



Sojourner Truth Academy Literacy Plan

Created: June 1, 2012

Updated: June 30, 2020

Literacy Plan Review Timeline: This plan will be reviewed annually. As new staff is hired, the plan will be included in their pre-service training.

Executive Summary

Sojourner Truth's Local Literacy Plan details our efforts to ensure each scholar is reading at or above grade level by third grade. The plan meets the requirements of Minnesota Statute 120B.12. This plan is ongoing and will be updated yearly.

Sojourner Truth Academy is an elementary school in North Minneapolis, serving scholars in kindergarten through eighth grade. The school offers a rigorous, standards based instructional program.

Mission: The mission of the school is to prepare children for the future by building confidence and a strong sense of self-worth through small classrooms and an open, safe, family like environment. Sojourner Truth Academy (STA) supports families by embracing change when necessary for the good of the children and serving as a bridge to the community. Staff at Sojourner Truth Academy is dedicated to and held accountable for providing a learning experience that is culturally relevant, challenging, and fun.

Vision: Sojourner Truth Academy is passionate about helping children achieve academic and social success in a community of high expectations where each child is valued.

Unlocking the door to literacy for all scholars is perhaps the most important task we face as educators. Reading and writing are the cornerstones of all academic and most professional success in our society. If scholars do not learn to read and write, they inevitably fail in school; the consequences of that failure are lifelong and far-reaching for both our children and our community.

Current federal and state legislation as well as statewide testing data indicate that we must focus even more instructional attention on the critical area of literacy. We are currently in the beginning stages of implementing a new comprehensive research-based framework intended to guide the efforts of staff, administrators, and teachers in the important area of literacy instruction. It outlines research-based components and instructional strategies that work best to improve student achievement. It outlines appropriate ongoing and comprehensive assessment and details the professional learning required of effective teachers, administrators and others to support scholar learning and

performance at high levels. Lastly, it describes a rich literacy environment and resources available to support scholars in their pursuit of literacy skills. It is intended to inform the daily work of teachers and administrators and to provide more detailed guidance and support as the school plans assessment, professional development and allocates resources.

Based on the current work of our Literacy Team, we have chosen to amend our June 21, 2018 Local Literacy Plan. We will utilize FastBridge Learning Assessment AReading for grades 2 and 3 as an assessment measure as the team determined there was a need for an improved comprehensive approach to reading assessment. For school year 2020-21 we will be using the FastBridge Early Reading composite score for K-1.

Our focus on literacy is critical if we are to accomplish our vision to have all scholars achieve academic success in a community of high expectations, prepared with the knowledge and skills they will need to become leaders in our community.

Goals and Objectives

In 2012, The Minnesota State Legislature enacted statute 120B.12. The statute 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 three. A local 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 district must post it’s literacy plan on the official school district website.”

It is the goal of Sojourner Truth Academy that all scholars will be reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade.

Our ongoing commitment to excellence is grounded in:

- Comprehensive, ongoing assessment of each scholar
- The 2010 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts
- Classroom curriculum and materials that are research-based for effectiveness
- Research-based teaching and learning protocols
- School Improvement Plan that addresses reading goals
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that focus on literacy data
- Work of Literacy Team in development of literacy frameworks

Over the course of the school year, school-wide professional development continued to focus on developing a balanced literacy model. Training focused on the implementation of a word study program implemented through ServMN – Reading Corps. This program targets phonemic awareness and phonics instruction. It is coached and professional development and coaching is provided throughout the year.

The percentage of scholars in grades K-3 who meet or exceed standards on the FastBridge aReading Assessment or Early Learning composite score will be determined based on Fall Assessment data.

At Sojourner Truth Academy, we base our definition of “proficiency” on the Minnesota Language Arts Standards benchmarks at each grade level. We use multiple data points including: classroom assessment, teacher observation and anecdotal notes, running records, FastBridge’s Early Reading suite and CBM, FastBridge aReading, and MCA to define proficiency. The table below further defines how we define “proficient” in reading for grades K-3:

Grade	Assessment	Proficiency
K	FastBridge Early Reading Assessment Suite	Composite Score ≥ 66
1	FastBridge Early Reading Assessment Suite	Composite Score ≥ 69
2	FastBridge aRead	Spring Scale Score ≥ 203
3	FastBridge aRead	Spring Scale Score ≥ 212
3	MCA	Meets or Exceeds

Component 2: Assessment

To assess students’ level of reading proficiency in Kindergarten through 3rd grade students will be given assessments that will help determine their literacy strengths and needs. Assessments are administered in whole-class, small groups, and individual settings throughout the year by the scholars’ classroom teachers(s), Associate Educators (Interventionists), Reading Corps, and Instructional Coaches. They include FastBridge Early Reading Assessment suite (K-1), FastBridge Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) (1-3), FastBridge aReading (2-3) as well as classroom-based and teacher-designed measures.

Screening—We use the FastBridge Early Learning Composite to screen K-1 in the fall, winter and spring. We use the FastBridge aReading reading assessment to screen all 2nd and 3rd graders in the fall, winter and spring. This data assists in determining instructional reading levels, flexible grouping, and whole group, small group and individual interventions as needed.

