District 777, BENSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Local Literacy plan

Approved October 20, 2014 by Benson's Board of Education

The purpose of this literacy plan is to ensure that ALL students will achieve grade-level proficiency and read well by Grade 3.

Literacy Plan Summary:

Our district is currently using Journey's, a balanced literacy program to teach reading in kindergarten through grade 3. Included in this program are: guided reading, read aloud, shared reading and independent reading. To enhance this curriculum, our district has an elementary library with a variety of fiction and nonfiction reading materials, covering a wide range of reading levels. Each classroom also has their own reading center where students can enjoy books and other resources selected by their classroom teacher. All K-3 students receive classroom reading instruction for a minimum of 90 minutes each day. Relevant technology engages students in meaningful learning activities. A variety of technologies have been integrated into the curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of the district's diverse learners. The district also uses the Accelerated Reader (AR) program which is a computerized program that tests basic reading comprehension. Students select books at their reading level, read independently or with a buddy and take an independent comprehension test on the computer. Each book is worth a certain number of points based on its length and reading level.

All students in grades K-3 are given the AIMSWeb diagnostic screening/benchmarking assessment three times throughout the course of the year in fall, winter, and spring. Using this data, along with data from STAR READING: grades 2-3, Fountas and Pinnell: K-3, MCA-data, Unit data from reading series, and data gathered from the Learning Point Navigator resources struggling and at-risk students are identified and referred for interventions. Specific interventions are based on further assessments and the interventions are implemented through the collaborative efforts of the classroom teacher and other specialists. Each student's progress is monitored regularly (approximately every 6 weeks using the unit assessments from reading series (grades 1 & 2), weekly for grades K & 3) and if the intervention selected is not working, another intervention is selected and implemented. Students not responding to these interventions are referred for special education services. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress at every step of the process.

The goal of the Benson district is to assure that all learners successfully achieve the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts (2010) for their grade level. The standards are aligned with the district's curriculum and a map is in place to ensure that the standards are taught within the time available.

Specific information is included in the K-3 Literacy Plan that follows this summary. For those who are interested in learning more about Benson's literacy program, please contact: Brad Johnson at 320-843-2710 or bjohnson@benson.k12.mn.us.

Literacy Plan Goals and Objectives:

Overarching Goal: All students will read at grade-level by Grade 3 as determined by the Reading Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs).

Objectives:

Each year educators will review and disaggregate reading data at grade levels K, 1, 2, & 3. Proficiency, growth, and trend data will be analyzed and used to set specific learning targets for each child and for each cohort of students. Pre-K data will be accessed and utilized, when available.

Updated June 2019

The Read Well Literacy Team & Staff Development Team will review, annually, the effectiveness of current pedagogical practices including core instruction, differentiation, remediation, and intervention.

Curriculum resources will be aligned to the most current standards. Standards will be prioritized and pacing guides developed.

Formative assessments will be used to modify instruction and to identify students who are not on pace to meet proficiency. Students not on track will follow the local intervention plan.

Grade Level Teams will be implemented to analyze the effectiveness of current literacy practices. Special attention will be paid to achievement gaps. Best practices will be shared.

Extended day and/or extended year programs will be utilized to provide targeted assistance to help struggling and at-risk students achieve grade-level proficiency.

Assessments:

The STAR assessments are often used to screen students for their reading achievement levels. STAR Reading ™ assessments help determine reading achievement levels in order to place students into the Accelerated Reader™ program. STAR Early Literacy assessments help educators monitor students' growing literacy skills and students' progress toward becoming independent readers. STAR™ assessments can also be used to monitor student growth throughout the year, to estimate students' understanding of state standards, and predict students' performance on the state test. In addition, STAR can help teachers determine appropriate instructional levels and skills that students are ready to learn.

Reading Status Norms (40th Percentile)			
Grade	Beginning-of-Year Mean	Middle-of-Year Mean	End-of-Year Mean
1	73	87	133
2	189	239	291
3	319	357	393

Students who do not meet the target score as listed above will undergo a diagnostic assessment to determine specific skill deficit(s) in one of the five strands of reading, using one or more of the following research-based assessments: Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Fountas and Pinnell, curriculum based pre- and post-tests, intervention based pre- and post-tests, individual reading inventories, or the Gallistel-Ellis - Revised (GE-R) test of Coding Skills.

