Volume 1 of LETRS this year? 2
- How many teachers in your school are beginning Volume 2 of LETRS this year? 4
- How many CERDEP PreK teachers and CERDEP Teaching Assistants in your school have completed EC LETRS? 2
- How many CERDEP PreK teachers and CERDEP Teaching Assistants in your school are beginning EC LETRS this year? 5

Section A: Describe how reading assessment and instruction for all PreK-5th 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.

At John P. Thomas, we analyzed our students' data using the universal screener, the iReady Inform, Orton-Gillingham assessments, and the BAS diagnostic tool. We design our instruction by triangulating the data from all assessments. The iReady data provides insights across five domains: comprehension, phonics, vocabulary, and students' reading levels, skills, and potential growth. It pinpoints where each student falls on the reading spectrum in relation to grade-level expectations. It identifies gaps in a student's literacy development and opportunities for enrichment. The BAS is administered one-on-one. It is a leveled reading assessment where teachers observe students' reading behaviors, fluency, and comprehension. Students demonstrate comprehension with oral responses to literal, inferential, and evaluative prompts. Both assessments provide data used to differentiate instruction. Through data analysis, we identify where students excel and where they struggle, enabling us to create targeted growth opportunities. Below are Instructional opportunities and strategies we use to meet grade-level ELA standards:

Oral Language

- Students in Pre-K through fifth grade are encouraged to develop oral language skills through daily Morning Meetings, where they share positive experiences and engage in meaningful conversations. Students in grades one through five also have opportunities to participate in the school news team. Across grade levels and content areas, teachers incorporate turn-and-talk activities, reciprocal teaching, collaborative

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small-group work, project-based presentations, and implicit grammar instruction. These experiences strengthen listening, speaking, vocabulary, and language development while helping students communicate ideas, articulate reasoning, and build understanding of increasingly complex texts.

Phonological Awareness

- In Pre-K through third grade, teachers use poems, songs, games, nursery rhymes, and chants to develop students' phonological awareness and ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds and sound patterns of spoken language. Students practice identifying and counting syllables by clapping or tapping out words and participate in activities that develop awareness of rhyming words, alliteration, and individual sounds. These experiences establish a strong foundation for phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and subsequent reading development.

Phonemic Awareness

- In the primary grades, teachers use the Orton-Gillingham three-part drill to reinforce the relationships between phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters or letter combinations). Big-book read-alouds, letter magnets, alphabet manipulatives, and word-family activities give students opportunities to connect sounds to their corresponding spellings. Teachers also use word ladders, word chains, and dictated sentences to develop students' ability to blend, segment, isolate, add, delete, and substitute sounds, and to connect these skills to written language. Through explicit, systematic, and multisensory instruction, students strengthen their decoding and encoding skills, build word recognition, and develop the foundational skills needed to access grade-level texts.

Fluency

- Fluency instruction focuses on developing students' accuracy, appropriate reading rate, and expression to support comprehension. Teachers model fluent reading and give students opportunities to reread familiar texts, participate in readers' theater, engage in guided reading and small-group instruction, and strengthen automatic sight-word recognition. These practices help students read with greater accuracy and prosody, allowing them to devote more attention to understanding and interpreting text.

Vocabulary

- Vocabulary instruction includes explicit teaching of Tier 2 academic vocabulary and Tier 3 content-specific terminology, as well as instruction in morphology, including prefixes, suffixes, and root words. Students learn to use contextual clues and reference materials, including dictionaries and thesauruses, to determine word meanings and deepen their understanding of language. Teachers reinforce

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vocabulary through discussion, reading, writing, and content-area instruction. These experiences expand students' academic language, strengthen word knowledge, and support their ability to comprehend and engage with increasingly complex texts.

