



Local Literacy Plan for School Year 2018-2019

Goals and Objectives

At Natural Science Academy (NSA), we believe that strong reading, writing, and problem solving skills are integral to all disciplines, including science and math. NSA educators understand that the practices of science as described in the Next Generation Science Standards correlate with the practices of reading and writing. We also understand that meaningful study of literature helps students grow in social emotional skills. Strong foundations in reading will enable our students to become empathetic and critical thinkers, scientists, mathematicians, and environmentally literate citizens.

We want out students' reading and writing ability to enhance their understanding of our world and enable their ability to solve its problems.

To meet this goal and in keeping with our contract with our authorizer ACNW and our commitment to compliance with Minnesota State regulations, we have several literacy related performance goals. Below are the ones that most closely relate to reading proficiency by 3rd grade.

Our school's reading proficiency goals include:

As measured by MCA data:

From FY17 to FY19, the school's aggregate proficiency index score for students in grade 3 will increase by at least 7.0 points from the baseline proficiency index score (FY14-16 baseline – 37.5) OR will be greater than that of the state for the same grade (3).

As measured by NWEA MAP data:

From FY17 to FY19, the aggregate percentage of students in grades K-5 who perform at or above grade level proficiency* (levels 3 or 4, respectively) as determined by the spring administration of NWEA MAP assessment will be at least 50%.

In FY18, 60% percent of students in grades K-5 will reach their growth goal for the Winter and Spring reading MAP tests. Growth goals are set by NWEA MAP based on each student's Fall score.

In FY18, the percent of students in grades K -2 whose RIT score on the NWEA reading MAP test is in the 50th Norms percentile** or above will increase by 10 percentage points from Fall to Spring. (E.g., if 50% are in the 50th percentile or above in the fall, 60% will be in the spring).

** Proficiency is determined using MN Linking Study cut scores on MAP reading and mathematics scales that correspond to the benchmarks on the MCA III reading and math tests. The Level 3 cut score demarks the minimum level of performance considered to be "Proficient" for accountability purposes.*

***Norms percentiles are determined by 2015 NWEA MAP national normative data*

As measured by standards-based curriculum based measures:

From FY18 to FY20, 60% or more of students in grades K-5 will meet or exceed expectations for 60% or more of their assigned literacy learning targets, based on the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards for English Language Arts.

Definition and Assurance of Proficiency

Reading proficiency in grades K-5 is determined by multiple measures. The table below displays assessments used and scores expected by the end of each grade. If a student achieves the expected score, they are considered proficient based on that measurement.

	NWEA MAP Growth: Reading RIT Score	EL Education Benchmark Assessments**
K	158	Late partial alphabetic
1	178	Late full alphabetic
2	189	Middle consolidated alphabetic
3	199	Late consolidated alphabetic
4	206	*
5	212	*

*Not assessed at this grade level

**EL Education Benchmark assessments provide information on letter naming, letter sound correspondence, phonological awareness, spelling skills, decoding, and fluency. The assessments help teachers determine each student's alphabetic phase (according to the research of Linnea Ehri) and where they are in progressing through the phase—or their “microphase.” This informs instruction in foundational skills block—our structured phonics program from EL Education.

Student Assessment Process

All students in grades K-5 are screened for reading proficiency three times each year with NWEA MAP tests in reading. Students in grades K-2 take the MAP Growth Reading K-2 test, or MAP for primary grades. Students in grade 3-5 take the MAP Growth Reading 2-5 test.

Other assessments will be administered regularly to all students. Other diagnostic assessments may be administered as needed to students who are not proficient in order to identify instructional needs and monitor progress. These assessments may be administered by the classroom teacher, the literacy specialist, and/or the special education teacher.

Teachers regularly monitor the progress of all students and monitor progress of students performing below proficiency levels most frequently. More information about the assessments used with all students at each grade level can be found in the Grade by Grade Assessment Plan.

Grade by Grade Assessment Plan

All assessments administered three times—Fall, Winter, and Spring

Grade	Reading Assessments		
K	Three times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWEA MAP Growth: Reading K-2 		
	Fall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter name and sound identification • Phonological awareness 	Winter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter name and sound identification • Phonological awareness • Spelling • Decoding 	Spring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter name and sound identification • Phonological awareness • Spelling • Decoding
1	Three times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWEA MAP Growth: Reading K-2 		

	<p>Fall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding 	<p>Winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding • Fluency 	<p>Spring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding • Fluency
2	<p>Three times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWEA MAP Growth: Reading K-2 		
	<p>Fall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Fluency • Decoding 	<p>Winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding • Fluency 	<p>Spring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding • Fluency
3	<p>Three times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWEA MAP Growth: Reading 2-5 		
	<p>Fall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding 	<p>Winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding • Fluency 	<p>Spring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Decoding • Fluency
4	<p>NWEA MAP Growth: Reading 2-5</p>		
5	<p>NWEA MAP Growth: Reading 2-5</p>		

Efforts to Identify Students with Dyslexia and Convergence Insufficiency Disorder

Identifying Students with Indicators for Dyslexia

Routine assessments conducted at Natural Science Academy that staff administer as general screening and can be used to identify students with indicators of Dyslexia.

