

Minnesota Transitions Charter School District, 4017

**Local Literacy Plan
2015-2016**

Approved _____ by MTS Board of Education.

Introduction

Minnesota Transitions Charter School District (MTS) believes that reading is the foundation to all subjects of learning. The ability to read critically, with systematic, progressive methods develops clear and effective thinking skills that are needed in all other disciplines. All students will be reading at or above grade level.

Read Well by Third Grade, MN Statute 120B.12

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/ReadWell/index.html>

Consistent with MN Statute 201B.12 MTS:

- provides comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction
- assesses students' level of reading proficiency and identify students not yet reading at grade level
- notifies and involves parents/guardians of students who are not yet reading at grade level
- intervene and accelerate learning growth for students who are not yet reading at grade, level
- train and support all elementary teachers in order to provide, comprehensive, scientifically-based and culturally sensitive instruction
- annually adopt and post a "Local Literacy Plan" outlining steps to ensure that all students are reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade

Minnesota Transitions Charter School (MTS) Literacy Plan Summary

MTS is a public charter school district that provides rigorous education to a diverse population. MTS serves over 3000 students in grades K-12 from Minneapolis and surrounding Minnesota areas. MTS has three elementary programs (K-5), three middle schools (6-8) and four high schools dedicated to student learning. Our statistically significant subgroups include limited English proficiency (LEP) at 12.6%, free and reduced program (FRP) at 49%, and Black at 22.1%. MTS elementary programs are as follows:

- **MTS Minnesota Connections Academy (MTSMCA)**, a tuition-free online public school. MTSMCA gives students the flexibility to learn at home with a curriculum that meets rigorous state education standards.
- **Banaadir Academy** an ESL program in Minneapolis with a powerful partnership between home, school and community. Working together, we build success for children as they become confident people and caring citizens for tomorrow's world.

- **MTS Elementary School** is a **diversified**, creative school with small classes and high qualified teachers.

It is the goal of Minnesota Transition Charter School (MTS) and its stakeholders that all students are reading at or above grade level by the end of 3rd grade as determined by the Reading Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs). The MTS Literacy Plan uses methods and procedures that are based on scientific and evidenced based reading research. As a school, we are committed to making decisions about reading assessments, instructional programs and materials, and professional development on the basis of scientific and evidence based research. This plan is our commitment to the children of our school and to the children themselves.

Our primary reading goal is to implement the six areas of literacy development which include: oral language development, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension. It is our goal to develop assessment and learning plans that are individualized and lead all students to meet the rigorous literacy demands of Minnesota. MTS consistently implements scientifically and evidence based reading instruction that is data driven, sustainable and incorporates a multi-tiered system of instruction and support so that students will reach the literacy demands of today's education.

Beginning the fall of 2015, both our seat based elementary schools are beginning new Reading Series (Journeys and Mondo Benchmark Series); balanced literacy programs, aligned with MN State ELA standards. Included in this program are components for guided reading, read aloud, shared reading and independent reading. To enhance this curriculum, our district has an elementary library with a variety of fiction and nonfiction reading materials, covering a wide range of reading levels. Each classroom also has their own reading library where students can enjoy books and other resources selected by their classroom teacher. Sufficient time for language arts instruction is necessary for children to read at grade level. Children in K-6 will receive 90 - 120 minutes of language arts instruction each day. Children not reading at grade level will receive more than 90 minutes of reading instruction each day.

Relevant technology engages students in meaningful learning activities. A variety of technologies have been integrated into the curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of the district's diverse learners. The district also uses Reading A-Z RAZ Kids, which is a computerized program that tests basic reading comprehension. Students select books from their reading level, read independently or with a buddy and take an independent comprehension test on the computer.

