

Westonka Public Schools Literacy Plan

District goals defining how reading proficiency will be ensured for ALL elementary students in Kindergarten through Grade 4

Westonka students will be assessed to determine reading strengths and gaps starting in Kindergarten through grade 4. The goals of these assessments include:

- Increase the level of students that are proficient in reading
- Analyze disaggregated student achievement results and growth data in grades K-4
- Develop a plan for progress monitoring for students that are below grade level
- Increase student achievement in reading for all students

What are the district's current practices including effectiveness of core literacy instruction for all and specifically student groups that have not been making adequate growth to meet grade level objectives?

The elementary literacy program is based on best-practice research and includes five essential domains of reading found in high-quality literacy programs. These domains include:

Phonological & Phonemic Awareness - Daily instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness to develop a solid foundation in reading and writing.

Phonics & Word Study - Daily lessons on phonemic awareness, sound/symbol relationships, blending, spelling and high-frequency word instruction at Grades K-2 and a focus on word analysis, spelling and vocabulary strategies at Grades 3-4.

Vocabulary - Instruction focuses on high-frequency, robust and domain-specific academic vocabulary. Instruction also includes opportunities for students discuss, define and use new words orally and create graphic organizers to articulate existing knowledge and extend their understanding of new words.

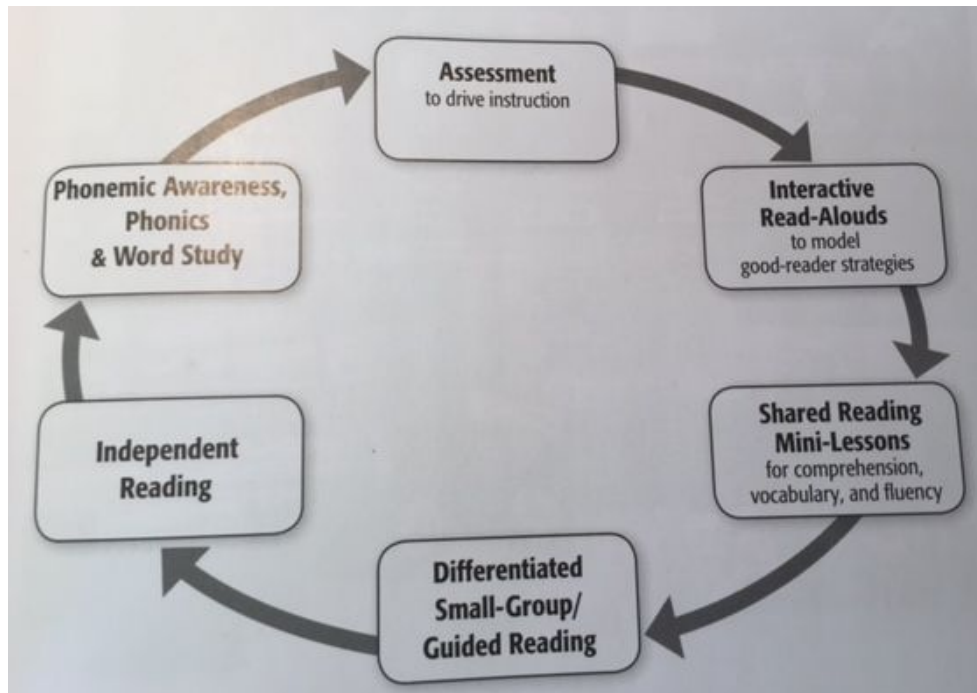
Fluency - Students receive direct instruction in reading fluency development to improve their reading rate and inflection.

Comprehension - Instruction focuses on helping students read a wide range of fiction and nonfiction (informational, persuasive, procedural and narrative) genres with full comprehension. Through comprehension development, students use strategies to learn, analyze and apply nonfiction content-area information and analyze and appreciate literary texts.

Writing is also an important aspect of the district's elementary literacy program through weekly intentional reading-writing connections and the use of genre-focused writing projects to develop narrative, persuasive and informational text writing skills. Grammar and conventions lessons are embedded throughout the writing program.

