

## **Sumner County Schools**

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: December 18, 2023

Approved: June 20, 2024

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**

Sumner County Schools instructional time exceeds the state minimum by providing our students with 75 minutes daily of foundational skills instruction. Foundational literacy skills instruction is the primary form of instruction for students in grades PreK through Second Grade.

Fundations is used to teach foundational literacy in grades PreK through Second Grade. Fundations is a sounds-first approach curriculum grounded in the Science of Reading. It is aligned to the TN State Standards and provides explicit instruction and student practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Grades K-2 also use Geodes to give our students the opportunity to apply their decoding knowledge through the reading and rereading of decodables. Geodes are aligned with Fundations to build fluent readers, provide an early understanding of story structure, offer practice in decoding words, phrases, and simple sentences.

Sumner County allows for an additional 60 minutes each day for students to practice knowledge building skills through Wit and Wisdom. Data from all sources are used to work with students in small groups to fill any gaps.

### **Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5**

Sumner County students in third through fifth grades receive between 30-45 minutes daily in foundational literacy skill instruction through an integrated 90-minute literacy block. Sumner County uses an evidence-based approach through Wit and Wisdom that builds knowledge and explicitly teaches foundational literacy skills and standards. The instruction is aligned to the TN State Standards and includes instruction that teaches morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency. Fundations is also used to explicitly teach foundational literacy skills in third Grade. Wit and Wisdom is used to teach knowledge building and foundational skills in third through fifth grades. Both of these curricula include explicit supports for fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Just Words is used in Fourth and Fifth Grades as a Tier II instructional intervention material to fill gaps in decoding and building phonics proficiency. Wilson is used for students in Tier III in Fourth and Fifth Grades to fill gaps in foundational literacy. Through the explicit use of these programs, Sumner

County is able to provide a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction for our students in grades third through fifth.

### **Additional Information**

Sumner County Schools had a level 1 in ELA as a district in 2022-2023. Sumner County had 6 schools that received a level 1 in 2022-23. There were also 6 schools that received a level 2 in 2022-23 school year. The district hired a reading specialist coordinator and Title 1 Coordinator to help support these schools in literacy. These coordinators supported the teachers by modeling lessons, co-teaching, delivering PL, and supporting them in what their specific school needs were. As a district, Sumner County offered Wilson and Foundations training to our reading specialists and paraprofessionals. The instruction department is currently working on creating a family plan for students to practice fluency at home each week. Sumner County Schools works closely with all elementary schools to continuously improve literacy scores.

### **Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2**

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom (approved waiver)

### **Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5**

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

Sumner County Schools has adopted Wit and Wisdom for grades K-5 and currently use Foundations for grades PreK-3rd grade for foundational literacy skills instruction. Grades K-2 also have Geodes to reinforce students' phonetic knowledge and help them build strong content knowledge and acquire robust vocabulary skills while practicing reading fluently.

### **Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5**

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) K-5

### **Intervention Structure and Supports**

Sumner County Schools uses Wilson Reading materials as reading intervention for students identified as having and or considered "at-risk" for a significant reading deficiency. Foundations and Geodes are two of the evidence-based interventions that students will receive and are differentiated based on Tier II and Tier III student needs. Sumner County's intervention schedules are aligned and adhere to the guidance in the state's RTI<sup>2</sup> model to identify students needing support for reading deficiencies. Students in Tier II and Tier III receive 45 minutes in intervention to address and progress monitor specific skills gaps that were identified on the Universal Screener. The screener is used to identify deficiencies in fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, letter names, letter sounds, word reading, and phoneme segmenting.

Students scoring below the 25th percentile on the Universal Reading Screener composite score will follow the crosswalk to determine if the student meets criteria as a student with unique learning

needs with characteristics of dyslexia. Students in grades K-5 who have characteristics of dyslexia receive specialized instruction daily.

Students are progress monitored bi-weekly to monitor progress of skill gaps. Data teams meet every 4 1/2 weeks to monitor student data and to inform decisions about duration, material, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress. Decisions are made to help support students to fill their reading gaps.

Students who fall below designated scores are given additional survey level assessments to pinpoint the skills deficit. The WIST and WADE are used to help identify skill gaps. Other programs used include SPIRE, Orton-Gillingham, and Heggerty. All the approved programs are used to help Sumner County students to become proficient readers.

### **Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports**

Sumner County Schools notifies families with a letter when their child has or is considered "at-risk" for a reading deficiency based on the screener and classroom data results. Families receive a letter in the fall, winter, and spring for grades Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. In addition to those three letters, families with students in Tier II and Tier III will receive information regarding their child's specific progress every 4 1/2 weeks. The information in the progress letter will be based on the student's specific progress monitoring results and progress made from the evidence-based materials and assessments.

The literacy letter shares more resources that families can access at home to support their child at no cost. These letters give details of student scores in parent-friendly language and provide a clear explanation of the skill gaps and the depth and extent of the student need. It informs the families how the gaps will be addressed during intervention through the specific program used. These letters explain the importance of being able to read proficiently by third grade and explicitly explains the promotion pathways for Fourth Grade students. Sumner County also has specific family letters for children in third and fourth grade to abide by the new retention law and promotion pathways.

In addition to the letters, our ELA curricula has family letters and information on how foundational skills and knowledge will be taught and how it can be practiced at home for free. Classroom newsletters, family tip sheets, upcoming at-home fluency practice, and school-wide family reading nights are also used to provide information on the importance of reading proficiency by third grade as well as engage and encourage family participation in their child's journey towards reading proficiency. Through these opportunities, families can better understand and support their child at home.

### **Professional Development Plan**

Sumner County Schools' PreK through Fifth Grade teachers were able to take the state's Reading 360 online modules and in-person trainings the last few years. The teachers completed a one-week online training that focused on early literacy skills. The second week was in-person where the teachers learned more in depth about foundational literacy skills instruction grounded in a phonics-based approach. Sumner County hosted an in-person session the last three years. New teachers to



our district complete at least week 1 of the early reading training during our embedded instructional focus days.

On top of the state's training offered, Sumner County has professional learning for educators on Foundations, Geodes, and Wit and Wisdom. This coming year, our offering will be for new teachers on each ELA curriculum and more in-depth training in foundational literacy for our returning teachers. This upcoming year, our district has instructional focus days embedded into the calendar where teachers can learn more about foundational literacy skills through more on-going training offerings by the instruction department leaders. Our teacher leaders and instructional coaches will be trained throughout the year on phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. Those educators will then redeliver content as needed to all teachers.