One of the most critical factors in a successful school-wide literacy plan is the use of a local assessment plan in which multiple measures are used at each grade level to

determine student performance levels in many areas of reading. In order to achieve this goal the first step is to train all teachers to analyzed data to inform their instruction. MTS administers multiple assessments for both growth and proficiency. This list includes but is not limited to:

- Measurement of Progress (MAP) assessments for reading in grades 2-5
- Mondo and Journey Common Core Assessments
- Quarterly benchmark assessments
- MCA Reading and Math
- Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP)
- MTAS
- ACCESS for ELLs
- Interim Assessments

In addition to the above assessments, other systems are in place to help achieve the districts' goal. Other systems include: classroom differentiation, targeted instruction, Title I services, Title III services, EL District Coordinator, District Reading Coach, Special Education services, parent feedback and effective, systematic staff development. More explicit information on these systems will be discussed in further detail, later in this plan.

Objectives:

Each year the Literacy Team and educators review and disaggregate reading data at grade levels K-5. Proficiency, growth and trend data will be analyzed and used to set specific learning targets for each child and for each cohort of students. K-2 data will be accessed and utilized, when available.

Grade Level teams review, annually, the effectiveness of current pedagogical practices in including core instruction, differentiation, remediation and intervention.

Curriculum resources are aligned to the most current standards. MN State Standards are a priority.

Formative assessments will be used to modify instruction and to identify students who are not on pace to meet proficiency. Students not on track will follow the local intervention plan.

The team met to analyze the data for the district and prioritize the needs of the students. As a result, the goal is for all students to read at or above grade level.

Literacy Plan (Curriculum, instructions and Assessment)

The Minnesota Transitions Charter School (MTS) Local Literacy Plan (#4017) is a comprehensive plan that outlines the five essential elements of creating and maintaining a developmentally appropriate framework for all learners to reach their fullest potential. These elements are complemented by four foundational principles synonymous with coordinated change at the systems, organizational, programmatic, and practice level. This plan is developed in response to legislation adopted by the State of MN in 2010 consistent with section 122A.06 subdivision 4.

The district's local Literacy plan is developed through a process using careful reflection and data driven decision making by the Literacy team consisting of Curriculum Director, Elementary Building Directors, District Reading Coach, Title One teachers, EL Coordinator, and Special Ed. teacher. Data included:

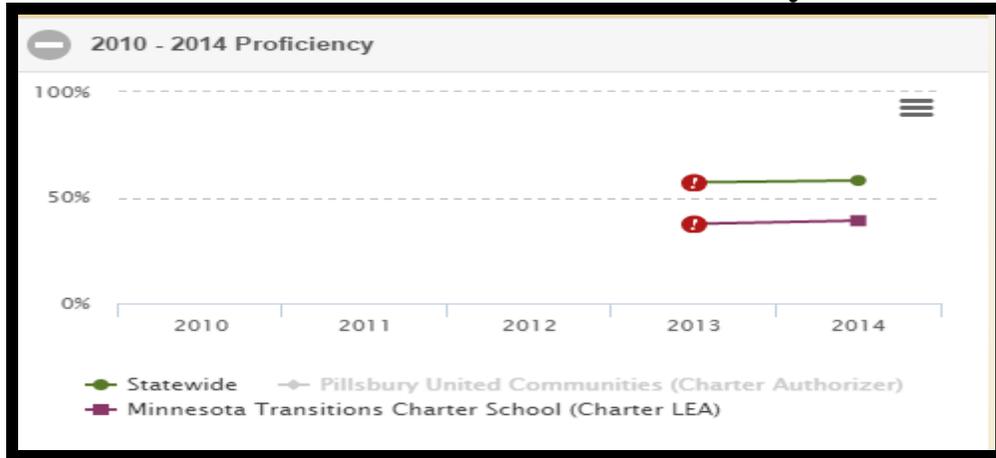
- Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA), Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and unit test scores
- Reading records, Mondo Bookshop Skills assessment, Journeys Assessments and Common Core Based Interim measurements
- Student surveys
- Staff turnover
- Classroom management
- Parent participation – attendance of conferences, parents nights, etc.
- Number of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch

All students in grades K-5 are given a screening/benchmarking assessment three times throughout the course of the year in fall, winter, and spring. Using this data, struggling and at-risk students are identified and referred for interventions. Specific interventions are based on three further data points, and the interventions are implemented through the collaborative efforts of the classroom teacher, other specialists and paraprofessionals. Each student's progress is monitored weekly and if the intervention selected is not working, another intervention is selected and implemented. Students not responding to these interventions are referred for special education services. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress throughout the process.