Assessment	Indicator for Dyslexia	When is screening conducted?	Teachers will look for:
Benchmark assessment spelling component	Poor spelling	1st, 2nd, and 3 rd grade in Fall, Winter, and Spring.	Difficulty in letter production. Letters out of order. Not all sounds represented within a word.
Words Their Way Elementary Spelling Inventory	Poor spelling	4 th and 5 th in Fall, Winter, and Spring	Difficulty in letter production. Letters out of order. Not all sounds represented within a word.
Writing Pathways narrative on-demand assessments	Poor spelling	K-5 in Fall, Winter, and Spring	Difficulty in letter production. Misspellings of words inconsistent within the same document. Student tells stories aloud in greater depth and detail than the written one indicates. Resistance to writing.
Benchmark assessment letter name and sound component	Poor Orthographic Memory and Recall	K in Fall, Winter, Spring.	Difficulty naming letters, inconsistency in letter names (knows it in one test session but not the next).
Benchmark assessment phonological awareness component	Poor orthographic memory and recall Poor decoding Poor phonemic awareness	K in Fall, Winter, Spring. 1-5 as a diagnostic tool.	Difficulty identifying onset sounds, inconsistency (knows it in one test session but not the next). Mishears letters or sounds, difficulty with rhyming
Benchmark assessment decoding component	Poor decoding	1-3 in Fall, Winter, Spring	Deletes or mixes up extremely common sight words, or skips words like "is," "the," "a."

			<p>Inconsistency in decoding the same word within the same passage.</p> <p>Over-relies on context clues to read, guesses at words based on first few letters.</p> <p>Accuracy of decoding improves over time but rate of fluency is consistently below benchmark.</p>

Efforts to identify students with indicators of convergence insufficiency disorder:

We understand that a routine vision screening is not enough to detect signs of convergence insufficiency disorder, and also that NSA teachers are not medical professionals able to diagnose convergence insufficiency disorder.

However, every teacher at NSA will receive a checklist of indicators to look for. If a child exhibits behaviors on the checklist, that child’s parents will be notified no later than the progress report date directly following the teacher noticing that behavior. Considering each checklist indicator for every child will be part of the progress report process. See Parent Notification and Involvement section for the checklist to be used.

Interventions

Teachers will meet with grade-level partners and/or literacy specialist during monthly teacher teamwork days following assessment administration to identify students not on track for reading proficiency. These students will be grouped using the data gained from assessments into tiered intervention groups.

Intervention instruction may be provided by any combination of the classroom teacher, paraprofessionals, and the literacy specialist, depending on the tier.

Regular monitoring of students in intervention groups will inform instruction for these students. Teachers will regularly discuss progress of these students with grade level partners and/or the literacy specialist during teacher planning time and/or weekly teaching team meetings.

Tier I (Core Instruction)	<p>High-quality instruction for ALL students within literacy block</p> <p>Focused whole-group instruction on grade-level standards. Students may receive accommodations to access this.</p> <p>Flexible small-group instruction based on reading level or strategy</p> <p>Regular individual conferences and formative assessment</p> <p>Independent practice: reading, writing, and word work</p> <p>May be supported by paraprofessionals</p>
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<p>Tier 2 (Group Interventions)</p>	<p>Small-group lesson or individual conference in addition to Tier I instruction, designed to assist students below grade level (or above) on continual improvement.</p> <p>Within literacy block</p> <p>Provided by classroom teacher, paraprofessional, or specialist</p>
<p>Tier 3 (Intensive Interventions)</p>	<p>Small-group lesson or individual conference in addition to Tier I instruction, designed to assist students well below grade level on improvement toward proficiency.</p> <p>Provided by specialist</p>

Tier 2 and 3 interventions are targeted toward students not already identified as needing special education services in reading instruction. For those students whose IEPs call for reading services, those services will be provided by the special education teacher. These students may receive additional reading intervention in the classroom if the teaching team (including the special education teacher) deem necessary and appropriate.

Parent Notification and Involvement

Parents are updated about student progress through parent teacher conferences held in November and March, with student progress reports each trimester, and through teacher contact by phone or by email.

Intervention-related contact:

If a student is receiving tier 2 or 3 interventions, that student's parents will be contacted by phone or email at the onset of the intervention and every 4 to 6 weeks throughout the intervention period by the classroom teacher or literacy specialist regarding that student's progress.

Progress reports for all students:

Student progress reports in FY17 were completed each trimester (typically in November, March, and June) and included a narrative of student achievement on literacy, math, and science learning targets as well as a narrative evaluation of their social skills and work habits. Parents were also sent a report of their student's NWEA MAP scores.

In FY18, teachers will provide a standards-based report card each trimester (typically in November, March, and June), which will indicate mastery of learning targets (based on MN state standards) assigned during the preceding trimester. The FY18 progress reports will also include MAP scores and scores on other literacy proficiency assessments, along with the grade level expectation for the end of the year. Below, see a blank for a grade one progress report.

