



## **Local Literacy Plan**

***"Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak, listen, view, visually represent and think in order to communicate to society."***

***International Reading Association***

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## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

*Reading Well by Third Grade is one of many developmental milestones in a child's educational experience. Literacy development starts at an early age and is the basis for all academic success. Reading well by grade three ensures that a student has a solid foundation of literacy skills to continue to expand their understanding of what they read, make meaning and transfer that learning across all subject areas. Instruction that provides the basis for all students to read well by third grade and beyond will help close the achievement gap and ensure that all students are ready for the demands of college and the workplace. From cradle to career, a sustained effort to create quality literacy environments in all our schools and programs from birth through grade 12 promotes academic success.*

-Minnesota Department of Education

MN Statute 120B.12 states that a school district must adopt a local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of Grade 3. This legislation is commonly referred to as "Reading Well by Third Grade". The literacy plan "must include a process to assess students' level of reading proficiency, notify and involve parents, intervene with students who are not reading at or above grade level, and identify and meet staff development needs."

The purpose of this document is to outline how DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science plans to address each of these requirements for our students in Kindergarten through Third grade.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science will develop proficient readers who have positive attitudes and habits with regard to reading, use their word knowledge to understand what they read, develop an understanding of what

they read by extending, elaborating and evaluating the meaning of the text and can read a variety of texts for a variety of purposes. Our literacy program strives to have all students achieve at or above grade level and become lifelong, independent readers.

Our primary reading goals are to:

- Help every child read at or above grade level by third grade
- Work collaboratively across grade levels and subject areas to develop proficient readers.
- All students who are not reading at grade level will be supported in order to close the achievement gap and attain grade level reading benchmarks.
- All students who are exceeding reading grade level benchmarks will be supported and challenged in order to make projected growth.
- Stakeholders will be informed about the instructional efforts to ensure that all our students will be reading well by third grade.

According to the mission statement, DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science will awaken a passion for learning through an enriched and individualized approach to education. Students, parents and teachers will work together to ensure positive character development and build a strong foundation for higher education.

The vision states that DaVinci Academy will be known and respected for providing a dynamic educational experience in which students become lifelong learners with a sense of responsibility to society.

To advance its mission and vision, DaVinci Academy has put into place the following pillars:

- Art and Science Focus
- Enhanced Learning Experience
- Differentiated Instruction
- Character Development

It is our goal to have all students reading well by third grade to ensure readiness for a successful future. This goal is aligned with the mission, vision and pillars of DaVinci Academy. Instructional programming that supports this goal of all students reading well by third grade includes:

- Curriculum that is aligned to current state standards
- Formative assessments that are used to modify instruction and to identify students not on pace to meet proficiency
- Research-based curriculum
- Early intervention in reading for students at risk
- High quality instruction that meets the needs of all students
- Guided reading program with integrated library
- Regular assessments to plan for reteaching and intervention

DaVinci Academy will provide a sequential, challenging curriculum in reading, writing, speaking and listening so that all students develop communication skills needed to be literate citizens.

## **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

Reading proficiency will be defined as students who score at or above established benchmarks and who perform at grade level in the classroom. Reading proficiency will be ensured for ALL students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 by multiple measures of assessment, data-driven decision making and a multi-tiered system of intervention through Response to Intervention (RTI). Students who are not reading at grade level will receive research-based interventions and their progress will be monitored until proficiency is attained. Interventions will supplement core reading instruction.

The core curriculum, Core Knowledge Language Arts, is aligned to the Minnesota English Language Arts Standards.

### **General Reading Assessments**

Student results on assessments is what drives instruction at DaVinci Academy. To help determine achievement of the goal that all students make

at least one year's reading growth, students in grades 2 – 8 take the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Annual Progress (MAP) in the fall and again in the spring. The MAP score is then used to determine where each student is academically and whether they are making adequate yearly growth.

To demonstrate at least grade level mastery in reading, students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 are assessed in their reading skills utilizing the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (STEP) reading assessment. The STEP Literacy Assessment is a developmental assessment that helps to provide a window into how students are progressing across the literacy continuum. This continuum includes emergent readers, early readers, transitional readers and self-extending readers. This comprehensive assessment allows teachers to move beyond just describing students' individual scores on isolated assessments to being able to discern where they fit into a larger picture of how students develop an integrated ensemble of strategies for learning to read and constructing meaning from text. The assessment evaluates key elements of literacy development including phonemic awareness, letter/word knowledge, reading accuracy and use of reading strategies, fluency and reading rate as well as literal and inferential comprehension.

