

Empower Academy

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

First Approved: July 1, 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

SPSTN uses a phonics approach grounded in the science of reading and aligned to the current Tennessee Academic Standards in ELA. SPSTN schedule is designed to include 120-150 minutes of daily literacy instruction. Grades K-2 will have a daily 60-minute foundational skills block. The skills block is designed to follow Linnea Ehri's Phases of Reading Development (Ehri, L.C., 1999). Each level of reading development includes phonemic awareness, phonics skills and reading behaviors to support children in becoming proficient readers. SPSTN uses Open Up Expeditionary Learning and will be supplementing foundational skills instruction with the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness program, Letterland Phonics, and the Read Naturally program. The foundational skills block will also incorporate unit lessons, and language dives with the Open Up/EL Curriculum. All aspects of each curriculum will be taught explicitly focusing on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students will be assessed on phonemic awareness, decoding, and fluency from the onset of the school year and administered monthly, based on each individual student's need. Benchmarks and Writing prompts will be given three times a year. Each student will have a personalized learning plan which tracks fluency, progress, and supports the students with their own personal literacy goals. Through iReady, students will be supported with online instruction as well as small group lessons supported by our teachers and paraprofessionals (ACE: Assistant Classroom Educators). Students' progress will be modified depending on the area of need. Targeted instruction will be given by the teacher and ACE. Both the teacher and ACE will document all progression aligned with the Tennessee ELA standards.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

For grades 3-5, SPSTN schedule is designed to include 90 minutes daily of Reading and English Language Arts. SPSTN selected Wit & Wisdom, by Great Minds, and Open Up/ Expeditionary Learning from the Approved Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. The adopted curriculum focuses on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Instruction will include morphology, grammar, spelling, writing, and fluency.

In addition, SPSTN will use supplemental curriculum from Read Naturally, Words their Way, Easy Grammar, Latin Roots, and 6 Traits of Writing. Teachers will follow an ELA pacing guide that is

aligned with the Tennessee ELA Academic Standards. A 60-minute foundational skills block will occur daily focusing on foundational literacy skills for learners who may need additional support in their reading development.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Open Up OUR Expeditionary Learning

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness (K-2)

Letterland Phonics (K-1)

Read Naturally (K-5)

Words Their Way (3-5)

Easy Grammar (3-5)

Latin Roots (3-5)

6 Traits of Writing (3-5)

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

i-Ready Suite K-5

We also administer the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to students in third grade for the Spring Benchmark.

Supplemental Screener

EasyCBM

Intervention Structure and Supports

In accordance with purpose 1 of the T.C.A. § 49-13-102, SPSTN-EA will provide a targeted school model that specifically closes the achievement gap between high-achieving and low-achieving students. We will focus on diagnosing skills and learning gaps, engaging students in their own learning process to meet and reach their personalized, rigorous, grade-level goals through a variety of student-led methods. In addition, we know that not all students meet grade-level content standards on the expected timeline. For this reason, we have incremental, Springs' supported intervention programs and skill attainment timelines at each grade level to assist students who are behind grade-level expectations. Struggling students will also benefit through our multi-tiered

system of support (MTSS) to meet the needs of students who are identified as in need of support through our coordinated intervention plan.

SPSTN follows the Tennessee Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) the academic three-tiered framework for teaching and learning that will include high-quality, differentiated instruction based on data based decision making on the part of teachers, paraprofessionals, and leadership team. All students at SPSTN receive high-quality, personalized instruction. Educators utilize Universal Screening from multiple sources of data to make informed decisions, provide personalized instruction, interventions, remediation, re-teaching, and enrichment. We provide interventions and support that address each student's skills gap. Our Tier II students receive 30 minutes of support daily, and Tier III receive 45 minutes of intervention daily.

All staff will be a part of creating a culture of clear and positive academic and behavioral support which is clearly articulated, modeled, and reinforced. For students who need more support that goes beyond the scope of Tier 1, they will be evaluated based on SPSTN progress monitoring tools. If a student is considered "at risk", an RTI team will meet and plan ways to support the student's learning and behavioral needs. The RTI team meets monthly to review student progress and goals, as well as to discuss changes in intervention, materials, or provider, regardless of what tier the student(s) was placed in initially.

Paraprofessionals and teachers will be tracking student progress with Tennessee's Department of Education student intervention plans, intervention records, and tracking forms. In the event that the student is not making adequate progress towards their academic and/or behavior goals, or are significantly below grade level, they will be evaluated and referred to the Tier III stage of RTI. Ultimately, SPSTN will recognize and support students when they first start to struggle to avoid academic and behavioral difficulties.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Parents at SPSTN are an integral part of the learning community. SPSTN teachers support and encourage a strong connection between learning at home and at school, which positively influences students' attitudes and achievements. Teachers are in constant contact with parents through our online Learning Management System, Gradebook, email, telephone, conferences, and written or in-person check-ins. Staff readily make themselves available to parents, as their schedules allow, and share the belief that strong communication is vital to create partnerships with parents and work as a team for each child's education. Students, parents, and teachers meet formally twice a year to discuss the student's personalized learning plans. Each plan is customized based on the student's universal diagnostic screening, mastery of the I CAN standards in ELA, and how the student is doing reaching their personalized ELA goals. However, communication begins at the start of the school year. The parent will receive notification of their students' performance on the universal screenings and academic assessments. Depending on how the student performs, supports will be put in place in September. RTI meetings will take place with the RTI team and parents. Parents will be provided with monthly parent training, a bi-monthly newsletter to support at home learning and will be encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom. At SPSTN, we believe in a three-prong approach, where the parent, student, and teacher work closely each day as a team.

After each universal screening, we provide a home literacy report to parents that include:

- student scores in parent-friendly language
- clear explanation of skill gaps and the depth and extent of student need
- information about how those gaps will be addressed during intervention
- no-cost activities for families to support learning at home
- information on the importance of 3rd grade reading proficiency
- 4th grade promotion pathways information
- communication with parents three times a year in grades K-3 and annually in grades 4 and 5

Professional Development Plan

SPSTN will provide hands-on, practical professional growth opportunities for teachers before the school year begins (approximately 10 days) and throughout the school year. For teachers who are new to Springs, SPSTN will also provide an additional five days of intensive teacher training to help them acclimate to the Springs Way. For ELA, teachers will be trained in their grade level content area. K-2 teachers will focus on the Open Up/Expeditionary Learning curriculum, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness program, Letterland Phonics, and the Read Naturally program. Grades 3-5 teachers will be trained in Wit & Wisdom, by Great Minds, and Open Up/ Expeditionary Learning from the Approved Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. In addition, teachers will have ongoing professional development in the Universal Diagnostic Assessments and participate in the free Reading 360 Early Literacy Training from TDOE.