

**South Carolina Department of Education**  
**Read to Succeed Elementary Exemplary Literacy Reflection Tool and Reading Plan**

**Directions:** Please provide a narrative response for Sections A-I.

**LETRS Questions:**

- How many eligible teachers in your school have completed Volume 1 ONLY of LETRS?: 0
- How many eligible teachers in your school have completed Volumes 1 and 2 of LETRS?: 0
- How many eligible teachers in your school are beginning Volume 1 of LETRS this year (or have not yet started or completed Volume 1)?:
  - 10 teachers and the reading coach began LETRS in January 2024. Volume 1 will be completed in December 2024. Volume 2 will begin in January for this group and be completed in December 2025.
  - 4 teachers will begin LETRS in October 2024 and complete Volume 1 by May 2025. They will participate in Volume 2 the following school year (2025-2026).

**Section A: Describe how reading assessment and instruction for all PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students in the school includes oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to aid in the comprehension of texts to meet grade-level English/Language Arts standards.**

- *Open Court Reading* spends the majority of instructional time in grades K-1 establishing critical foundational skills they will need to become confident readers. By the time they reach 2nd grade, they are ready to build upon that strong foundation and focus on developing vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, inquiry, and language arts skills. (*Open Court Reading Program Overview, 2024*)
- All three parts of the instructional focus (foundational skills, reading and responding, and language arts) serve as the base for each systematic, explicit daily lesson plan. They are each supported by differentiation resources for English Learners and students at all ability levels.
  - **Foundational Skills** focus on phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, fluency, and word analysis.
  - **Reading and Responding** addresses comprehension, vocabulary, and inquiry through close reading of complex texts.
  - **Language Arts** covers the writing process, penmanship, grammar, usage, and mechanics, and spelling instruction.
- Formal and informal assessments are woven throughout each lesson.

**Section B: Document how Word Recognition assessment and instruction for PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students are further aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy and foundational literacy skills.**

- Scarborough's Reading Rope (2001) is a visual of the different components that need to be woven together for skilled reading. One strand category is **Word Recognition**, which consists of smaller strands to represent the skills in this category: *phonological awareness, decoding, sight recognition*. All of these strands are dependent on each other and are critical for skilled reading (along with the strands under the **Language Comprehension** strand category and its smaller strands). (Lexia, 2024)
  - Of the 3 smaller strands within the word recognition category, decoding is the element that helps bring everything together regarding word recognition. It is the process of linking printed words or letters on the page to their spoken equivalents. A student's ability to

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decode words begins with their understanding of the language sound system and then proceeds to their grasp on the writing system through an understanding of phonology, orthography, and morphology. (Lexia, 2024)

- When screening and assessing students, we use the data and Scarborough’s reading rope to determine areas of weakness and needs for instruction. Students who fall below benchmark are given further assessments using PAST, CORE Phonics surveys, and a spelling inventory to further pinpoint areas. *Open Court Reading* provides teachers with a range of materials for working with individuals and small groups of students who need more instructional support.
- *Open Court Reading* aligns with **structured literacy** because it is explicit, systematic, and responsive, helping all students learn to read. Our previous curriculum, *Project Read*, also aligned with the science of reading and nearly every early childhood and elementary teacher participated in that training, as well. The teachers’ knowledge of the science of reading has already been in place for years, but now we are continuing to improve our learning and knowledge through LETRS training.
- The Science of Reading indicates that the ease with which children learn to read depends upon their level of phonemic and phonological awareness. These **foundational skills** are the building blocks for fluency and comprehension. Complex learning can not take place without strong foundational skills. *Open Court Reading* purposefully designed the instructional time to include the majority of the focus in K-1st on these critical foundational skills. They then are ready to build upon that foundation and focus on developing vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and language arts in 2nd grade and beyond. (*Open Court Reading* Program Overview, 2024)

**Section C: Document how the school uses universal screener data and diagnostic assessment data to determine targeted pathways of intervention (word recognition or language comprehension) for students in PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade who have failed to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency.**