The following table denotes the grade-level correlation between Reading Recovery, Fountas and Pinnell, DRA, Basal Equivalent, and Lexile Levels:

Grade Level	Reading Recovery	Fountas-Pinnell Guided Reading	DRA	Basal Equivalent	Lexile Levels
Kindergarten	A & B	A	A	Readiness	
	1		1		
	2	B	2	PrePrimer 1	
	3	C	3		
Grade 1	4		4	PrePrimer 2	
	5	D	6		
	6				
	7	E	8	Preprimer 3	
	8				
	9	F	10	Primer	
	10				
	11	G	12		
	12				
	13	H	14	Grade 1	200-299
	14				
	15	I	16		
	16				
Grade 2	18	J & K	20	Grade 2	300-399
	20	L & M	28		400-499
Grade 3	22	N	30	Grade 3	500-599
			34		
	24	O & P	38		600-699
Grade 4	26	Q / R / S	40	Grade 4	700-799
Grade 5	28	T / U / V	44	Grade 5	800-899
Grade 6	30	W / X / Y		Grade 6	900-999
Grade 7	32	Z		Grade 7	1000-1100
Grade 8	34	Z		Grade 8	

Based on these diagnostic assessments, instruction and interventions will be matched to the student's needs in one or more of the five pillars of reading **(phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension)**.

Within 10 days (for computer generated tests), following the assessment results, parents will receive a letter informing them of the assessment, results of the assessment, and supports, interventions and further diagnostic assessments that will be used to help their child meet the reading goals for their grade level. Parents will be invited in to visit about their child's educational needs and ask any questions they may have. A list of potential supports that the parent can use to assist the child in achieving grade-level proficiency will be provided to the parent

A complete outline of the parent communication and involvement process is listed in the section below.

Progress monitoring data will be collected weekly and analyzed on a monthly basis. The following process will be used:

- A. Examine the student chart after 4-6 data points have been plotted and a trend line has been generated.
- B. Change the intervention or choose a new intervention if a student has 4 data points clearly and consistently below the aim line.
- C. Continue the intervention until the student meets the grade-level benchmark if the student has 4 data points on or above the aim line.
- D. Refer the student to the problem-solving team if the student has 4 data points below the goal line for the second intervention.
- E. Discontinue the intervention when the student has met the grade level benchmark. Exit criteria: 3-4 data points above the aim line with one data point at or above the next benchmark target.
- F. Continue progress monitoring at least three times following the discontinuation of intervention to assure that progress has been maintained.

Entrance criteria is based on a triangulation of assessment data with classroom teacher input. When the student scores three to four data points above the aim/goal line with one data point at or above the next benchmark target, the student will be exited from the supplemental intervention services.

Parent Communication and Involvement:

The district has developed a parent communication letter that will communicate the state-identified grade-level standards and how their child is progressing toward meeting these standards. The letter will include the core literacy instructional practices and the intervention supports that are used with students who are not on track to achieve benchmark targets that reflect grade-level content standards.

Students, who are not meeting benchmark targets as indicated by the previously described assessment process, will be diagnosed for specific skill deficits using one or more of the following assessments: DRA, Fountas and Pinnell, curriculum based pre- and post-tests, intervention based pre- and post-tests, individual reading inventories, or GE-R test of Coding Skills.

Based on these diagnostic assessments, interventions will be matched to the student's needs in one or more of the five pillars of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension).

The purpose of providing additional time on task, through these intensive interventions, is to effectively accelerate student achievement to match grade level expectations.

HOW WILL PARENTS BE INFORMED IF THEIR CHILD IS NOT READING PROFICIENTLY?
- Teachers will communicate screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring results for all students during fall and winter conferences. During conferences, teachers will provide parents with strategies to accelerate their child''s literacy development in areas where a skill deficit has been identified.
- Grades are reported three times per year and will indicate the areas of need and whether students are reading at grade level.
- Parents are notified when students participate in pull-out literacy programs. The notification includes the program''s purpose and entrance and exit criteria.

WHAT INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS AND INTERVENTIONS WILL BE USED?