Review and analysis of achievement results and growth data in grades K-3

The following graph and chart show the MTS Elementary School programs trend data for the past two years. The three programs included in this data include: MTS Elementary School, **MTS Connections Academy and MTS Banaadir Academy.** **The general trend in our Elementary programs is an improvement in student scores over time. It is believed that the programming for literacy is one of the key factors in this improvement. Additionally, there is a reduction in the achievement gap in the three main sub-groups represented by the district specific to our Elementary programs, which are Black, Limited English Proficiency and Free & Reduced Program.**

Third Grade MCA III Proficiency



Institution	2013	2014
MTS 3rd Grade	37.6%	39.1%
State 3rd Grade	57.2%	58.1%

Process of Assessment

Currently, MTS uses the Reading MAP assessment reading in grades 2-5, the Mondo/Journeys assessment in grades K - 5 and Standard Based Reading interim assessments for placement of students at their instructional level of reading. Students are assessed using the above reading data points throughout the year; fall, winter, and spring. Students must be proficient on the MAP assessment as well as one of the other two assessments, according to the benchmark scale of that particular assessment for MTS to consider that student “Proficient” in the area of reading.

The State MCA-III reading assessment is also used as a data point for placement of students in grades 3 & 4. Students (gr. 3 & 4) who are in need of special services, as indicated by an Individual Education Plan (IEP), are also assessed in literacy using the state approved MTAS assessment. English Learner (EL) students (gr. K-4) are also assessed in reading for English Proficiency using the State adopted ACCESS.

Throughout the year students are frequently monitored and assessed using Curriculum based measurements (CBM) and interim assessments, designed by the teachers, and other formative assessments to assess student understanding of state grade-level standards. Classroom teachers, the reading coach and all specialists collaborate frequently to analyze this data to ensure appropriate instruction and interventions are being utilized for each student.

There are a variety of ways that data is collaboratively analyzed and utilized in the district. The district is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) and thus teachers, teacher leaders and specialists are analyzing data on at least a weekly basis in collaborative, small group settings. Other opportunities to work with data throughout the year include, Title I meetings, Title III meetings, Child Study, and intake, placement and reclassification processes.

Parents have multiple opportunities to receive this data. Including, but not limited to: conferences, progress reports, report cards, continuing learning plans, parent meetings, and the invitation to visit the classroom at any time.

Screening Tools	Grade Range	Timeline
Mondo/Journeys Skills Series	K-1	3 time a year
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)	3-10	Once a year
OLPA Optional Local	3-8, 10	1 time a year
Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)	Students with Special Needs	Once a year
ACCESS	ELL Students	Once a year
LAS	ELL Students	Once a year

Progress Monitoring Assessments					
Grade	Test Product	Assessments	Proctor	Date	Data stored
K	Reading A-Z/ Mondo/Journeys Assess	Fluency	Classroom teacher	Winter Spring	View Point Data warehouse
K-1	Mondo bookshop/ Journeys Primary assessments (if applies)	*Print concept/Name identification *Initial Sound with pictures *Naming letters *Rhyming *Segmenting and blending	Classroom teacher	Quarter	View Point Data warehouse
K-1	Dolch Words	Word Knowledge	Classroom Teacher	Quarterly	View Point Data warehouse
K-1	Mondo Bookshop/ Journeys Primary assessments	Oral Language Assessment		Fall Spring	View Point Data warehouse
K-1	Writing Sample	Writing knowledge (See Assessment and Reading Handbook)	Classroom Teacher	Fall, Winter, Spring	View Point Data warehouse
2-5	Dolch Words	Word Knowledge	Classroom Teacher	Quarterly	View Point Data warehouse
2-5	Mondo bookshop/Journeys	Vocabulary Assessment Oral Language Assessment	Classroom Teacher	Fall, Winter, Spring	View Point Data warehouse
2-8	NWEA	Comprehensive Reading	Classroom teacher	Fall, Winter, Spring	View Point Data warehouse
2-8	Mondo/Journeys Benchmark	*Oral Reading *Comprehension *Word Knowledge *Retelling	Classroom teacher	Fall, Winter Spring	View Point Data warehouse
1-8	Mondo/Journeys Running Records	fluency	Classroom Teacher	Monthly	View Point Data warehouse
2-8	Writing Sample	Writing knowledge	Classroom Teacher	Fall, Winter, Spring	Portfolio