Comprehension

- Comprehension instruction incorporates explicit teaching, teacher modeling, guided practice, and independent application of strategies that help students construct meaning from text. Students learn to make connections, ask and answer questions, summarize information, identify text structures, monitor their understanding, visualize, and draw inferences. Teachers use a variety of literary and informational text genres to develop students' ability to identify key ideas and details, analyze information, interpret meaning, and support responses with textual evidence. Graphic organizers, reciprocal teaching, flexible small-group instruction, literature circles, and accessible classroom libraries give students opportunities to engage with diverse texts, discuss their interpretations, and strengthen comprehension skills.

At John P. Thomas, ongoing assessment and instructional planning are interconnected. Teachers use assessment results, classroom observations, and student work to identify strengths, address skill gaps, adjust instructional approaches, and provide targeted intervention or enrichment. Flexible grouping and differentiated instruction allow teachers to respond to students' changing needs while maintaining high expectations for all learners. By integrating oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension into a cohesive literacy framework, John P. Thomas supports students in developing the foundational skills and higher-order thinking abilities necessary for successful reading. Through intentional instruction, ongoing progress monitoring, and data-informed decision-making, we strive to ensure every student makes meaningful literacy gains and can access, understand, analyze, and respond to texts aligned with grade-level ELA standards.

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

At John P. Thomas, word recognition assessment and instruction for students in Pre-K through fifth grade align with the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy development. The science of reading emphasizes that accurate, automatic word recognition is essential to skilled reading, as it enables students to devote more cognitive resources to language comprehension and meaning-making. Word recognition

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develops through interconnected skills, including phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and decoding, orthographic mapping, and reading fluency.

To identify students' strengths and instructional needs, the district administers the mandated i-Ready Inform assessment, and the school supplements these data with initial Orton-Gillingham (OG) assessments, running records, and teacher anecdotal notes. Teachers analyze and triangulate assessment results to identify students performing below grade-level expectations and pinpoint specific gaps in foundational literacy development. These findings guide explicit, systematic, cumulative, and differentiated instruction, targeted intervention, and ongoing progress monitoring.

Phonological awareness instruction begins in Pre-K and continues throughout the primary grades, progressing from recognizing larger sound patterns to identifying and manipulating individual phonemes. At the earliest levels, students engage with rhymes, songs, stories, and games that develop their ability to hear, recognize, and manipulate sounds in spoken language. For example, Pre-K students practice identifying and producing rhyming words using pictures and other visual supports.

In kindergarten, instruction advances to connecting sounds to their corresponding letters, blending sounds to form words, and developing early decoding and encoding skills. Teachers use the Orton-Gillingham Three-Part Drill to reinforce sound-symbol relationships and provide systematic practice in identifying, blending, and segmenting phonemes. Students manipulate sounds and letters with magnets and letter cards, count the number of words in a sentence by moving colored squares, and use multisensory materials, such as sand trays, to practice letter formation and sound-spelling patterns.

These explicit, multisensory instructional practices continue through second grade, with skills introduced, reinforced, and extended to meet students' individual needs. Students who struggle to master foundational skills receive additional small-group instruction and targeted practice to address identified gaps. This approach reflects the principles of structured literacy by providing direct instruction in the structure of spoken and written language, systematic skill development, cumulative review, and frequent opportunities for guided and independent practice.

During these grades, students also develop automatic recognition of high-frequency words (HFWs). Teachers use orthographic mapping principles to help students connect a word's pronunciation, spelling, and meaning, enabling the word to be stored in long-term memory for efficient retrieval. For words with irregular spelling patterns, instruction explicitly identifies predictable letter-sound relationships and draws attention to the parts that require additional learning. This approach supports accurate, automatic word recognition rather than relying primarily on visual memorization.

In grades three through five, instruction builds on students' foundational phonics and decoding skills by placing increased emphasis on morphology and the meaningful structures within words. Students receive explicit instruction in morphemes, base words, roots, prefixes, and

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suffixes. Teachers model how these word parts combine to create meaning and how morphological knowledge supports decoding unfamiliar multisyllabic words, spelling, vocabulary development, and comprehension. Students apply these skills through guided practice, word analysis, and opportunities to examine related words and recurring spelling patterns. Instruction reinforces the connection between word structure, pronunciation, spelling, and meaning, enabling students to approach increasingly complex academic and content-specific vocabulary with greater independence.