The levels of the STEP reading assessment start at the Pre-Reading level and go up to STEP 12. It is the goal that all students will achieve STEP 12 by the end of third grade. The table below shows the STEP levels to be achieved by trimester:

	<b>End of Tri 1</b>	<b>End of Tri 2</b>	<b>End of Tri 3</b>
	<b>STEP</b>	<b>STEP</b>	<b>STEP</b>
K	1	2	3
1	4	5	6
2	7	8	9
3	10	11	12

Students are assessed using STEP three times per year. This assessment is given individually to each student by their homeroom teacher. All teachers in Kindergarten through third grade receive training on how to administer the STEP assessment. Students read a leveled book with increasing difficulty at each STEP level. The teacher takes note of reading behaviors and records the student's reading accuracy and fluency. After reading the book, the test administrator has a comprehension conversation with the child about the book. There are additional components of the STEP assessment that target specific reading skills aligned with the leveled texts.

The information gathered from the STEP assessment is used to identify students who need extra help in reaching grade level expectations. Students are assessed diagnostically in order to match their needs with instructional practices. Additionally, students who are receiving extra help are progress monitored regularly. Progress monitoring data is used to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and to adjust instruction as needed to maximize growth toward grade level expectations.

### **Universal Screening Assessments**

Our primary assessment is STEP, but data from other screenings is also used to determine if students are to be considered for targeted services in reading. These targeted services include Tier II interventions with an RTI instructor using the Fountas and Pinnell Levelled Literacy program. These services are delivered for 30 minutes each day in a small group setting. Progress monitoring is conducted using the **Benchmark Assessment System** (BAS). Using the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems to determine student's independent and instructional reading levels, teachers can observe student reading behaviors one-on-one, engage in comprehension conversations that go beyond retelling, and make informed decisions that connect assessment to instruction.

If a student is performing below benchmarks and is struggling to keep up with reading instruction in the classroom, the teacher brings the student up

to their PLC (Professional Learning Community) group to get ideas about interventions to try with the student. An RTI instructor may also be consulted regarding interventions. Reading intervention activities have a clearly defined purpose and can also be used whole class as well to support the core curriculum. These interventions may include more small group instruction within the classroom, review activities during centers and other more targeted interventions. These interventions are continued for a minimum of nine weeks and progress monitoring occurs throughout.

Students who are not responding to interventions in the classroom are then brought to the Student Intervention Team (SIT). This team consists of the RTI instructors, the Academic Director and others who may need to be involved for students with particular needs. If deemed necessary, a student may be referred for Tier II interventions as mentioned above. After a predetermined amount of time, a student may move to Tier III interventions. Tier III interventions include one-on-one instruction with an RTI instructor and are developed based on the specific needs of each student. Some Tier III interventions include the Wilson Reading Program, the Letterland Phonics program and others.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Students who receive extra help due to screening and diagnostic assessment scores are progress-monitored regularly. Progress monitoring data is used to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and to adjust instruction as needed to maximize growth toward grade level expectations.

Teachers will complete progress monitoring at least twice a month or more based on the individual student need and the type of intervention. RTI teachers will use the BAS, WADE and STEP to monitor progress in grades K – 3.

DaVinci Academy will assess all students who were previously below benchmarks at the beginning of each school year within the first three weeks



of school. New students to DaVinci Academy will be assessed during their first two weeks of school.

## **PARENT NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

All parents are communicated with at several times during the year. Parent conferences occur in the fall after the first round of STEP testing is completed. This is a chance for teachers to share with parents where students are on the STEP reading continuum and the reading goals based on the assessment. If students have been identified for additional interventions, parents are informed about what these interventions will be and how they will be informed about progress. If warranted, an RTI instructor will sit in on the conference to give further information and answer any questions parents might have.

If a student begins Tier II interventions, parents are informed by the RTI teacher providing the interventions about the Leveled Literacy program as well as the specific goals for the student and a timeline. Progress reports are sent at midterm as well as at the end of the trimester.

If the RTI team has discussed a student and interventions have not supported the targeted growth, parents are invited to meet and discuss their child's progress, indicators of potential concern from the teacher and parents and a plan for the child moving forward. Parents will continue to be informed of progress toward the target reading goal throughout the school year.

## **INTERVENTION AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT**

Reading proficiency will be ensured for all students in Kindergarten through third grade by multiple measures of assessment, data-driven decision making and a multi-tiered system of support. If a student is identified as not reading at or above grade level, they will receive research-based interventions and be progress monitored until proficiency is maintained. Interventions will supplement not supplant core reading instruction.

