Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District's Local Literacy Plan

Making a difference by preparing all students for a successful future in a changing world.
--District Mission Statement

This Literacy Plan is designed to provide an overview of how our dedicated teachers work to provide students with appropriate, research-based instruction.

Statement of Goals

"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 its literacy plan on the official school district website."

MN State Legislature Statute 120b.12

Objectives
- Inform all stakeholders of the district's efforts to ensure quality instruction at all instructional levels for K-3 students.
- Students will be reading well by third grade or before.
- Students who are exceeding grade level standards will receive instruction that continues to progress their learning.
- Students who have not met standards will receive support to reach standards.

District Goal (Due to COVID this goal has not been updated)
- The percentage of BHM students enrolled Oct. 1 in grade 3 who earn an achievement level of "Meets" or "Exceeds" standards will increase from 65.6% in 2019 to 69.6% in 2020 on all reading accountability tests (MCA and MTAS).

Definition of Proficiency

Proficiency is defined by local school districts. Proficiency levels are monitored and adjusted through a yearly review cycle. Reading proficiency is determined by looking at multiple measures. The chart below illustrates the scores that are annually reported to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Students should be at or above the listed levels. This is only one factor that classroom teachers use to determine student proficiency. Classroom teachers have access to a variety of literacy assessments to help them understand the whole reading profile of a student.

Grade Level	Assessment	Proficiency Level (Winter) *based on 2014-2015 Norms
Kindergarten	District Letter Sound Fluency	19 Correct Letter Sound Per Minute
First Grade	Acadience Nonsense Word Fluency Acadience Oral Reading Fluency	38 Sounds Correct Per Minute 19 Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM)
Second Grade	Acadience Oral Reading Fluency	57 Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM)
Third Grade	MCA-III	Meets or Exceeds on MCAs

District's K-5 Literacy Curriculum

District #877 chose its core literacy program for grades K-5 based on the available research at the time of selection. The program is structured on scientifically research-based reading and writing instructional practices. A quality literacy curriculum incorporates reading and writing daily for a variety of purposes. Programs are also selected based on the recommendations of the National Reading Panel. The panel identified 5 pillars of literacy.

The five pillars are:
1. **Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to hear and produce the separate sounds in a word and to blend separate sounds into words. (If you can do it with your eyes closed, it's phonemic awareness.)
2. **Phonics/Word Study:** A way of teaching word recognition that is based on the relationship between letters and the sounds the letters represent. Word study looks at spelling patterns and word meanings.
3. **Fluency:** Fluency is an important link to comprehension. Fluency can be defined as smooth, expressive, accurate reading at an appropriate rate. As a result of being a fluent reader, a student can focus on comprehension rather than word identification. Students need to hear good models of fluent reading and they need time to practice at an appropriate level for them.
4. **Vocabulary:** Vocabulary is about understanding the meaning of words. This could be in reading or in oral language. Students will typically be able to understand more words orally than in print. It's important to help students learn new meanings for words to improve their comprehension.
5. **Comprehension:** Comprehension is understanding what is read or heard. This is the most complex component. It includes not just recalling details but inferring the author's meaning by reading between the lines.

Another important area for students to develop is oral language. Oral Language helps develop vocabulary, sentence structure, and communication. Some ways that teachers help develop this is through turn and talks, classroom discussion, and modeling.

Curriculum is reviewed on a 10 year cycle. This cycle may or may not align to revisions in state

standards. The cycle is designed to allow the various curriculum areas time to reflect, evaluate, research, and make adjustments to curriculum. Curriculum includes the standards, assessments, district created lessons and units, and any purchased programs used to meet the needs of the district. Part of the review process is to ensure that there is vertical and horizontal alignment across the district to ensure students are being prepared for the next grade level.

