

# Reading Improvement Plan

## Kent City Schools

December 2019

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*Dear Members of the Kent City Schools Board of Education,*

*In anticipation of the completed revision of Kent City Schools PK-12 Local Literacy Plan, targeted for January 2020, this Reading Improvement Plan (RIP) specifically and briefly addresses our plan to raise literacy achievement through grade 3. The state requires districts to adopt a RIP to address 3rd grade literacy achievement when the report card indicator for grade 3 ELA is below proficiency for two years. This plan will demonstrate that the educators of the Kent City Schools are committed to improving literacy achievement and have already put many measures in place that should result in improved scores already this school year. A richer data analysis and detailed explanation of the goals and action steps will be presented in the revised K-12 Local Literacy Plan.*

*We ask your approval of this plan at the December 17, 2019, Board meeting. This document with hyperlinks is available at [www.kentschools.com/krumley/llp](http://www.kentschools.com/krumley/llp).*

*Respectfully,*

*Lead Developers of RIP:*

*Karen Rumley, Director of Instructional Program*

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*Kristin Garner, Literacy Specialist*

*Rachel Yohn, Literacy Specialist*

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*The Kent City School District's **vision for literacy** is for **all** learners to acquire the **knowledge and skills** to read at grade level, enabling them to access information as independent critical and creative thinkers and to be collaborative communicators and problem solvers in our global society.*

*Kent City Schools Vision for Literacy*

### Context

While helping our students learn to read and write has long been a primary focus for the educators of the Kent City Schools, several factors have combined in the past few years to raise awareness and inspire a more systematic and intentional approach to ensuring that *all* students are provided appropriate literacy instruction that will support overall academic success and mitigate the development of learning gaps. Much of this change has been generated by a significant shift in the field of literacy reflecting new developments in the Science of Reading, specifically with regard to the importance of early systematic and explicit instruction in language foundations as combined with essential background knowledge, comprehension skills, and consistent access to rich and rigorous text. Gough and Tunmer (1986) refer to this as the Simple View of Reading, a framework adopted by the Ohio Department of Education in its 2018 *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*. Additionally, new and rigorous state report card measures, when combined with a shift in standards, testing format, and question complexity, have required districts to direct specific attention to raising the bar for all students. This Reading Improvement Plan (RIP) is developed to specifically address achievement concerns and plans in grades K-3.

- **Local Literacy Plan (LLP) Revision** (target January, 2020): A district team developed a Local Literacy Plan in the spring of 2018 to address systemic needs for improving student literacy across all grades and disciplines. A Local Literacy Plan committee has been meeting regularly to implement the action steps defined in the plan, including resource review and implementation, professional learning, and decision-making protocols. The steps reflecting K-3 literacy are outlined below. A revised LLP is underway to assess progress on the original goals and to refine or create new action steps based on new data.
- **District Strategic Plan**: The LLP supports and aligns with the newly adopted Kent City Schools Strategic Plan, in which Goal #1- Academic Achievement ensures student access to a rigorous core curriculum and provides for systems of data-based decisions and interventions to promote gap closing and support students considered to be at-risk of low achievement.
- **Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP)**: The CCIP is the interactive tool used by districts to establish instructional priorities and to direct the spending of federal funds. Our plan is directly aligned to the Strategic Plan and reflects the action steps of the LLP.

- **Schoolwide Title I Services:** Adjustments to the delivery of Title I services in the elementary schools (beginning Fall 2018) have allowed for more intentional targeted interventions for struggling readers.
- **K-5 ELA core and supplemental literacy materials:** In alignment with goal 2 of the LLP, the LLP committee has spearheaded the review and selection of core resources for all ELA classrooms, and with regard to the RIP, specifically K-3 resources that address each of the major components of foundational literacy. The selection and adoption process is underway and will be concluded in spring 2020. All resources are to be aligned with Ohio's learning standards and the science of reading principles.
- **Curriculum Audit:** A recent (Fall 2019) audit of teacher understanding and use of Ohio's learning standards in planning and practice revealed significant disparities in approach and emphasis with regard to foundational literacy within and between grade levels. This finding underscores the need to ensure professional learning and the intentional development of a consistent core literacy program (resources and scope/ sequence).
- **Grade 3 ELA Proficiency Score (Ohio State Test):** One of 26 indicators on the state report card, the grade 3 ELA score reflects student proficiency of state ELA standards as measured by a standardized assessment in April. Since the state incorporated a new assessment for grade 3 in 2016, and then added the on-line platform in 2017, Kent's third graders' collective proficiency has ranged from 59.4% to 70.1%. [Ohio Senate Bill 216](#) (Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3301.0715(G)) enacted the following: "Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, when fewer than 80 percent of a school district's students score proficient or higher on the grade 3 Ohio's State Test in English Language Arts, the district must establish a reading improvement plan that will engage credentialed reading specialists. The school district's board of education must approve the plan before the district begins implementing it." Since our most recent grade 3 score is 70.7% we are required to submit this plan for Board approval.
- **Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers Report Card Indicator:** This measure is a calculation of the numbers of students at each of grades K-3 who are considered to be "on track" or "not on track" for proficiency by the spring grade 3 ELA test as determined by a diagnostic assessment given at the beginning of each school year. A formal Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP) is developed for each student (K-3) who is considered to be "not on track". The indicator rewards districts for moving students to "on track" status and penalizes for students who fail to reach proficiency and had not been on a RIMP. As the thresholds for the on-track designation are locally determined, the Kent Schools initially made decisions to raise the threshold of "on track" designation to ensure that every potentially struggling student was supported by an official RIMP; while this decreased the indicator deductions, this also inadvertently resulted in having far fewer students reach "on-track" status. Thus, the district and each elementary school have had scores of "D" in this measure for the past two years. Corrective measures in reporting have already been enacted for the 2019-20 school year.