Reading Level

Assessment	Level expected at end of year	Child's current level	On track?
Reading MAP	178		
Benchmark Assessment Microphase	Late partial alphabetic		

Progress reports will also feature a checklist for behaviors that may indicate convergence insufficiency disorder and one for indicators of dyslexia.

Below, see the checklists:

Convergence Insufficiency Disorder Behavior Checklist:

- eyestrain (especially with or after reading)
- headaches
- blurred or double vision
- inability to concentrate or sustain attention
- frequent loss of place
- squinting, rubbing, closing or covering an eye

Presence or absence of these behaviors does not constitute a diagnosis!

Natural Science Academy cannot evaluate or diagnose convergence insufficiency disorder. We can only inform families of the behaviors we notice or complaints we hear at school. If families are concerned the child may have convergence insufficiency disorder, professionals capable of diagnosing the condition are optometrists and ophthalmologists.

NSA teachers are also not qualified to diagnose dyslexia. The checklist below only seeks to keep you informed of what the indicators of dyslexia are and whether we've noticed them in your child this marking period.

Dyslexia Indicator Checklist:

Evidence-based indicator for Dyslexia (check if the indicator was observed)	Assessment (circle or highlight assessment in which the indicator was seen).	Notes
○ Poor phonemic awareness	Benchmark assessment in phonological awareness	
○ Poor decoding	Benchmark assessment in decoding	
○ Poor spelling	Benchmark assessment in spelling	

	Spelling Inventory	
	Writing sample	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Poor orthographic recall 	Letter recognition Letter sound correspondence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family history of dyslexia 		

Curriculum and Instruction System

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, Natural Science Academy will be using EL Education's curriculum for English Language Arts. This approach to teaching literacy is standards based, immersive, and meaningfully tied to science and social studies content. The curriculum is in a second edition after 25 years of use.

In grades K-5, the curriculum consists of 4 modules per year. The modules are content-based immersive literacy experiences and are each divided into three units. Below is an excerpt from the EL Education overview of the curriculum:

The last unit of each module, **Unit 3**, culminates with a performance task. This is where students have created their “magnificent thing” and are writing about it, bringing together what they know about tools, collaboration, and perseverance (and magnificent things!):

What students learn in Units 1 and 2 helps them prepare for this performance task. (This is the principle of “backward design” in action.)

In **Unit 1** students read, sing, discuss, dramatize, draw, and write to acquire strong content knowledge as well as the literacy skills that they need to do so. Students informational texts, learn how to ask and answer questions about the many texts they work with, and they learn to collaborate and converse with one another, capturing their thinking in pictures and words.

In **Unit 2**, they begin work with “close reading” of a complex text. In primary grades, this close reading happens through hearing the text read aloud (i.e., a close read-aloud). Teachers use a close read-aloud guide to conduct a series of sessions (across multiple lessons) that invite students to analyze and discuss this rich literary text. During the module lessons in this unit, students also do a series of design challenges that give them hands-on experience with collaborative problem solving.

As the lessons in each unit progress, teachers regularly check in on students’ progress. Each unit has a standards-based assessment built in. Here, students read, write, or speak with increasing independence about the texts they have been working with.

EL Education

Curriculum overview <https://curriculum.eleducation.org/overview>

In addition to the modules, at grades K-2, students have a Foundational Skills block, during which direct, differentiated instruction of foundational reading skills like letter formation and naming, letter sound correspondence, phonemic awareness, spelling, decoding, syllabication, etc. are practiced, along with foundational writing skills. Benchmark assessments in the Fall, Winter, and Spring will allow teachers to place students into differentiated skill groups so that each child is receiving the instruction they need.

At grades 3-5, students engage in additional, differentiated skill-based practice during the Additional Language and Literacy block. Students rotate from independent skill practice to teacher guided small group practice in these skills:

- Independent Reading
- Additional Work with Complex Text
- Reading and Speaking Fluency/GUM (grammar, usage, mechanics)
- Writing Practice

- Word Study and Vocabulary

Professional Development on Scientifically-based Reading Instruction

This summer, instructional leadership is being formally trained in the EL Education ELA curriculum. The curriculum is created by teachers and research-driven. This is curriculum as professional development.

During the school year, instructional leadership will serve as coaches to classroom teachers for the implementation of the curriculum through team-teaching, model-teaching, refining lesson plans together, lesson observation, collaborative reflection, etc.

Additionally, classroom teachers of students in grades K-3 are required to complete one workshop or book study in teaching foundational reading skills each year, and teachers of students in grades 4-5 are required to complete such training once every two years. Instructional leadership will use data gathered about teaching practice through lesson observations as well as student achievement data from the fall and winter assessment period to determine the specific areas of need for staff development. Literacy instructional leader, acting as coach, will assist the classroom teachers in implementing what they've learned as a result of the professional development through observations and reflective discussions.

Supports for English Learners (EL)

The EL curriculum has supports for English Learners built into the curriculum so that they can participate fully.

The curriculum presumes English language learners and language minority students are fully participating members of a diverse and heterogeneous classroom structure. At the same time, it honors the fact that language learners need targeted instruction within each lesson and additional supports if they are to be successful.

EL Education, "The Principles Behind our Curriculum"
<https://curriculum.eleducation.org/about-us>