## **Core Literacy Instruction**

The foundations of reading will be met through the core curriculum. Teachers will foster students' understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, phonemic awareness, fluency and other basic conventions. In addition, a necessary and important component of an effective reading program is that it is structured to develop proficient readers with the capacity to think critically, read fluently and comprehend texts across a range of text structures.

Interventions programs assist students who are struggling with literacy. Based on the results of screening and diagnostic assessments, students will receive a multi-tiered level of support that includes research-based interventions. These interventions target skill deficits in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

## **Tiers of Literacy Support**

Tier 1: Core Support - The core curriculum includes the Core Knowledge Language Arts program (CKLA), differentiated instruction and guided reading. CKLA is a comprehensive program (Kindergarten – Grade 5) for teaching reading, writing, listening, and speaking while also building students' vocabulary and knowledge across essential domains in literature, world and American history, and the sciences.

All students receive core instruction in Tier 1. Students who are at or above benchmark and are making enough academic growth will have their needs met through instruction in the core curriculum and guided reading. Students performing below grade level will receive Tier 1 instruction as well as additional services through Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 support.

Tier 2: Small group support - Students who are below grade level are supported through classroom guided reading, small groups and

additional RTI instruction using the Leveled Literacy Curriculum. Additional support is provided during the WIN time, which is 30 minutes per day, five days per week. To gauge effectiveness of specific interventions, classroom and RTI teachers will monitor student progress using the STEP assessment, benchmark assessments on comprehension and fluency and the BAS. Once a student has reached grade level benchmarks, he/she will continue to be monitored and the amount of extra support in Tier 2 may stay the same, be reduced or may be ended. Classroom teachers will continue to monitor progress to ensure that mastery is maintained.

Tier 3: Intense Support - Students who are significantly below grade level in reading will receive Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions and may qualify for more intense Tier 3 support. This support consists of additional time with an RTI instructor using the Wilson Reading Program or other research-based interventions.

### **Support for English Learners**

English Learners at DaVinci Academy experience inclusion for most of the day. English Learners at DaVinci Academy receive content-based instruction which promotes students' English language proficiency and builds academic content knowledge by integrating subject areas with language acquisition strategies. English learners acquire English through participation in age-appropriate instruction aligned to state standards as well as English Language proficiency standards. The primary objective of teaching language through content is to make the curriculum available to students at all levels of English proficiency.

At the K – 3 level, the EL teacher collaborates with the general education teacher to support language acquisition strategies. Linguistic, graphic, visual, kinesthetic and interactive supports are provided to make content standards and curriculum accessible for English Learners at all levels of

proficiency. The EL teacher pulls students out during the WIN time and at other predetermined times throughout the school day to support students in acquisition strategies to support the core curriculum.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional development is data-driven, ongoing and inclusive of all teachers. It is delivered in a variety of formats and aligned with school goals. To ensure consistency from classroom to classroom and grade level to grade level, DaVinci Academy schedules a significant number of professional development trainings both at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year.

Teachers in Kindergarten through Grade 3 were all trained on how to administer the STEP Literacy Assessment and how to use the data in guided reading groups as well as how to plan lessons to meet and further instruct students in specific skills. The STEP training consisted of three training days spread throughout the school year. The first training in August introduced the teachers to changes in the program, how to utilize the online component and answered specific questions teachers had about the program. The second training was held in November, which was after the first round of STEP assessments. The trainer met with individual grade levels to provide individual training pertinent to that grade level, provide information on using the information gained through the assessments in daily lessons for the whole class and small groups and again, to answer specific questions from each grade level. For the third training session, the trainer will observe teachers administering a STEP assessment with students to provide feedback and answer questions that may have arisen throughout the school year.

Professional development is a time to respond to immediate instructional needs as well as ongoing needs throughout the school. At the beginning of each school year, three days are set aside for new teacher training. The following week is training for all staff. Each school year, an average of 10 to 12 professional development days are scheduled throughout the year. DaVinci Academy utilizes formal and informal evaluations as well as the

results of student data to identify teacher-training needs. In addition, teachers meet weekly in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) for a minimum of an hour each week. Much of this time is devoted to reviewing data, discussing instructional strategies, reviewing curriculum standards and discussion specific student interventions.

Annually, teachers are provided training regarding indicators of dyslexia, eye convergence insufficiency disorder and other learning/medical disabilities that may impact student learning.