Assessment remains integral to instruction in grades three through five. Screening, classrooms performance, and ongoing teacher observations identify students who continue to struggle with word recognition. Teachers use this information to provide targeted small-group instruction that addresses specific skill deficits, including decoding, multisyllabic word reading, spelling patterns, and morphological awareness. Teachers monitor progress to determine whether students are responding to instruction and whether they need additional support or adjustments.

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-5th grade who have failed to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency.

Data continues to drive our decisions about Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions for students at John P. Thomas Elementary. We use a comprehensive approach that includes iReady Inform and Literacy Task, BAS, District Student Checklist documentation, and, in specific cases, OG Sight Word and/or Morphology, to ensure each student is matched with the most appropriate intervention and interventionist. Over the past three years, our school has had to adopt a highly intentional approach to using our reading interventionist, since one specialist supports students in grades 1 through 5, which is often challenging. To address this, we conduct an in-depth analysis of student data, focusing on those identified as Tier 3 learners. This practice begins in the second week of school and includes reviewing historical data, iReady instructional planning reports, individualized reading plans, and student samples. Using this data, we meet with parents, teachers, and our interventionists to set individualized goals and establish progress-monitoring routines within a 4-6 week cycle. This early intervention allows us to provide immediate, targeted support while completing all Fall assessments.

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Additionally, we use this data to identify students in grades 3–5 with iReady scores below 526 who are classified as emergent or transitional readers and with BAS levels at least two grade levels below expectations. These students take the iReady Inform assessment to gather additional diagnostic information about their phonological strengths and areas for growth. Once the iReady Inform, Orton-Gillingham initial assessment, and BAS assessments are complete, our MTSS Leadership Team meets to triangulate the data and identify patterns of confirmation or discrepancy among Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 students. This analysis informs decisions about further diagnostic testing, including OG spelling assessments or the Literacy Task administered by the Reading Interventionist or Literacy Coach. Next steps include our Literacy Coach, Reading Interventionist, and Instructional Coach collaborating to create grade-level intervention groups and schedules for students in grades 1–5. We pay special attention to students in grades 4 and 5 who have not yet met the benchmark of an iReady score of 526 or a BAS level of ‘J’ or higher. Once we establish routines for Tier 3 students, we expand our planning to include classroom teachers and trained support staff who can assist with Tier 2 interventions.

From a diagnostic perspective, we group students by their identified skills and strategies. These groups receive targeted instruction during the school day through Guided Reading, Orton-Gillingham, and RTI time. We are fortunate to have an afterschool program that runs three days a week, extending intervention beyond regular school hours. This program includes RISE and Early Childhood educators trained in OG and LETRS, who provide prescriptive instruction to targeted pull-out groups in grades 1–5. Additionally, we analyze data for students receiving special services to create inclusive instructional environments. These students either work on grade-level standards or participate in small-group, skills-based Guided Reading instruction. Following each 4–6-week MTSS cycle, we review progress-monitoring data during our afterschool intervention to assess goal achievement and determine next steps. Throughout the school year, we will continue to monitor student progress with fidelity and consistency to keep our intervention cycles fluid and responsive to the diverse needs of our learners.

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.

At John P. Thomas Elementary, we have a structured system in place to help parents understand how to support their child’s reading and writing development at home. Teachers communicate regularly with families by discussing student progress quarterly. For students performing below grade level, teachers reach out every four to six weeks with updates and suggestions, and when a student’s academic performance changes, teachers provide targeted strategies and skills that parents can implement at home. We also collaborate with our Parent Engagement Specialist, School Improvement Council, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and community partners to promote and sustain meaningful parent involvement in student learning beyond the classroom. Families also access resources during school events such as Open House, Curriculum Night, Literacy Night, Math and Science Night, Grandparents Day, assemblies, and parent-teacher conferences, where they receive books and other learning materials to reinforce literacy skills at home. To ensure that our support meets the needs of all families, parents are encouraged to complete surveys throughout the year, which allow us to gather feedback and tailor assistance accordingly. Finally, parents receive detailed reports after each district and state benchmark assessment, keeping them informed about their child’s progress in reading, writing, and other academic areas. This system ensures consistent communication, access to resources, and collaboration between home and school, ultimately strengthening student literacy achievement.

