

Aventura Community Schools

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: October 6, 2024

Approved: June 3, 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

Aventura Community School uses a project based hands-on learning approach to instruction. Students engage in a 2-hour literacy work cycle and have literacy instruction woven into Morning Meeting practices as teachers model letter-sound recognition in spelling the morning message, make intentional grammatical mistakes for students to correct together, etc. The 2-hour Literacy work cycle each day includes explicit instruction along with practice in phonics, phonological awareness, word study, fluency, and comprehension. The literacy work cycle starts with 45 minutes of direct instruction followed by engaging centers and teacher-led small group instruction. Foundational skills instruction is the primary form of instruction.

Foundational Reading skills are sequenced from basic to more complex through the Expeditionary Learning and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum. Expeditionary Learning aligns with the Tennessee ELA standards, as approved by the state's Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Vocabulary and reading skills are developed through Read Alouds and Shared Readings where teachers can model metacognitive strategies for determining word meaning and comprehension of shared texts.

Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Spelling, and Fluency are addressed through Heggerty's whole-group direct instruction, engaging literacy centers and small group decoding instruction using the American Reading Company's small group instructional toolkits. Combining whole-group instruction with targeted small group instruction allows all students to have access to grade level literacy skills while continuing to meet the student where they are at to make progress on remediation as needed.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

Aventura Community School uses a similar structure in grade 3 as in K-2; our project based hands-on learning approach to instruction. Students engage in a 2-hour literacy work cycle and have literacy instruction woven into Morning Meeting practices as teachers make intentional grammatical mistakes for students to correct together, model sentence structure, etc. The 2-hour Literacy work cycle each day includes explicit instruction along with practice in word study, fluency, and comprehension. The literacy work cycle starts with 45 minutes of direct instruction followed by sustained independent reading time, engaging centers and teacher-led small group instruction. Foundational skills instruction is the primary form of instruction.

Foundational Reading skills are sequenced from basic to more complex through the Expeditionary Learning. Expeditionary Learning aligns with the Tennessee ELA standards, as approved by the state's Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. Vocabulary and reading skills are developed through Read Alouds and Shared Readings where teachers can model metacognitive strategies for determining word meaning and comprehension of shared texts.

For students who are behind grade level in phonics skills, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Spelling and Fluency are addressed through Heggerty's whole-group direct instruction. All students refresh their phonetic skills and continue to develop their literacy skills through engaging literacy centers and small group decoding instruction using the American Reading Company's small group instructional toolkits. Combining whole-group instruction with targeted small group instruction allows all students to have access to grade level literacy skills while continuing to meet the student where they are at to make progress on remediation as needed. Assessments and performance tasks from Expeditionary Learning require students to develop skills in comprehension, writing, and fluency in alignment with the Tennessee State Standards.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Open Up Expeditionary Learning

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Open Up Expeditionary Learning-3rd grade (no students in grades 4 or 5)
3rd grade added for SY24-25

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Heggerty English for whole-group phonics and foundational skill instruction for students behind grade level in phonics and foundational skills

America Reading Company: foundational reading small group instruction

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5. This screener complies with RTI2 and Say Dyslexia requirements.

Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, aimswebPlus K-3 (no students in grades 4-5)

Intervention Structure and Supports

All of ACS's K-3 classrooms have two co-teachers. The co-teaching approach allows for intervention to happen inside of the classroom fluidly throughout the day. Each class's specific schedule during the Literacy work cycle varies as co-teachers work to meet the needs of students in their room. Co-teachers will use a variety of strategies (parallel teaching, alternative teaching, etc.) to ensure students get individualized instruction throughout their literacy block to remediate any necessary early literacy skills.

After completing the universal screener and additional internal assessments in the Fall, data is reviewed by the Director and co-teachers to determine which students have a significant reading

deficiency or are “at-risk”. Students who scored between the 0-40th percentile are classified as needing Tier II or III small group intervention. Interventions for students in Tiers II and III include but are not limited to: additional time in small-group instruction during the literacy work cycle, alternative foundational-skill lessons by the co-teacher during whole group instruction, and pull-out support by our Student Support team. All students receive 90 minutes of intervention/enrichment based on their specific needs identified by the Universal Screener and other student data points. We ensure all intervention supports and schedules are aligned to Tennessee’s RTI Manual.

Intervention groups are run within the classroom by co-teachers throughout the literacy cycle. Data teams use progress monitoring data to inform decisions about duration, material, and intensity changes when a student is not showing progress. Classroom teachers receive weekly coaching from the Lower School Director or Executive Director and review their Tier II and III groups biweekly to determine if any changes need to be made to interventions.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

ACS notifies parents if their child is “at-risk” for a significant reading deficiency if they score between the 0-40th percentile on our Universal Screener. Parents are notified via a letter that explains in parent-friendly language the skill gaps and extent of student needs in addition to information about how those gaps will be addressed during intervention after each URS administration.

The letter also introduces parents to the importance of being able to read by the end of 3rd grade, which is important because all of our students at this time are K-2, and many families are not yet familiar with the third-grade requirements and expectations. We also provide information on the pathway to 4th grade. ACS letters also provide ideas for no-cost activities for families that will support learning at home. These letters are sent to parents three times a year for our students in grades K-2, which are the grades we currently serve. Additionally, Families are notified of their student’s progress through quarterly report cards, conferences and through conversations with classroom teachers. In-person parent teacher conferences are scheduled annually for all students in the fall and on an as-needed basis for students determined to be “at-risk.” Teachers follow up with an option for phone or in-person meetings on a 4–6-week basis for all students who are at-risk to inform parents of their student’s progress and areas of growth.

Professional Development Plan

Teachers at Aventura Community School participated in the free Reading 360 training series developed by the Tennessee Department of Education. This course is delivered asynchronously online and focuses on foundational literacy skills including phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary.

Aventura asks teachers upon hiring to demonstrate proof of their knowledge and competency in foundational literacy by sharing their certificates of completion with the director. If they are unable to produce that certificate, they are required to complete the asynchronous training during our two-week summer institute in July.



Additional professional development opportunities are held throughout the school year regarding student data and progress, social-emotional learning, and student literacy levels in English and Spanish.