Intervention programs assist students who are struggling with literacy. Benson School District has started a Response To Intervention (RTI) program during the 2013-2014 school year. RTI uses a multi-tiered level of support that includes researched based interventions. These interventions target skill deficits in the area of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Other Intervention programming may include:
- Reading Response in grades 1-3: a pull-out literacy program for at-risk students that may include small group or one-on-one instruction and/or interventions
- Special Education in grades K-3: instruction and interventions targeted to students" individual needs as indicated by an Individual Education Plan (IEP), must meet state qualification guidelines
- Targeted Services in grades 1-3: a before or after school literacy program for at-risk students

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support:

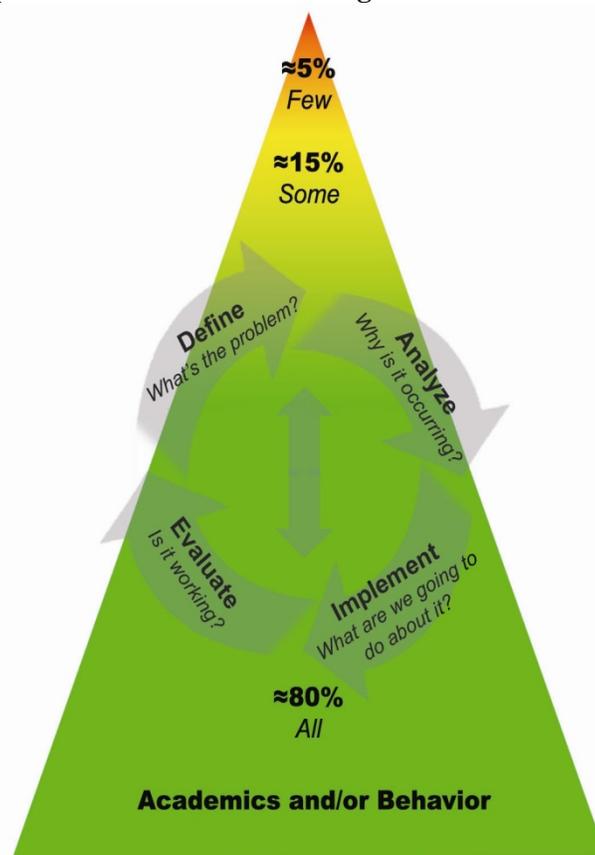**A Model of School Supports and the Problem Solving Process**

ACADEMIC SYSTEMS
Tier 3: Intensive, Individual Interventions *Students who need individualized interventions.*
Tier 2: Targeted Group Interventions *Students who need more support in addition to the core curriculum.*
Tier 1: Core Curriculum *All students, including students who require curricular enhancements for acceleration.*

≈5% Few
≈15% Some
≈80% All
Academics and/or Behavior

Define — What's the problem?
Analyze — Why is it occurring?
Implement — What are we going to do about it?
Evaluate — Is it working?

The first level of support occurs in the classroom with core instruction delivered by the classroom teacher using the district's reading curriculum. Teachers differentiate instruction in small groups according the needs of their diverse learners.

Based on screening and diagnostic assessments, the second level of support identifies students not meeting grade-level targets who are, then, provided supplemental reading interventions according to their skill deficit(s).

Students not responding well to the interventions provided at the second level are referred to and receive the most intensive and individualized level of support. Students receiving Special Education services are included at this level.

The following are resources and tools, based on the five pillars of reading, for parents, caregivers, and/or community members to use in support of literacy practices at home:

Reading					Writing	Speaking
Phonemic Awareness	Phonics/Word Study	Vocabulary	Fluency	Comprehension		
Read stories with rhyme, especially nursery rhymes.	Practice recognition of letters and letter sounds	Read and talk to your child	Repeated reading (Practice reading the same passage several times.)	Ask your child questions about the story or text	Have your child draw pictures and ask your child to write or tell you about them.	Read to and with your child
Ask your child to name the beginning, middle, or ending sounds in words.	Practice spelling with your child. Try this website: Spelling City	Explain unknown words to your child	Record your child reading, practice the passage, and record again. Listen for the improvement.	Retell stories or main ideas	Provide your children with a journal to draw or write about their experiences.	Try activities from ASHA -- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Create rhymes. (For example: bat, sat, cat, rat, hat)	Practice letter sounds and reading words. Try this website: www.starfall.com	Use pictures to explain word meanings. (in text or by drawing)	Partner read with your child. (You read a page; your child reads a page.)	Preview the story with your child before he/she reads it (picture walk)	Share your own writing with your children.	
		Relate the word to a real life situation		Predict what might happen next	Have your child make lists (grocery lists, to do lists)	
		Discuss the words multiple times		Read stories with your child and take an AR (Accelerated Reader) test.		