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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-5th grade intervention based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading.

John P. Thomas Elementary School monitors reading achievement and growth at the classroom and school level, making decisions about Pre-Kindergarten through fifth-grade interventions based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading through the implementation of the Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) Framework. The Multi-Tier System of Support Framework is a problem-solving approach that uses data-driven decision-making to provide support and interventions for students in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade, focusing on academic, behavioral, social-emotional learning, and chronic absenteeism, with particular emphasis on student attendance. The team holds regular grade-level discussions monthly to analyze benchmark assessment data and foster collaboration among educators.

The Multi-Tier System of Support Team at John P. Thomas Elementary School is comprised of a dedicated School Level Team of the Reading Interventionist, Principal, Assistant Principal, Literacy Coach, Curriculum Coach, Math Interventionist, and Behavior Interventionist that meets every six weeks to review student assessment data, track progress monitoring, and identify students in grade levels Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade who needs additional intervention. The Multi-Tier System of Support Framework offers three tiers of classroom-level interventions, with support consisting of Tier I: All students benefit from a high-quality curriculum and instruction. Tier II: Students requiring additional support receive targeted classroom teaching and strategic interventions, and Tier III: These students receive intensive, individualized interventions alongside Tier II support. Progress Monitoring of students' academic achievement and readability levels is conducted through classroom assessments such as common formative assessments (CFAs) and Mastery Connect Benchmark lessons and benchmark assessments. Multi-tier Support Meeting systems allow for stakeholder input, ensuring comprehensive support. Follow-up Multi-Tier Systems of Support Meetings are scheduled to evaluate intervention effectiveness based on ongoing analysis of disaggregated data through data-driven decision-making and targeted interventions. We strive to create a learning environment that promotes literary success for every student.

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-5th grade.

The literacy coach, district support, and/or a consultant provide training at John P. Thomas at least three to four times a month. The training teachers receive is tailored to their needs. Teachers are trained in the systematic approach to providing direct instruction. In addition, the program implements LETRS, Orton-Gillingham, and Morphology training and resources during small-group instruction.

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Section G: Analysis of Data

Strengths	Possibilities for Growth
• Teachers and instructional assistants have various professional learning opportunities at the district and school levels. • A variety of assessments are available within the district. • Students have access to ample texts at various levels in the classroom, allowing them to choose from multiple genres. • Our school has ongoing community partnerships with various groups focusing on literacy. • Teachers use Empowering Writers, Fountas & Pinnell, Wonders, and Orton-Gillingham resources when planning daily instruction. • • •	• During PLOs and PLCs, teachers will collaboratively analyze data, strategies, and resources used to deliver effective instruction. • Implement their data and resources as guide tools to guide instruction in all tiers. • During PLC, all data will be used to monitor student progress towards universal screening grade level goals. • Use Standards to align all primary and secondary resources. • Student/progress monitoring (not just from RTI) • Using engagement inventories to monitor student engagement, confer with students to increase their independent work volume, and continue eliminating activities that do not support instruction. • Increase time for authentic writing across content areas to optimize learning. • Increase the use of conferencing and observations of reading and writing engagement to plan for and monitor the results of literacy instruction. • Professional Learning implemented and observed in instructional practices. • •