- All students in kindergarten through eighth grade participate in a diagnostic assessment, Renaissance Star Reading and/or Star Early Literacy (depending upon their scores). Students in kindergarten and first grade also do one-on-one Star CBM assessments as part of the universal screening process. Students in 2nd grade falling below benchmark on the diagnostic are also given the Star CBM assessments (oral reading fluency, rapid naming, etc.).
- All students that fall below benchmark are then monitored and given further assessments as needed to pinpoint specific areas for instruction and intervention. Some of these assessments include: PAST, CORE Phonics Survey, Spelling Inventory, Oral Reading Fluency, and F&P (only for students that are fluent readers and their weakness is in reading comprehension).
- Students are provided Tier 2 intervention during WIN (What I Need) time with their teacher or another teacher within the grade level to get an extra layer of instruction. If progress stalls or is not made, they are then moved to Tier 3 intervention with our literacy coach. Tier 2 and 3 interventions are determined based on the further assessments. For students with phonological and/or phonemic awareness weaknesses, *UFLI* is the primary curriculum used to target this area. For students working on fluency, the teacher/reading coach used decodables from *Open Court Reading*, *Project Read*, or *UFLI*. If working on language comprehension, *UFLI* and/or *Project Read* is primarily used.

**Section D: Describe the system in place to help parents in your school understand how they can support the student as a reader and writer at home.**

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- Our teachers communicate with parents weekly through a class newsletter. Parents are provided with learning standards/goals for the upcoming week. Parents are also provided with a home-school connection flyer through *Open Court Reading* each week, which provides parents with the weekly mentor text, vocabulary, spelling, and essential question, as well as strategies and ideas to support their students at home.
- When students complete their benchmark assessments, parents are also provided with a letter to inform them of their students scores and specific focus areas/skills.
- Parents are required to attend parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first quarter, and as needed the remainder of the year. It is the expectation that teachers hold conferences with students that are below grade level proficiency and provide them with resources and information to support their children at home.
- We have at least one literacy night annually when parents are invited to the school to participate in literacy activities and learn more about the curriculum we use in the classroom.

**Section E: Document how the school provides for the monitoring of reading achievement and growth at the classroom and school level with decisions about PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade intervention based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading.**

- Students take Star assessments three times per year (fall, winter, and spring) to determine their achievement and growth at the school level. The literacy coach compiles the data from Star and other assessments onto a spreadsheet and labels students as “Tier 1,” “Tier 2,” or “Tier 3” using the triangulation of data as a guide. This spreadsheet is used for data conversations with teachers as a starting point for determining who needs further instruction and determining other assessments needed to pinpoint specific areas of weakness for the additional instruction and/or intervention. Any students in Tier 2 or Tier 3 need to have an MTSS Google form completed so we can more closely monitor them. We meet monthly for MTSS meetings to discuss all students labeled as “Tier 2” or “Tier 3,” and to determine ways to support them and whether a referral for evaluation is needed.
- In the classroom, teachers use the Star data and Freckle to monitor progress. Additionally, there are unit assessments in the *Open Court Reading* curriculum aligned to daily lessons to determine mastery of content and need for additional instruction.

**Section F: Describe how the school provides teacher training based in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to support all students in PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade.**

- Before the standards changed and the curriculum adoption period opened, our school had already transitioned to aligning with the Science of Reading. All of our ELA teachers were trained to implement *Project Read Phonics* and *Project Read Framing Your Thoughts* (writing/grammar), both of which are aligned to the Science of Reading.
- Last school year, we began enrolling teachers in LETRS to get further training to support our instruction and implementation of our new curriculum, *Open Court Reading*. Majority of our teachers (K-3rd and SPED) will complete Volume 1 in December 2024. The remaining teachers (K-3rd and SPED) began Volume 1 this fall.
- In August, all of our ELA teachers were provided with training through McGraw-Hill for *Open Court Reading* and have had onsite, ongoing coaching from the literacy coach and McGraw Hill’s support team.

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**Section G: Analysis of Data**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Possibilities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers routinely use comprehensive, formative assessments to gather data about their students.</li> <li>● Teamwork amongst teachers is done routinely to create long range plans, weekly plans and activities for students of different ability levels and learning modalities.</li> <li>● Noticing, teaching, and prompting for use of strategic reading behaviors is a strength for teachers.</li> <li>● Small group instruction is purposefully planned. During this time, it is evident that differentiation is taking place.</li> <li>● Student artifacts that are reflective of their learning displayed in the hallways, classrooms, and common areas. Work is frequently updated and students are active participants in displaying their work.</li> <li>● The integration of content-specific reading, writing, and research has been done routinely by teachers. Based on observations and lesson plans, teachers use informational text of various subject matter to instruct students on reading strategies, characteristics of texts, etc.</li> <li>● Resources and materials have increased over the last couple of school years (books for novel studies, curriculum to boost phonemic awareness &amp; phonics instruction, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue LETRS training to ensure all K-3rd teachers are LETRS trained</li> <li>● Data analysis and data interpretation: The development of data analysis will assist teachers in making instructional decisions for students. The development in professional development will assist teachers in determining effective in-class interventions that will be effective and differentiated for students.</li> <li>● More evidence of authentic writing texts for the majority of instructional time (observations, portfolios, displays).</li> <li>● While peer collaboration and planning has increased, teachers still need more participation in book studies and targeted professional development. The implementation of more job-embedded professional development and professional learning opportunities would promote professional growth among teachers. Sessions on areas of need can be supported to build the confidence of teachers and improve the performance of students.</li> <li>● More community partnerships to increase reading and writing. Partnerships with our local library have started happening, but there is still more room to improve.</li> <li>● Ensure that targeted and effective small group or individual conferring/instruction is occurring in all classrooms (data analysis/progress monitoring)</li> <li>● Improvement in the area of monitoring student engagement in reading and writing tasks and using that data to confer with students.</li> </ul>