Professional Development:

The Benson District has days built into the school calendar that will be used for Professional Development.

Professional Development is provided through:
- Grade-Level Common Planning Time
- Monthly Grade-level collaboration meetings
- Regional Professional Development through Minnesota River Valley Education District (MRVED)
- Basal Training from Company Representative
- Administrators use formal and informal evaluations to identify training needs.
- Literacy Team and Staff Development Committee
- Mentoring

The Benson district is a member of the Minnesota River Valley Education District (MRVED). The nine districts of the MRVED collaborate on curriculum review and development and professional development. There is a six

year Curriculum Review and Development cycle that is adhered to by member districts. The purpose of the best practices meetings are as follows:

- Prepare the Best Practice team members to lead the curriculum review and development process in their district.
  - Mapping of standards
  - K-12 alignment of standards
  - Tasks as listed on the review cycle
  - Data driven instruction
  - Development of assessments
- Encourage professional networking with educators from other districts and look for opportunities to collaborate.
- Read and discuss current research to increase student achievement in the content area.
- Learn about new instructional strategies and /or technology along with approaches for classroom implementation.
- Capitalize on opportunities to bring in specialists.

MRVED Staff assist districts with both horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum, as well as the development of pacing guides.

During the fall of 2012, the MRVED districts created four common professional development days each year. These days allow for focused work on disaggregating and using data to plan instruction, aligning curriculum to current state standards, assuring mastery of the standards at the appropriate cognitive levels, and providing content specific learning opportunities based on the needs of the member districts.

Annually, in August, a data-mine will be held. Data will be disaggregated and analyzed. Results will be shared with the district staff development team, who will then create SMART student goals and offer Professional Development opportunities designed to address the needs identified by the data.

Scientifically-Based Reading Instruction:

The scientifically-based reading curriculum Benson uses is Journeys which has been aligned with the Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts (2010). Small group instruction is used to differentiate for our diverse learners.

English Learners and Other Diverse Populations:

The district currently assesses all English Learners using the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) assessments (W-APT and ACCESS).

W-APT stands for the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test. It is an English language proficiency "screener" test given to incoming students who may be designated as English Learners, typically administered only to new students. It assists educators with programmatic placement decisions such as identification and placement of ELs. The W-APT is one component of WIDA's comprehensive assessment system.

Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Learners (ACCESS for ELs) is a secure, large-scale English language proficiency assessment given to Kindergarten through 12th graders who have been identified as English Learners (ELs). It is given annually in Minnesota beginning in the 2011-2012 school year to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English.

W-APT and ACCESS for ELs test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA's five English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards:
- Social & Instructional Language

-      Language of Language Arts
-      Language of Mathematics
-      Language of Science
-   Language of Social Studies

Test forms are divided into five grade-level clusters:
-      Kindergarten
-      Grades 1-2
-      Grades 3-5
-      Grades 6-8
-      Grades 9-12

Each form of the W-APT test assesses the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

Within each grade-level cluster (except Kindergarten), ACCESS for ELs consists of three forms: Tier A (beginning), Tier B (intermediate), and Tier C (advanced). This keeps the test shorter and more appropriately targets each student's range of language skills.

Based on the W-APT and ACCESS assessments, students who qualify for ESL support will receive the intervention of focused language skill development from a licensed ESL teacher, in addition to the core instruction.
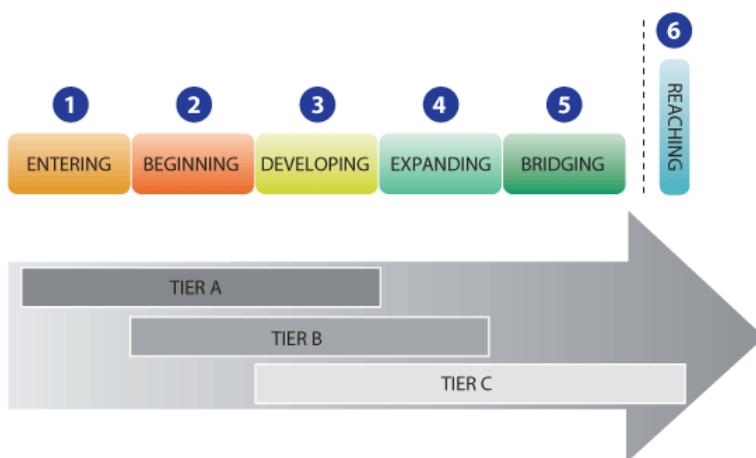
Instructional materials will be analyzed for its culturally appropriate content and purchased during the district's curriculum cycle for core subjects. EL curriculum materials and interventions, used to develop language skills, will be updated as-needed or developed on-site.