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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>Previous Goal #1:</u> Increase the percentage of third graders scoring Meets and Exceeds in 2024-2025, as determined by SC READY, from 45% to 48% in the spring of 2025-2026.	Met Goal: Based on the Spring 2026 data, 17.3% of third graders scored Not Met on the 2025 SC READY.
<u>Previous Goal #2:</u> Increase parent attendance by 25% at all parent workshops through various platforms.	Met Goal: Based on the Spring 2026 data, parent attendance increased by 10%.
<u>Previous Goal #3:</u> : By the end of the 2025–2026 school year, 100% of Pre-K–5th grade teachers will participate in monthly Professional Learning Opportunities (PLOs) focused on improving writing instruction through the use of the Writing Rope framework, modes of writing (narrative, informational, opinion), and Visible Learning strategies including clear learning intentions, success criteria, and effective feedback resulting in at least a 10% increase in student writing proficiency as measured by school-wide writing assessments	Met Goal: Based on Spring 2026 data, 100% of teachers received monthly Professional Learning Opportunities focused on improving writing instruction through the Writing Rope framework, modes of writing (narrative, informational, opinion), and Visible Learning strategies, including clear learning intentions, success criteria, and effective feedback. These efforts resulted in at least a 20% increase in students' overall assessments, higher-quality instruction, and the school becoming a National Certified Visible Learning School.

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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. ***Note the change in language for the 3rd grade goal to align with the 2030 vision of 75% of students at or above grade level.*** Schools that do not serve third grade students may choose a different goal. Goals should be academically measurable. **All goals should align with academic growth or achievement.** Schools must provide a minimum of two goals.
- Schools are strongly encouraged to incorporate goals from the school renewal plan. Utilize a triangulation of appropriate and available data (i.e. SC READY, screeners, MTSS progress monitoring, benchmark assessments, and observational data) to set reasonable goal(s) for the current school year.

Goals	Action Steps
<u>Current Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</u> Increase the percentage of third graders scoring Meets and Exceeds in the spring of 2025 - 2026, as determined by SC READY, from 48% to 51% in the spring of 2027.	Action Steps: • Participate in collaborative planning to align standards with district-approved resources and best practices. • Implement a Structured Literacy Framework • Utilize primary and secondary resources with fidelity during interventions and word study. • Conduct and analyze running records to implement interventions for targeted students. • Create and instruct small groups based on students' needs. • Progress monitoring student progress using specific data points. • Professional development will be crafted to support the instructional needs of the students. • Conduct reading and writing standards-based conferences. • Collaborate with students to set goals based on universal screeners and formative and summative assessments.

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	• Use a variety of data to inform and adjust daily instruction. (Including, but not limited to, Universal Screener, running records, common formative assessments, rubrics, checklists, running/reading documents, and conferring data) • Utilizing SC State Standards to explicitly teach the literacy skills and strategies of reading, writing, listening, and speaking to engage students in all content areas. • Using protocols to deconstruct standards for instructional implementation. • Implement learning labs to enhance delivery of instruction.
<u>Current Goal #2:</u> By the end of the 2026–2027 school year, the school will increase parent attendance at academic-focused workshops by 35% compared with the established baseline through in-person, virtual, and other accessible participation opportunities. Workshops will focus on practical strategies families can use at home to support grade-level reading, mathematics, homework routines, and student learning goals.	Action Plan: • Plan and facilitate parent workshop series. • Offer flexible participation platforms. • Provide academic focused parent workshops. • Plan & facilitate literacy and special services events for parents and community partners. • Provide focused academic parent workshops. • Quarterly Literacy Newsletter • Provide opportunities for families to give feedback on events and review the information to assess effectiveness

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<u>Current Goal #3:</u> By the end of the 2026–2027 school year, 100% of Pre-K–5th grade teachers will participate in monthly Professional Learning Opportunities (PLOs), engage in collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and implement evidence-based instructional practices aligned with Explicit Instruction and Visible Learning. These practices include communicating clear learning intentions and success criteria, intentional modeling, guided practice, frequent checks for understanding, formative assessment, and timely, actionable feedback. As a result, students will demonstrate at least a 10% increase in proficiency on school-wide assessments.	Action Steps Pre-K-5: • Provide monthly Professional Learning Opportunities (PLOs) • Develop and share instructional resources • Conduct focused classroom walkthroughs • Facilitate instructional coaching cycles • Establish and facilitate Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) • Model effective instructional practices • Monitor student learning through formative assessment • Provide timely actionable feedback • Analyze student achievement data quarterly
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