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**Section H: Previous School Year SMART Goals and Progress Toward Those Goals**

- Please provide your school's goals from last school year and the progress your school has made towards these goals. Utilize quantitative and qualitative data to determine progress toward the goal (s). As a reminder, all schools serving third grade were required to use Goal #1 (below).

Goals	Progress
<p><b>Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</b> Reduce the percentage of third graders scoring Does Not Meet in the spring of 2023 as determined by SC READY from <u>18.2 %</u> to <u>15 %</u> in the spring of 2024.</p>	<p>In spring of 2023, 19% of our 3rd grade students scored “Does Not Meet” on the SC READY ELA test. While this does not meet our third grade goal, this is a completely different group of students from the previous year. This group had more ML students that are still acquiring the English language. Additionally, our class sizes are on the smaller side with 67 total 3rd grade students. Just 2 students’ scores determine whether or not we meet this goal.</p>
<p><b>Goal #2:</b></p> <p>By May 2024, we will demonstrate increased parent participation in the early literacy process as evidenced by homeroom sign-in sheets for literacy nights and parent-signed conference logs, and the creation of Principal’s Parliament (a group of parents that meet monthly with admin and other staff members).</p>	<p>We have had very successful family literacy nights and other events. We have seen an increase in the amount of parents on campus for not just literacy, but also involvement in other class activities.</p> <p>A Principal's Parliament committee was formed and they met regularly with admin and other staff members.</p>
<p><b>Goal #3:</b></p> <p>2023-2024 SC Ready: For 3rd-5th grade, we will increase % of students passing (meets/exceeds) from 65.5% to 68%.</p>	<p><b>Pass Rate by Grade Level</b>  <b>3rd: 64% 4th: 66%, 5th: 71%</b>  <b>= 67% OVERALL PASS RATE 3rd-5th</b></p> <p>The percentage of 3rd-5th grade students passing in spring of 2023 was 65.5%. This year the percentage of 3rd-5th grade students passing in spring of 2024 increased to 67%, falling just below our goal of 68%.</p>

**Section I: Current SMART Goals and Action Steps Based on Analysis of Data**

- All schools serving students in third grade MUST respond to the third-grade reading proficiency goal. Schools that do not serve third grade students may choose a different goal. Schools may continue to use the same SMART goals from previous years or choose new goals. Goals should be academically measurable. The Reflection Tool may be helpful in determining action steps to reach an academic goal. Schools are strongly encouraged to incorporate goals from the strategic plan.

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<b>Goals</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
<p><b><u>Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</u></b> Reduce the percentage of third graders scoring “Does Not Meet” in the spring of 2024 as determined by SC READY from <u>19%</u> to <u>18%</u> in the spring of 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase data talks with students and parents/guardians.</li> <li>● Analyze and use data to drive instruction for small groups.</li> <li>● Determine students projected to score “does not meet” from the Star diagnostic tests. Increase tier 2 instruction using small groups.</li> <li>● Determine students with weaknesses in decoding and fluency using PAST screeners. Increase instruction in this area. Improvement with decoding and fluency will lead to improvement in comprehension.</li> <li>● Literacy coach will work closely with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers to assist in analyzing data to inform instruction.</li> <li>● Ensure WIN time is being effectively utilized.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Goal #2:</u></b></p> <p>2024-2025 SC Ready: For 3rd-5th grade, we will increase % of students passing (meets/exceeds) from 68% to 69%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue providing more job-embedded professional development and coaching for literacy teachers.</li> <li>● Develop a plan using <i>Coach</i> resources and team teaching to help students prepare for state testing.</li> <li>● Improve instruction around analyzing text and finding text evidence.</li> <li>● Increase Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to target areas of weakness in reading.</li> </ul>