Selection/Placement of Students for Reading Tier Interventions:

Using multiple indicators, students are placed in a reading tier intervention based on their scores on building-wide internal assessment, Mondo, Journeys, DIBELs, and NWEA. Teacher recommendations also play an important role in providing services to students who lag behind in their reading skills. The results of the Mondo Comprehensive, Journeys comprehensive assessment, phonemic awareness test, fluency assessment, and spelling inventory are used to provide reading intervention services to students.

Literacy coaches work with classroom teachers and reading specialists to:

- insure that interventions are implemented as intended
- help gauge effectiveness of the intervention through progress monitoring
- adjust the intervention when needed, based on the results of progress monitoring

Parent Notification and Involvement

Family involvement is essential to the success of our students as readers. MTS schools seek to contact and involve families in a variety of manners within each of our school community. The school has a written parent involvement policy, which is found in the school board policies.

Parent Communication plan

1. In order to have all students reading well by third grade, the elementary utilizes the View Point and Skyward monitoring system. On the district website there will be an explanation of the assessment practices and the multileveled systems of support as implemented in MYS literacy plan.
2. Parents will receive benchmark information two times a year during conferences.
3. In addition, parents of students who are receiving supplemental instruction will be informed of progress multiple times a year.

Parents are always welcome to visit classrooms in the district. All schools in the district hold a school-wide open house at the start of each school year and participate in the Annual Board meeting in February. Also, signs are written in multiple languages, and bilingual language support is available to parents immediately upon entering the office at our schools where the need is greater. Parent liaisons are available to families by cell phone at their convenience.

Each school holds parent events as well as conferences nights throughout the year. These include open houses, breakfasts, portfolio nights, science fairs, and educational game nights. At these events literacy is a hot topic. MTS staff spends time discussing literacy at home, student data, and literacy activities with family members while giving them the tools to work with their students at home.

Suggestions for parents to become a part of their child's educational process are given throughout the year by individual classroom teachers at parent-teacher conference times, which vary by school. Schedules are available on our website – www.mtcs.org. Notices

of these meetings are sent home via flyers and by calling chain. One focus of our conference nights is sharing data with families.

MTS families receive a newsletter quarterly or monthly (depending on the site) to provide them with current information and to notify them about upcoming events. This includes updates about curriculum and academic testing.

Current practices and instructional systems

The MTS district uses the Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) found in the National Reading Panel Report and in the No Child Left Behind legislation passed by Congress in 2001. National Reading Panel and Reading First both cite studies that show that best practice for reading blocks is to have a minimum of 90-plus uninterrupted minutes. At-risk students require more instructional time each day with instruction that is more enriched (Gumm & Turner, 2004). In addition to the 90 minutes, the classroom teacher, special education teacher, EL teacher or Title One teacher will provide immediate intensive intervention to children in need, as determined by assessment data and diagnostic assessment.

MTS literacy model consists of the following framework:

- Provides instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing instruction
- provides instruction in large group, small group and individual settings
- includes interactive read-aloud, interactive writing, shared reading, shared writing, guided reading, guided writing, independent reading and independent writing, and literate conversation.

- The Literacy Block will be laid out in the following way:
 - Reading instruction spans at least 90(120) minutes daily and contain a balance of large group, small group and/or individualized reading instruction. (Allington 2002).
 - Reading Series whole group instruction is integrated with the Daily 5 and should span 20-30 minutes daily throughout the focus lessons.
 - Daily 5 rotations and focus lessons with Small group, 1-1 instruction, and independent reading.
 - Daily 5 rotations provide a gradual release of responsibility through explicit instruction, as well as interactive, guided and independent practice with teacher conferencing and immediate teacher feedback.
 - All students read a variety of texts both fiction and non-fiction. (MN ELA Standards, 2010). Providing all students with the opportunity to read text at their independent level and of their own choice every day. (Allington, 2012).
- Reading instruction includes the essential pillars of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension. (National Reading Panel, 2000).
- Students requiring additional support receive an additional 30 minutes of small group or individualized time.