Training / Coaching / Resources available for all school staff:
- SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol)
- Title III Activities – MRVED meetings
- Testing Training
- Integration Activities: Open-house, school communications in other languages, iPad apps for translations.
- ESL teachers take on trainer/coaching roles with regular education teachers
- Sending lead teachers to appropriate trainings

The W-APT and ACCESS assessments are used specifically with ELs. These assessments are used in conjunction with the previously mentioned assessments administered to the entire student body: AIMSweb, Fountas and Pinnell, DRA, MAP, and MCAs. The disaggregated data compiled from each of those assessments will be used to improve programs, strengthen core instruction, and accelerate the acquisition of oral language and literacy skills of ELs. The Read Well Literacy Team is responsible for accessing, analyzing, interpreting, and applying the disaggregated data.

In regard to Professional development, the MRVED plans and facilitates five workshops throughout the year for teachers who work with ELs. Each district sends their ESL instructor(s) and depending on the content of the day, other teachers and/or paraprofessionals. These workshops follow the previously mentioned MRVED Best Practices format. This format breaks the day into two parts: one part of the day is focused on professional development, which will build the capacity of the workshop participants. Each year ESL instructors develop a list of potential topics that are identified as areas of need through looking at student data.

The second part of the day is a facilitated discussion format. The facilitated discussion portion of the day includes a research component, sharing best practices, challenges and potential solutions, data driven decision making, developing an effective parent program, etc. This part of the day is dedicated to strengthening the districts' ability to meet the needs of ELs and their families. Each district will identity areas needing improvement and develop an annual plan to meet the identified needs. In the areas where there are common needs, the MRVED staff facilitates activities to meet those needs. As is the tradition of MRVED staff development, instructors will have "homework" and will be asked to provide evidence that what they are learning is being put to use in the district and classroom. This evidence will include sharing of student work.

Studies show that newsletters can be an effective way to provide educational information. Some of the benefits include convenience, ability to save past issues for future reference, and timely, relevant information. Often times, small adjustments in teaching by a mainstream teacher can make significant differences for ELs. Mainstream teachers are bombarded by staff development opportunities, so if they don't have many ELs in their classrooms, they may choose another professional development opportunity over the courses being taught on strategies for ELs. The newsletter serves both as an introduction to strategies for working with ELs and also a follow-up. As a follow-up it provides consistent reinforcement of strategies already learned. The newsletters also provide a spring-board for discussions on how to better serve our EL population.

WHAT IS OUR PLAN TO REPORT OUR ANNUAL DATA ON READING PROFICIENCY AND COLLECT FEEDBACK FROM OUR STAKEHOLDER GROUP?
Spring STAR READING and AIMSWeb for grades 2 & 3 and local data from diagnostic assessments for grades K-1 will be reported annually to the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner.
Data will include percentage of students proficient in:
- Kindergarten: letter recognition & sounds, blending & phoneme segmentation fluency, sight words & nonsense word fluency, rhyming & beginning sounds.
- First Grade: word & nonsense word fluency, vowel sounds (long & short vowels), decodable words, oral language.
- Second Grade: word recognition, vocabulary, informational & narrative comprehension, literature
- Third Grade word recognition, vocabulary, informational & narrative comprehension, literature

The Benson Reading Well by Third Grade Literacy Plan will be updated and posted on the Benson website during the summer of 2019.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?
During the 2019-2020 school year, our goal is to continue to improve the academic achievement of our students, to critically review our literacy plan and make changes to address ALL our students" needs, to analyze data to make programming decisions, and to determine training for our educators.