## Plan overview

As a result of ongoing data collection and analysis of the progress toward established LLP goals, the district will continue to pursue the action steps described in the LLP to raise student literacy achievement. The first priorities are to “Universally implement an **evidence-based core language and literacy plan** that incorporates the Simple View of Reading ...as a foundation for interventions within a multi-tiered system of support” (LLP Goal 2) and to “**Build capacity** for effective universal literacy instruction in all educators through targeted, ongoing, embedded, and collaborative professional learning experiences” (LLP Goal 5). Ensuring the solid foundation of core instruction enables work toward LLP Goal 3, “Identify systematic and explicit **evidence-based interventions** to embed into a multi-tiered system of supports that align with core instruction and reflect student needs, and ensure they are implemented with fidelity.”

Details below describe the action steps that are already being taken to raise K-3 literacy achievement, as well as the plans for ongoing and future work.

## Status and Needs

### Action steps taken/ under way since January 2018

- **LLP- based action steps** related to K-3 Literacy that are accomplished to date:
  - Establishment of the District LLP Committee: this K-12 committee meets several times a year, with an elementary-level sub committee meeting monthly. Its purpose is to monitor the implementation of the LLP with regard to elementary-level needs, and is comprised of teachers, specialists, and administrators from each elementary building.
  - LLP Goal 2: (evidence-based core language and literacy plan) aligns with the district Strategic Plan (SP) Goal 1, strategies A & B, and has been a primary focus of elementary literacy efforts. As a result of professional learning and resource investigation, the district is universally implementing the following systems:
    - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum\* (all classrooms grades PK-1 core PA) - *LLP Strategy 2*
    - Foundations\* (all classrooms grades K-3 core Phonics & Word Study) - *LLP Strategy 2*
    - Acadience (Dibels Next) as the universal screening and benchmarking assessment for foundational literacy skills - *LLP Strategy 3*
    - Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP) piloted for some incoming kindergarteners - *LLP Strategy 3*
    - \* Heggerty and Foundations will be recommended for formal adoption at the conclusion of the ELA resource review in spring 2020.
    - Continued use of Star Reading as a universal screening and benchmarking assessment for reading - *LLP Strategy 3*
  - LLP Goal 3: (evidence-based interventions) aligns with the district Strategic Plan (SP) Goal 1, strategy C, and several such interventions have been identified for use by classroom teachers, tutors, and specialists in providing various “tiers” of intervention. A complete toolbox is being built and will include decision rules regarding the use of such tools and will include fidelity check processes. Identified interventions at this time include:

- Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Skills Assessment as secondary screener
  - Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST) as a secondary screener
  - Double dose Heggerty, Foundations (reinforcement of core instruction is appropriate for many struggling learners)
  - Kilpatrick one-minute activities for Phonological Awareness
  - Wilson Reading system (Tier 3/ intensive intervention)
- LLP Goal 4 is to “Develop a system of **shared data acquisition** and **analysis** to monitor student progress and guide decision-making for instruction and intervention” and aligns with the district Strategic Plan (SP) Goal 1 strategy D and Goal 3 strategy C. The focus of this goal is to enable efficient and comprehensive data acquisition to facilitate conversation and data-based decision-making. District acquisition of the DataMap component of the ProgressBook suite enables all educators to access relevant and complete data about individual and groups of students.
- LLP Goal 5 ensures that **professional learning** is provided and available to all educators regarding the Simple View of Reading, resource implementation/ support, data analysis, and other literacy-related topics.
  - Professional learning has been directly provided for all teachers and specialists on inservice days since LLP implementation: October 12, 2018; March 15, 2019; October 11, 2019, and will continue to be a focus on future inservice days.
  - Professional learning in literacy has been incorporated into grade level learning days (Fall 2019) and conference/ workshop options are continuously available to select or all staff.
- **Additional tutor support** has been provided for kindergarten students beginning in Fall 2019. The addition of two part-time tutors (each serving two buildings) is allowing for the targeting of students with the most intensive needs. The additional personal ensures that either the extra tutor, the regular intervention tutors, or the classroom teacher is free to work with these students on specific skills; this designated tutor is also gathering data on implementation and progress to inform future decisions for the student, as well as at the building and district levels.

**Data points:** Many data points support the practices underway as well as plans for the next steps. A comprehensive data analysis is available in the coming revised LLP..