Assessments

The district uses a variety of assessments to evaluate student performance and progress towards becoming a proficient reader. Teachers use informal daily measures such as listening to students read and examining daily work. This helps the teacher provide more individualized instruction for the student. Teachers also make use of more formal measures to provide an end of the term or unit grade. The district actively screens students to identify possible areas of reading difficulties. Screeners are only one tool that may identify students who are struggling. Based on how a student performs on a screener, other assessments will be used to see if the student could benefit from additional support. Below is a table that shows the screeners that are performed at each grade level.

	K	1	2	3	4	5
Universal Screeners	● Letter Name ID ● Letter Sound Fluency ● Nonsense Word Fluency	● Nonsense Word Fluency ● Oral Reading Fluency	● Oral Reading Fluency ● NWEA MAP	● Oral Reading Fluency ● NWEA MAP	● Oral Reading Fluency ● NWEA MAP	● Oral Reading Fluency ● NWEA MAP
New 2020 Screener for Characteristics of Dyslexia	Quick Phonological Awareness Screener (Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board)			Phonological Awareness Screening Test by Dr. David Kilpatrick		

<u>Response to Intervention (RtI)/Multi-Tiered System of Supports</u>

A system of supports called Response to Intervention (RtI) has been in place in the district since 2006. This system is often referred to as the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) which encompasses academic and behavioral supports. Each year this system is revised by a dedicated group of staff based on the current research. Various screening tools are used to identify students who may be in need of extra support. Through the use of screening tools and classroom data, students are placed in an appropriate level of support that is in addition to their core instruction. For many students, the core curriculum is meeting their educational needs. Some students may receive additional small group instruction from a teacher or an educational support professional to either enhance or help the students meet proficiency on MN State

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Standards. This is accomplished through tiered instruction designed by certified teachers. Still others may need more intensive support through more direct teaching with a highly qualified, licensed teacher. Special Education is one specialized program for students who need more tailored instruction. Another program, Quest, services highly gifted students (top two to three percent) in grades 2-9.

For students needing extra support, teachers work together to provide small group or individual instruction, commonly referred to as an intervention. Intervention strategies are chosen after screeners have taken place. For some students, diagnostic assessments will be used to identify skills that a student is not proficient in. Some examples of interventions include paired reading for fluency development, Words Their Way for phonemic awareness and phonics, and reciprocal teaching for students who need comprehension support.

Students' progress is monitored on a consistent basis. Depending on the level of intervention this might be monthly, every other week, or weekly. The data collected from this monitoring is graphed so a teacher can determine if the student is progressing at a desired rate. The desired rate is different for each student based on the needs of the student.

In a MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) model, parents are informed at various points of the process. Each building has different requirements based on how they structure their MTSS Model. Some schools have a Federal program called Title I. In this program, parents are notified before the child receives an intervention by a teacher in the Title I program. Please see the section on Parent Notification for more details. In other schools, the parents are often informed at conferences. At this time, the parents and teacher can review the child's progress, how the intervention is working, and the plan for the child.
See BHM MTSS Brochure Link for more information.

Additional Requirements of Read Well Legislation
Convergence Insufficiency screening and screening for characteristics of dyslexia became a requirement during a 2016 revision of MN State Statute 120B.12 by the State Legislature. The statute states, "The district also must annually report a summary of the district efforts to screen and identify students with dyslexia or convergence insufficiency disorder to the commissioner by July 1." Below is the procedure that will occur in the elementary schools.

Screening for Characteristics of Dyslexia
Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is characterized by an unexpected difficulty in reading, which can include but is not limited to trouble with word recognition, poor spelling, and decoding issues. It is a common learning disability. The district screens all students for potential reading issues as part of MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports). An additional screening will be required of students who score below the 25th percentile on the universal screeners. The screeners for characteristics of dyslexia will specifically look at phonological awareness skills. Research indicates that these skills are predictors of reading success. If a student doesn't pass a screener, the student will be considered for Tier 2 or Tier 3 support based on the specific areas of reading concern. Please see the section on RTI/MTSS or the BHM MTSS Brochure

Link for more information. Parents can also choose to pay for their own outside assessment to determine if dyslexia is a concern. Parents seeking more information can read *Navigating the School System When a Child is Struggling with Reading or Dyslexia* on the Minnesota Department of Education's website.