- Scientific, research-based literacy interventions for selected students is provided in addition to core literacy instruction and directly targets student needs. (Buffum, Mattos & Weber, 2010)
- Writing instruction and writing practice every day for a minimum of 30 minutes. During this time all students write to persuade, explain and convey experiences as outlined by the 2010 Minnesota English Language Arts Standards.

Interventions and Instructional Supports

Students are considered for additional services if a student is identified as not reading at or above grade level on any of the screening assessments. Data used to determine whether they receive services includes the screening data and classroom observational data. Students are not considered meeting grade level expectations if they are scoring below the 25th percentile on any of the assessment tools. These students will be considered for small-group Tier II interventions provided by Title I Specialist on top of the regular classroom instruction already being provided. Ideally, these targeted students would receive even more intense one-on-one interventions if the schedule and staffing permits. Students who qualify for English Language Learner (ELL) services will receive ELL instruction provided by the ELL Specialist. Students who qualify for special education services will receive their targeted interventions in accordance with their IEP plans.

MTS services provided to students include, but are not limited to:

- Targeted instruction and Tiered instruction using assessment data: Journeys Diagnostic Assessment, Mondo Benchmark Text Level/comprehension, CBM, Common Assessments, etc.
- Smaller class size
- Family involvement through Title Nights
- Tiered Intervention Models within buildings and classrooms
- Tier II small group intervention with specialist
- District Literacy Coach
- Help with implementation of improvement plan
- English Language Learners (ELL services)
- Reading Corp.
- Special Ed. Services

District specialty teachers are highly, qualified teachers with appropriate training to instruct students in reading best practices and acceleration of learning.

All staff use supplemental materials and practices that help achieve the MTS initiative to improve student learning. - Read Live, Hecwin, Tuckers Signing, Moby Max, Small guided group, Differentiation in the classroom, Flexible grouping, Best practices strategies and sheltered instruction strategies.

MTS Elementary Three Tier intervention system:

- ❖ Tier I is for all students. They receive Core Curriculum instruction in the classroom using differentiation and a variety of learning styles to create individual learning opportunities for all students.
- ❖ Tier II is intended to serve students who are struggling in the general ed classroom academically. This is SBRR small group instruction that is carefully designed and as explicit and systematic instruction to fill the gaps. The students receive both Tier I and II instruction. The Title One teachers serve the Tier II students. Progress monitoring occurs every 2 weeks.
- ❖ Tier III is an additional intervention intended to serve students who are not making sufficient advancement towards grade level abilities after receiving both Tier I and II interventions. The students receive increased Tier III services and may use alternative curriculum to make adequate academic growth. These students may be taught by a special teacher and/or using specialized curriculum and instructional techniques.
 - Tier III is the intensive intervention program that uses materials to accelerate student learning in order to catch them up so they can participate in the core program. Progress monitoring occurs weekly.
 - Intensive reading interventions may include:
 - Read Live
 - Hecwin-Reading Horizon phonics program
 - Reading RAZ
 - Minnesota Reading Corps (MCA)
 - Other specialized approaches delivered by an Early Intervention service teacher and the Title Specialist.

Minnesota Reading Corps (MRC) Minnesota Reading Corps is a statewide initiative to help every Minnesota child become a successful reader by the end of 3rd grade. The program places AmeriCorps members as literacy tutors in sites across Minnesota to implement a research-based early literacy effort to help struggling readers. The MRC strategies are designed for both preschool ages children and K-3rd grade students.
<http://www.minnesotareadingcorps.org/>

Student Support System for EL Learners

The English Learner (EL) Program at the MTS district is designed for students who are in the process of English language acquisition. The instructional model is a hybrid including both pull out instruction, push in collaboration and training for mainstream teachers on differentiated language sheltered instruction strategies.