- Information about individual student kindergarten readiness is available from several sources and this data helps school leaders and teachers plan for the support that they may need to be successful in school. The Early Literacy Assessment (ELA) is given to preschool children twice per year, and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is given to kindergarteners by November 1. Both tests are comprehensive, and the KRA Language and Literacy sub score is used to determine “on track” status. The CTOPP was piloted in some buildings this year as a means of gathering even more data about students' readiness for kindergarten level learning.
  - Kent Schools' preschool is outstanding and maintains a Five-Star Rating in Step Up to Quality (SUTQ). Teachers utilize a research-based early literacy and numeracy

curriculum that includes universal progress monitoring measures in all developmental domains and highlights areas of deficit for further intervention.

- Historically, only about 50% of incoming kindergarteners are "on track" in language and literacy, and fewer than 30% of incoming kindergarteners have any formal preschool experience, so the literacy plan includes instruction at the very beginning of the skills progression. The Heggerty preschool PA curriculum is often used for struggling kindergarten groups.
- Acadience/ DIBELS Next has replaced the aimsweb Plus program as a universal screening, benchmarking, and progress monitoring tool for foundational skills. Results help to determine appropriate interventions for struggling students.
- Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers report card indicator (formerly known as K-3 Literacy Improvement)
  - As described above, the state requires that districts administer a reading diagnostic test to every student in grades K-3, and the test must be approved by the state. The results determine the on/ not-on track designation, and a RIMP is written for every student identified as not on track.
  - The KRA Language and Literacy subscore is used to determine on track status with a state-defined cut-off score. The district has alternated its choice of designated diagnostic assessment for grade 1 from Star Early Literacy test to the aimsweb Plus Test of Early Literacy, to the Acadience (DIBELS Next) assessment this year, as well as for grade 2 between Star Reading and Acadience (DIBELS Next). Grade 3 continues to use Star Reading. The cut-off ranges for these assessments are locally-determined, and the cut-offs have been adjusted to more appropriately match the needs of students.
  - As points are awarded for students who progress from not on track to on track and are deducted for students not on a RIMP who score below proficient on the 3rd grade test by spring, the district has been penalized by setting high thresholds. High numbers of students being designated as not-on track and staying with that designation were not offset by the minimized deductions.
- Grade 3 proficiency and the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGRG)
  - While the district has had a history of high performance on the state tests, educators and students are still adjusting to changes to the standards, testing complexity, and formats. While the overall grade 3 scores are not back at or above 80% proficient, it should be noted that no students have been retained due to the provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, and Kent is one of 209 (out of 608 total) districts with this record. Additionally, 13% of students (31 of 237 eligible students) who took the test were exempted from the consequences of the TGRG due to disability or English learner status (4 of these students did achieve a proficient score).
  - Star Reading projection data can be analyzed to identify students predicted to struggle with achieving proficiency in the spring, especially with correlation to recently released fall test results.
- Additional notes:
  - The district has made significant changes to the resources and programming for its youngest learners through the LLP and other initiatives, especially the foundational changes at grades K-2. Most current and prior grade 3 students have not been impacted by those core instructional changes for this year, though they have

benefited from more targeted individual assessment and interventions. It is anticipated that the changes will yield achievement gains moving forward.

- District data outside grade 3 shows significant systemic growth, notably in achieving an A in both the value Added and Gap Closing report card indicators for the 2018-19 school year.

**Revision of Local Literacy Plan** will reflect our current status and refined goals. This project is in progress and the anticipated completion of this revision is in January 2020. To accomplish this target, each building leadership team has been participating in a needs assessment called the Reading- Tiered Fidelity Inventory (R-TFI), the data from which will be analyzed by the LLP committee to clarify appropriate revisions and priorities. Assessment and demographic data will also be updated and analyzed for inclusion in the decision-making

### **Reading Improvement Plan Action Steps**

- Continue implementation of LLP Action Steps as described above
- Teacher/ student level analysis of state standards and testing resources (LLP 2. - *Strategy 3*)
- Complete K-5 ELA resource selection/ adoption: Spring 2020 (LLP 2. - *Strategy 2*)
- Complete decision-making procedures on teacher selection of interventions for use: Framework Spring 2020 (LLP3 - *Strategies 1 & 2*)
- Engage Families in supporting their children in language and literacy growth (LLP2 - *Strategy 5*; LLP 3 - *Strategy 4*)
- Complete K-5 ELA Curriculum Maps: by Fall 2021 (LLP2 - *Strategy 1*)
- Develop common assessments to measure critical skills and understandings aligned to K-5 curriculum maps: by Spring 2022 (LLP2 - *Strategy 3*)
- Ongoing: professional learning regarding the Simple View of Reading

### **Additional District Action Steps**

- Complete revision of LLP (January 2020)
- Continue to promote a district-wide culture of literacy
- Continue to partner with internal and external stakeholders to provide supports and enrichment for Kent's young readers (ie, Rough Riders Read, Team Kent activities, etc.)

### **References**

- Gough, P. and Tunmer, W. (1986). Decoding, reading, and reading disability. *Remedial and Special Education*, 7, 6–10
- Ohio Department of Education. (2018).. *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.