Convergence Insufficiency Screening

Convergence Insufficiency is a vision disorder that is characterized by the lack of the eyes to maintain focus or continue to focus as objects are moved closer to the eyes. This vision disorder is not a part of the district's school-wide vision checks. According to MDE's *Convergence Insufficiency (CI) Fact Sheet*, "A basic eye exam or screening with the 20/20 eye chart is not adequate for the detection of convergence insufficiency (and many other visual conditions), nor is a near vision screening task comprehensive enough. A comprehensive vision evaluation by a licensed eye care specialist who tests binocular (two-eyed) vision is the most effective means for detecting CI. District 877 "does not include screening for convergence insufficiency disorder as part of its vision screening program. Parents with concerns about the condition should see their licensed eye care specialist for assessment and treatment.'"

Parent Notification

Parents, teachers, and schools are partners in ensuring all students are reading well by grade 3. Parents are notified at conferences (Fall and Winter) and/or by the end of that grade level if their child is not on track to read well by 3rd grade. Report cards are another form of communication. They are available online at the beginning of February and the end of the school year. Parents of students who are performing below grade level may often receive notification that their child was recommended for a program sponsored by Community Education called Targeted Services Remedial Reading. This is a free program for recommended students. Parents may also receive a BHM MTSS Brochure which is available in each building. This brochure will give a brief overview of the process that schools use to support struggling readers.

Professional Development

The district provides ongoing training to staff in effective reading practices. This includes how to meet the diverse needs of all learners. These trainings can vary from year to year based on the needs of the staff and curriculum implementation. Teacher Instructional Coaches are also available to help staff refine not only their literacy practice, but a variety of instructional strategies.

All teachers receive training in how to use the program that the district chose as part of its core curriculum. The training includes how to support students in a flexible small group setting, instruct phonics, support vocabulary development, and use comprehension strategies for all elementary grade levels. Kindergarten and first grade teachers receive training in phonemic awareness. New staff receive a minimum of a half day of training. Additional support is available from co-workers and Teaching and Learning Department staff. Curriculum maps are available for teachers to guide their instruction. A Core Expectation Chart has been created by the District K-5 Literacy Team to provide staff with additional support on effective strategies. There are also

after school classes taught by highly qualified staff.

Professional Learning Committees (PLCs) are continually working on improving their practices through a cycle of identifying an area of concern by reviewing student data, creating a plan of action based on research, and then evaluating the results of their plan. Through this process teams of teachers are working on their own professional development. The training for this process is offered to all new teachers on an annual basis.

Culturally Responsive Instruction professional development is provided for new teachers at BHM schools annually. It is also modeled through all of the professional development facilitated by our district faculty. Culturally Responsive Instruction is also embedded through our partnership with AVID by promoting high expectations and the use of high engagement, collaborative and inquiry rich strategies.

English Learners (EL) staff works collaboratively with classroom teachers and Title I staff to provide a range of services to students. EL teachers use a program that is parallel to the core literacy program This may be a support piece or a full replacement for the literacy program depending on the need of the student. EL teachers will be using the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards.

Summary
The district uses data from various assessments and surveys to make decisions to support teachers and students. Teacher groups in the district use data to support students in learning the standards and to become proficient readers. Classroom teachers use individual student data to adapt their instructional strategies and resources to meet the needs of their students. Some components of structured literacy instruction are present in the current curriculum. This is an area of growth that will be worked on in the 2021-2022 school year. Another area of growth is working to disseminate and incorporate the Science of Reading into ongoing professional development for K-5 staff.

Communication About District Progress
District 877 communicates overall district reading proficiency to the public through its World's Best Workforce Report. The most recent report can be found on the district website under the [Teaching and Learning Department](#).

Bibliography
Stai, Cory, and Kristin Oien. "Convergence Insufficiency (CI) Fact Sheet ." MDE, Rosedale, 23 Aug. 2017.

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