As long as students are classified as having limited English proficiency (LEP), the district seeks to ensure that language acquisition is not impeding upon a student's academic

success and that all students can succeed in all academic subjects while becoming proficient in the English language. In addition, all of MTS's teachers receive professional development in the area of teaching English Learners (ELs). All mainstream teachers are responsible for teaching the academic language of their content area, and for developing differentiated lessons to meet student needs.

The appropriate staff tests the student with developmentally appropriate measures as soon as possible. The assessment used is the W-APT stands for the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test which is used to determine English Language Proficiency level and level of need for services.

The W-APT provides a broad sampling of proficiency in the four major language domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, using a sample of critical English language proficiency skills that translate into an overall measure of language competence. The W-APT test scores and student EL levels can be kept in a number of places including, but not limited to: teacher workbooks, assessment binders, Skyward, PM Sheets on the Google documents and in the students' ESL files and View Point Data system. The information is in all of these locations so that all teachers who work with the students can have access to the information and can utilize it to best inform their instruction and match the students' needs with core and intervention supports. The process for allocating resources, training, coaching and selection of instructional materials to address the specific language acquisition needs of EL and minority students is varied. All teachers are trained in the process of second language acquisition and coaching is provided on an as needed basis. The district EL coordinator works with the literacy coach and the Title I coordinator to plan professional development opportunities, which are elaborated on in the professional development section.

English Learners and Other Diverse Populations:

The district currently assesses all English Learners using ACCESS for ELL. The ACCESS Links K-12 Assessments helps educators accurately assess the academic and social language skills of English language learners. The assessments provide detailed information on students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. The W-APTlinks provides reliable English language proficiency results to help educators make instructional decisions and allows districts to measure student growth. It measures both social and academic skills for a comprehensive view of language abilities and accurately meets the needs of all English language learners. Based on these demographics, resources will be allocated and professional development will be determined annually. Instructional materials will be analyzed for its culturally appropriate content and purchased during the district's curriculum cycle for core subjects. EL curriculum materials and interventions, used to develop language skills, will be updated as needed or developed on-site.

Analysis of Current Practice: Effectiveness of Core Instruction

Analysis of current practice and support is done on an ongoing basis in both individual and group formats including PLCs, intake, reclassification, etc. Using View Point Data

warehouse enables teachers to track students' progress via multiple assessments. Teachers can then match the student to the program that best fills their needs. These View Point Data warehouse are utilized as a tool to analyze the effectiveness of our curriculum, instruction and intervention practices.

View Point Data warehouse is an online, dynamic tool used by teachers, which include a litany of assessment data (see above list). After each monitoring period grade level teams and reading specialists determine if students are in need of intervention services. If needed, additional diagnostic assessments are done to ensure student needs are correctly identified. When students are identified as not making adequate growth based on the data collected, there are multiple tiered interventions in place including classroom differentiation, targeted instruction, tiered intervention, and scientifically based reading interventions and a child study team.

Professional Development

MTS provides many opportunities for the staff to further their knowledge of research based instruction and strategies. Staff members are provided time during staff development days, Professional Learning Communities, and weekly meetings to collaborate horizontally and vertically across grade levels and subjects. There is planned staff development days built into the school year calendar along with a 5 day Summer Staff Development Institute. Professional development is provided by:

- Internal Leadership Team
- Regional Professional Development
- Outside Resources/Consultants
- Curriculum Coordinator
- District Reading and EL Coaches

Summer Staff Development Institutes are provided for teachers. All Elementary teachers will receive extensive training in the summer of 2015 to develop a full understanding the new reading programs implemented in the 2015-2016 school year. This training will continue throughout the school year through coaching, Class demonstrations, and modeling provided by in house Literacy coaches and Mondo/Journeys professional personnel, videos and materials.

Professional development is chosen based on a needs assessment and monitored by coaches, administrators, and/or consultants.

Communication system for annual reporting:

MTS has monthly open board meetings for all parents, teachers and community members to attend and learn about our schools. At the Annual board meeting, in February of each year, parents are invited to learn about the local literacy plan for the school and vote for

new board members. Lastly, the MTS Local Literacy plan is posted on the MTS website at www.MTCS.org.

The literacy plan developed by the district will be posted on the MTS district website. Data for the district will be sent to the Minnesota Department of Education commissioner.