What are the district's current practices and supports that have demonstrated success leading to improved results for groups of students not yet proficient?

Westonka elementary schools implement a research-based instructional model that includes 1. Assessment, 2. Interactive Read-Alouds, 3. Shared Reading Mini-Lessons, 4. Differentiated Small-Group Guided Reading and 5. Independent Reading and Phonemic Awareness, Phonics and Word Study. This model provides all students opportunities to demonstrate what they have mastered and provide added support to fill gaps in reading development.



At both Westonka elementary schools, students that are not meeting grade level expectations in reading are closely monitored and are placed into effective reading intervention programs that provide these students more time to master grade level reading expectations and build their confidence with their reading abilities.

When students do not meet grade level reading expectations, they are included in a systematic approach of identifying their specific reading gaps and determining the best intervention program to use to address their gaps in reading. The reading intervention options include the following:

- Soliday System for decoding and phonics focus
- SRA Reading Mastery for phonemic awareness, phonics and word analysis, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension focus
- Benchmark Literacy reading intervention options for a comprehension focus

These systematic reading intervention programs are used by different elementary staff depending on the school or grade level but include classroom teachers, special education teachers and para-professionals, the elementary reading literacy coach and academic para-professionals.

In addition, the Minnesota MCA-III assessments and NWEA Measures of Academic Progress assessments provide summative data on student performance the measures student learning that occurred during the

school year. MCA-III and NWEA assessment results are used to review instructional practices, curriculum, and identify strengths and weaknesses in our reading and literacy programs.

Hilltop Primary School and Shirley Hills Primary School staff use the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model and meet regularly to discuss ongoing formative assessments linked to student learning. Teachers focus on specific skills for intervention teaching and identify students that are ready for enrichment instruction.

We believe that our continuous use of data-driven instruction is one of the key drivers of student achievement increases on local and state assessments and meeting grade level reading benchmarks.

What does the district use to assess students' level of reading proficiency including assessments used, when administered, how proficiency is determined, and when and how results are communicated with parents of students in Kindergarten through Grade 4?

Hilltop Primary School and Shirley Hills Primary School staff believe that it is important to communicate reading assessment results to students and parents. Parent-student-teacher conferences are held twice a year to review academic progress, growth in reading along with other academic areas. Reading assessment results are also reported on each child's report card with grade level benchmarks so parents have a clear picture of their child's reading abilities throughout the school year.

The district uses multiple measures to assess a student's reading ability. The following are the assessments used to assess students' level of reading proficiency. They are given during the fall, spring and more frequently during the school year (for students needing closer monitoring).

- Read Naturally Oral Reading Assessment (Grades 1-4)
- NWEA Reading Measures of Progress Assessment (Grades 1-4)
- Teacher College's Running Records Assessment (Grades K-4)
- Benchmark Literacy Sight Words Assessment (Grade K)
- Benchmark Literacy Rhyming Segments and Words Assessment (Grade K)

What is the district's communication plan for sharing reading assessment results with parents or caregivers for all students not meeting grade level proficiency expectations?

For students not meeting grade level reading progress goals during the school year, communication between school and home through email, phone calls and face-to-face meetings are important aspects of supporting these students and their work on developing their reading abilities.

In addition, parent-student-teacher conferences are held twice a year to review academic growth in reading plus reading assessment results are reported on each child's report card with grade level expectations so parents have a clear picture of their child's reading abilities at the end of each trimester.

What are the district's entrance and exit criteria for students needing instructional interventions used when indicated by reading assessment data?

Students participate in the district's reading intervention programs if they have not met one or more grade level reading assessment benchmarks. Student progress is formally tracked when participating in these reading intervention programs and students continue to participate in the intervention program(s) until the student demonstrates minimum grade level reading expectations.

What are resources and tools for parents and caregivers to support literacy practices at home?

Both Hilltop Primary School and Shirley Hills Primary School provide web-based programs that can be used with students outside of school to work on reading skills. Each building decides which programs to implement with students and their families.