Diagnostic –FastBridge AReading and FastBridge Early Learning Composite assessments provide teachers, parents, and scholars with the strengths and needs of the scholars. It also assists in determining specific interventions, grouping, and setting growth goals.

Progress Monitoring –FastBridge Early Learning Suite also provides opportunities to measure growth. In between testing periods classroom teachers and support staff assess students on mastery of skills based on the Minnesota Academic Standards Reading Benchmarks using running records, anecdotal notes, classroom assessments, and observations of class work.

FastBridge Early Learning

- **Areas assessed:**
 - Letter Naming
 - Letter Sounds
 - Onset Sounds
 - Nonsense Words
 - Word Segmenting
 - Sight Words
 - Sentence Reading
- **Assessment instruments used:** Paper and computer based scoring
- **Administered:** Three times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)
- **Administered by:** Classroom teachers, Reading Corps members, and Associate Educators (Interventionists)

FastBridge Curriculum Based Measure (CBM)

- **Areas assessed:**
 - Accuracy and Fluency
- **Assessment instruments used:** Paper and computer based scoring
- **Administered:** Three times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)
- **Administered by:** Classroom teachers, Reading Corps members, and Associate Educators (Interventionists)

At the completion of each testing cycle, classroom teachers conduct an analysis of their students' results. They create an action plan, including SMART Goals to guide their literacy instruction and literacy interventions. The plan includes grouping, skills to reinforce and introduce, strategies to model and teach, and interventions for students below grade level. The plan also includes assessments teachers will use to monitor progress.

Assessment data will be available for parents with their student's progress reports and report card, as well as at conferences two times per year.

The end goal of any curriculum must be to provide all scholars with the essential skills and knowledge to enable them to meet high academic standards. Sojourner Truth Academy has a balanced approach to literacy with comprehensive, scientifically based reading instructional practices to assess and support all scholars' reading progress depending on their needs. The curriculum provides a clear alignment of essential skills and knowledge, instruction, and assessment measures. The development and implementation of the curriculum reflects current research and best practices. It is organized around six research-based components: print awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics/decoding, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension.

1. Print Awareness: Defined as “knowing how books work.” It involves knowing that print carries meaning and serves many purposes. It involves knowledge of print concepts: front-to-back, top-to-bottom, left-to-right, letter (upper and lower case), word, paragraph and page.
2. Phonemic Awareness: The ability to hear and think about the individual sounds (phonemes) the letters represent in words and understanding letters represent certain sounds.
3. Phonics/Decoding: The ability to match letters and spelling patterns with sounds to identify words.
4. Fluency: is the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression. Phonemic awareness and phonics have become automatic.
5. Vocabulary Development: Scholars' ability to understand what they read relies to a great extent through the expansion of vocabulary. It is impossible to learn without knowing and understanding the words that relate to that topic.
6. Comprehension: The ability to read text and extract meaning. Research suggests that good readers are strategic. They monitor their understanding, and, when a problem occurs, they take steps to fix it. Scholars learn how to activate prior knowledge, create mental images, predict and question, retell and summarize, draw inferences, and determine important information.

There is a strong reciprocal relationship between reading and writing. Learning to read well influences writing as well. Research suggests that good writers pass through stages when they compose text. These stages include: prewriting, drafting, revising, and publishing. Teachers are encouraged to provide this experience by facilitating writers' workshop in their classroom. Elementary scholars have the opportunity to develop writing skills in opinion, informative/explanatory and narrative writing.

Kindergarten classrooms are kept small with no more than 20 students in each classroom. There are two full-time paraprofessionals that support classroom instruction. The paraprofessionals are trained to work with students one on one or in small groups to advance their literacy skills.

In Kindergarten through 3rd grade, time is designated for a 30 minute Shared Reading block, a 60 minute Guided Reading Block, and 30 minute Word Study instruction.

Parent Notification and Involvement

Scholar progress and assessment data will be made available to parent/guardians through Parent/Teacher conferences (2 times per year) and with their student's progress reports and report cards (2 times per year).

Intervention and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Sojourner Truth Academy has a multi-tiered structure of support to meet the expectations outlined in the local literacy plan.

Core Instruction

- All classroom teachers will be required to provide the School Director of Teaching and Learning with an ELA curriculum map at the beginning of each school year. The curriculum map must include curriculum and resources used for each of the 2010 ELA Academic Standards with standards cited, how students will be assessed for mastery, and when the content will be taught and mastered by students.
- All classrooms in Kindergarten through 3rd grade will implement a 30 minute shared reading block, a 60 minute guided reading block, and 30 minute Word Study instruction.
 - **Shared Reading** – Classroom teachers will introduce students to a variety of authors, illustrators and types of texts to entice them to become readers. They will also teach students the reading skills that are frequently utilized and teach systematically and explicitly how to become good readers and writers.
 - **Guided Reading Block** -- During the 60 minute Literacy Block, students rotate through stations. Two stations are led by teachers, one focused on the guided reading model of decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension instruction and the other on interventions as needed. There are also stations with various authentic reading tasks to be completed when not working with a teacher.
 - **Word Study Instruction** – Teacher-led direct instruction word study that builds on phonemic awareness and phonic skills.

