

Introduction:

The state of Minnesota adopted statute 120B.12 in 2011. The primary goal of the statute is to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3. The statute requires that teachers provide comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction consistent with sections 122A.06 subdivision 4 of state law. Statute 120B.12 requires school districts to identify children before the end of kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 who are not reading at grade level. The statute also requires that school districts must use reading assessments and provide a summary report to the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner each year.

Marshall County Central School District has constructed and adopted the following literacy plan in order to meet the requirements of statute and best serve our students. The literacy plan has been constructed in line with the Marshall County Central School District mission, "Building a foundation and future of educational excellence - one student at a time." It also has been constructed to align with the district's objectives of maximizing student achievement and maintaining an environment of continuous improvement.

The components of the literacy plan include the following:

1. Process utilized to identify students who are not reading at grade level in grades kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2
2. Procedures for notifying parents about student reading performance
3. Interventions used for students in school for children who are not reading at grade-level
4. Intervention materials and ideas that will be distributed to parents to help promote literacy and improve reading skills at home
5. Staff development plan for teachers to ensure they have access to sufficient training in reading instruction and intervention strategies
6. Annual Summary Report to Commissioner

This plan was constructed by the district elementary principal. It was reviewed, edited, and approved by the Viking Elementary teaching staff, the Marshall County Central School District staff development committee, the district committee for curriculum and instruction, and the Marshall County Central School Board.

Identification of students who are not reading at grade level:

Marshall County Central School District continually assesses the reading progress of its students. Students in grades K-3 take reading unit assessments at the end of each reading unit that examine students' phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Students in Marshall County Central School District also take the normed Early Star Reading Assessment or Star Reading Assessment at the end of each academic quarter. The Star tests help prioritize which students are in greatest need of reading interventions, help teachers make curriculum decisions, and help the school district monitor student growth over time.

- Students in kindergarten and grade 1 are determined to be at grade level if they consistently achieve 70% or higher on their reading unit assessments, score transitional reader category or higher on the STAR Early Literacy Test, and rate grade appropriate on quarterly reading report card assessments.
- Students in grade 2 are determined to be at grade level if they consistently achieve 70% or higher on their reading unit assessments, score in the 25th percentile or higher on the Star Literacy Test, and rate grade appropriate or high in reading on the quarterly report card.
- Students in grade 3 are determined to be at grade level if they consistently achieve 70% or higher on their reading unit assessments, score in the 25th percentile or higher on the Star Early Literacy Test, and rate grade appropriate or high in reading on the quarterly report card.

Students must meet the minimum requirements in all three assessments to be considered reading at grade level. If a student meets two out of three assessment requirements, teacher narrative supported by student reading performance evidence may also be considered to make a final determination about overall reading ability. Students who meet zero or one of the assessment targets will be determined to not be reading at grade level.

Process for notifying parents:

It is essential that parents know the academic progress of their children. The Marshall County Central School District holds a Back to School Night at the beginning of each year to introduce parents to the reading curriculum and orient families for the school year. The teachers show parents what children will be learning in school that year and what curriculum components require support from home. The district holds Parent-Teacher Conferences twice each year. One conference is held in the fall and one conference is held in the spring. Each parent receives a scheduled conference time and academic progress is shared there. The district distributes report cards at the end of each academic quarter usually in November, January, March, and May of each year. The elementary teachers also contact parents directly when they notice students having difficulty learning to read to offer ideas on how the school and families can work together to improve student progress.

Parents will be notified if their child is at risk of falling behind grade level at the following times:

- Fall Parent Teacher Conferences (K, 1, 2, and 3)
- Spring Parent Teacher Conferences (K, 1, 2, and 3)

In May of a child's Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 2nd Grade year an official form letter will be issued by the school office notifying parents if their child is not meeting the requirements to be reading at grade level.

The notification letter will detail the following information:

- Category for student performance on Star Early Literacy Exam/Star Literacy Exam (Urgent intervention/Intervention/On Watch/At or Above Benchmark)
- Average percentage achieved on unit reading assessments
- Fluency Rate vs. Grade Level Average
- Students current grade earned in reading report card assessments
- List of school interventions planned to improve child's reading performance
- Intervention strategies for family to begin at home that will help improve child's reading skills

School Interventions:

Marshall County Central School District has many different levels of interventions available to students that fall behind in reading. Many of the interventions the school district offers are available to all students and become implemented as needed. Title I services and Special Education services are only offered to children that meet qualifications. For students to be eligible for Title I services they must meet three of the following criteria: Score below the 25th percentile or lower on the Star Early Literacy Exam, have received Title I services during the previous year, have received referral from classroom teacher/student assistance team, scored below target level on the reading/math series benchmark tests. For students to be eligible for special education they need to demonstrate poor academic progress and need to go through the special education evaluation process to determine if they qualify for special education services.