Interventions

- Sojourner Truth Academy's Multi-Tiered System of Support to meet the needs of ALL learners is as follows:
 - **Tier 1:** All students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade are grouped by instructional levels and specific needs for differentiated literacy

instruction. These groupings are flexible based on progress monitoring.

- **Tier 2:** Classroom Teacher will provide interventions on targeted skills, determined by FASTBridge risk level and/or FastBridge Early Learning Suite (assessment, two times each week, for students who are between the labeled some risk, high risk (FAST). The teacher will use supplemental materials that support the skills that the students are missing.
- **Tier 3:** Reading Corps member will provide literacy tutoring on targeted skills, determined by the Reading Corps benchmark assessment, 20 minutes each day to student who qualify. The Reading Corp member will use MRC's research-based literacy interventions. These interventions will not be done during core academic time.
- Early Learning Interventionist will provide 30 minute daily intensive interventions on targeted skills, determined by aRead, Early Learning Suite and PRESS inventories.

Professional Development

Alignment and Collaboration

To meet the goals outlined in the Literacy Plan, the school has established common planning time for grade level teaching teams, which allows teachers to plan and share instructional strategies.

All licensed teachers at Sojourner Truth Academy participate in weekly professional development meetings that focus on analyzing data, unpacking benchmarks, planning using best practice literacy instruction and strategies. These meetings are conducted during teachers' regular work hours. The Director of Teaching and Learning, Instructional Coach, and Lead Teachers use assessment data to prioritize and select professional development objectives. The Literacy Team, Instructional Coach and Lead Teachers research proven strategies and field-test the strategies in their classrooms before introducing the strategies to all classroom teachers. The Literacy Team, Instructional Coach and Lead Teachers model the use of the strategy at the professional development meetings, present and/or display student work, and discuss the results of implementation. Classroom teachers then create a plan to implement the strategies in their classrooms. The Director of Teaching and Learning, Instructional Coach, and Lead teachers observe classroom implementations and provide feedback to individual teachers. Classroom teachers bring back student work and results to discuss at the next professional development meeting. Some of the most recent strategies have been Conferring and the Guided Reading Model.

At the beginning of each school year, before students arrive, all staff will participate in required trainings. These trainings will be, but are not limited to: needs of diverse learners and growth mindset, structures and techniques of literacy instruction, anecdotal

notes, and instructional interventions as well as equity in instruction. The Director of Teaching and Learning and Instructional Coach will conduct weekly observations and provide feedback and coaching as needed. The Director of Teaching and Learning and Lead Teachers will also conduct three formal observations each of each classroom teacher at STA. They will use the TAP instructional rubric as a tool to assess each teacher's instruction. The Director of Teaching and Learning, MTSS Coordinator and Instructional Coach will meet weekly to discuss findings from informal observations to help plan professional development activities based on instructional techniques.

Curriculum and Instruction System

Standards Alignment

- At the beginning of each school year all teachers will create, review, or revise curriculum maps for both literacy and math. The curriculum map must include curriculum and resources used for each of the 2010 ELA Academic Standards with standards cited, how students will be assessed for mastery, and when the content will be taught and mastered by students. Classroom teachers in grades Pre-K through 3rd grade will collaborate to ensure that they are aware of the literacy goals for students at each grade level.

Curriculum Resources

- Classroom teachers use elements of all of the following components: Scott Foresman Reading Street for shared reading in Kindergarten, Wit and Wisdom (pilot) in 1st grade, Ready Gen (pilot) in 2nd grade, and Journey's in 3rd grade as well as leveled readers for guided reading groups. Each classroom also contains a 500 book library.

Student Support System for EL Learners

When a Sojourner Truth Academy scholar's primary language is not English, the scholar is administered a language proficiency test to determine English Learner (EL) identification. We utilize the WIDA's W-APT. As a valid and reliable test, they assess social, instructional, and academic English proficiency in the four domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

ESL teachers use the WIDA English language proficiency test to determine each scholar's English Language Development (ELD) levels. The WIDA tests are aligned to the WIDA ELD standards that were adopted by Minnesota in June 2011. Sojourner Truth Academy also uses the WIDA ACCESS to inform level of primary and English language acquisition for each EL scholar.

Training and Support

- Sojourner Truth Academy has a licensed ESL teacher that provides multiple trainings for staff each year on how to meet the needs of the diverse learners in our building. Some of the topics have included making homework and test modifications, Sheltered Instruction, and strategies and techniques that make learning more meaningful for diverse learners. The ESL teacher also meets once a month with grade level teams to make sure that needs are being met for the diverse learners in the classrooms. This is also a time when classroom teachers can ask for any help they may need with accommodations.

Communication System for Annual Reporting

- Sojourner Truth Academy's Local Literacy Plan, attachments, quarterly data, and resources can be found on the district's website at www.sojournertruthacademy.org.