- The following list outlines many of the district intervention plan components:
 - Teacher conferences with parents and sends supplemental materials home.
 - The teacher provides students with on level reading materials to help support learning
 - Teacher provides time in class for additional small group guided reading
 - Paraprofessional assistance is available to help students who need extra help
 - The district has a Title I teacher to provide intensive reading skills practice
 - There is an afterschool program available to students who need extra support
 - A student assistance team (SAT) will collaborate to determine if a student needs more support
 - SAT members include current teachers, former teachers, support staff, and parents
 - The team discusses need for further interventions and builds intervention plan (further interventions could include special education referral, additional family supports, discussion about retention, and other intervention plans)
- Special Education Assessments determine if child is eligible for Special Education Services

Interventions and Ideas sent Home:

Marshall County Central School District encourages family involvement in our students' education. One of the district's belief statements is: "Students, families, teachers, administrators, and the community share responsibility for the improvement of the educational process." When a child is not meeting grade level expectations in reading, the school enlists the help of parents to work more at home to improve the child's reading. Teachers will call parents when they discover that a student is falling behind. The teacher will ask parents what they are doing at home to promote reading and practice reading skills. The teacher will suggest ideas to help parents know what to do to help a young child that needs extra help learning to read. The following list includes items and ideas that have been shared with parents so they can help a child improve his/her reading skills:

- Parents are encouraged to set up a time to listen to their child read
- Parents are encouraged to set up a time to read to their child
- Minute logs are sent home to keep track of minutes read at home
- Parents are encouraged to help children read Accelerated Reader books at home
- Teacher sends home reading materials ahead of time (parent helps at home so child has more success at school)
- Teacher sends home alphabet chart and alphabet cards
- Teacher sends home alphabet games (letter name, letter sounds, beginning sounds, ending sounds, rhymes).
- Teacher sends home leveled reading books, sight word books, rhyming books
- Teacher sends home learning songs (alphabet song, rhyming word songs, calendar songs)
- Teacher sends home short stories for fluency practice
- School shares a list of primary learning web sites with reading practice games are sent home
- Reading software like Fast ForWord Basics is sent home for child to practice basic reading skills
- Weekend practice packets are sent home
- Summer practice packets are sent home

Staff Development Promoting Reading

Statute 120B.12 requires school districts to implement comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction in the five areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension as defined in section 122A.06, subdivision 4 until a child achieves grade-level proficiency. Elementary teachers are also to receive sufficient training to provide comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction using the intervention methods outlined earlier in this plan.

Marshall County Central School District regularly reviews its curriculum. The school district has adopted an elementary reading curriculum that focuses on each of the five areas of reading defined by statute. The reading curriculum contains components that help develop children's phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers routinely assess student progress in each of the essential areas. The curriculum the district uses also works cohesively with the district's intervention methods listed earlier in this plan. The elementary reading curriculum offers leveled guided reading practice books and three different levels of student work allowing teachers to find materials that best fit student's needs.

The Marshall County Central School District selects curriculum that aligns directly to the state standards and common core standards. As standards change, the district teachers compare the current curriculum and their instructional strategies to state standards and common core standards. The teachers use an online tool to create curriculum maps of their instructional plans for the school year. Teachers identify when they teach each standard benchmark in their curriculum maps. The district administration helps teachers make sure they are teaching essential standards by examining curriculum maps and using the mapping tool to analyze assessment results.

Marshall County Central School District utilizes professional learning communities to promote staff development. The elementary teachers in the school district receive ongoing training on how to best administer the curriculum selected for our students. The teachers in the district meet every two weeks in professional learning communities. One of the agenda items at each of these meetings is to examine the components of the reading curriculum and discuss how to implement its components to fidelity. This year's professional learning committee's focus is to improve parent involvement.

Marshall County Central School District requires all teachers and administrators to receive at least three hours of continuing education in reading before they can renew their teaching license every five years. The district encourages teachers to attend regional workshops offered by the Northwest Service Cooperative, the Minnesota Department of Education, and other education agencies in the areas of reading, literacy, and diversity.

Teachers and administrators benefit by professional development in several ways. They remain current on best-practice scientifically based techniques and view new materials available to improve curriculum and instruction. Teachers and administrators hear new ideas that are working in other school districts and are able to bring those ideas to the Marshall County Central School District.

Marshall County Central Schools does not have a significant diverse population in terms of ethnicity and we do not have a population of English Language Learners. However, our teachers benefit from learning about how other districts serve students of different cultures. We do have a diverse population in terms of poverty and a higher than average special education population. Many of the techniques that help English Language Learners

help students who come from homes without a rich literacy background and also help students with learning needs.

Annual Report to Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner

A report will be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner each year on or before June 1. The report will detail the following:

- Star Early Literacy and Star Assessment results from end of each academic quarter
- Summative results from the K-3 Curriculum Based Unit Assessments
- Summative results identifying number of students who are not reading at grade level in grades K-3 based on criteria noted in identification section.

The report will also be shared with the district staff development committee, results will be included in the district Annual Report on Curriculum and Instruction, and will also be shared with the district school board. Teachers will use classroom assessment data and the summary assessment data to make adjustments to curriculum and instruction to help ensure all students will be reading on grade level by grade 3.