

Minnesota Transitions Charter School District, 4017-07

Local Literacy Plan

2020-2021

Introduction

Minnesota Transitions Charter School District (MTCS) 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.

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

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/prof/index.htm>

- Consistent with MN Statute 201B.12, all school districts in the state of Minnesota must develop a Local Literacy Plan to support student reading proficiency by grade three. Districts must post their plans to the District website and submit proficiency data to the commissioner annually. The plans must:
 - 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 (MTCS) Literacy Plan Summary

MTCS is a public charter school district that provides rigorous education to a diverse population. MTCS serves over 3000 students in grades K-12 from Minneapolis and surrounding Minnesota areas. MTCS has two elementary programs (One K-6 and one K-4), two online schools. One online school Minnesota Connections Academy (K-12), and a second, Minnesota Virtual School (6-12). In total, three high schools dedicated to student learning. Overall, our statistically significant subgroups include limited English proficiency (LEP) at 9.5%, free and reduced program (FRP) at 55.4%, and Black at 19.0%.

Here are the numbers for our statistically significant subgroups by school.

Banaadir Elementary K-4: (LEP) at 78.9%, (FRP) at >=90%, and Black at 100%

MTCS Elementary School: (LEP) at 11.3%, (FRP) at >=90%, and Black at 50.0%

MTS Secondary: (LEP) at 33.9%, (FRP) at >=90%, and Black at 60.2%

P.E.A.S.E Academy: (LEP) at 4.8%, (FRP) at 33.3%, and Black at 0%

MN Virtual High School: (LEP) at 3.0%, (FRP) at 36.4%, and Black at 6.5%

Minnesota Connections Academy: (LEP) at 1.4%, (FRP) at 49.3%, and Black at 8.0%

MTCS elementary programs are as follows:

- **MNCA Minnesota Connections Academy (MNCA)**, a tuition-free online public school. MNCA gives students the flexibility to learn at home with a curriculum that meets rigorous state education standards.
- **Banaadir Elementary K-4** has a 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.
- **MTCS Elementary School** is a diversified, creative school with small classes and highly qualified teachers. MTCS Elementary is a loving, nurturing, and learning community that cares about your child. We are committed to providing support and encouragement. We develop student self-confidence along with the right tools for academic success.

Goals and Objectives:

It is the goal of Minnesota Transition Charter School (MTCS) 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 MTCS 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. MTCS uses a unified approach to teaching balanced literacy. The goal of the program is to have students experience the power of reading and writing.

This plan is our commitment to the children of our school and to the children themselves.

We Believe . . .

- All students have the right to become literate
- Literacy encompasses reading, writing, listening, and speaking
- Learning to read and write begins at birth in the home and needs to be supported in English and other languages
- Literacy is a necessary skill to succeed in life
- Children must read often and in all subjects
- Data and research leads to differentiated professional development

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. MTCS 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.

Our elementary schools use balanced literacy programs, aligned with MN State ELA Standards. Included in these programs are components for close reading, small flexible groups, read aloud, shared reading, and independent reading. To enhance this curriculum, our district focuses on books that are a variety of culturally relevant high interest 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 at least 90 minutes of language arts 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.

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 all teachers are trained to analyze data to inform their instruction. MTCS administers multiple assessments for both growth and proficiency.

The assessments include but are not limited to:

FIRLA Leveling System-American Reading Company

- This leveling system assesses the student's reading level based on comprehension and fluency. This is administered at a minimum of three times a year as a way for teachers to form small groups and meet individual needs

NWEA MAP Testing

- A group-administered, standardized comprehensive adaptive reading assessment designed to show a student's academic growth throughout a school year. The level of difficulty of the test is adjusted to measure a child's individual performance.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)

- A group-administered test given once per year starting in third grade to assess a student's progress toward meeting the MN academic standards.

Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)

- Is an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

ACCESS for ELLs

- English language proficiency assessment administered to Kindergarten through 12th grade students who have been identified as **English language learners (ELLs)**.

Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP)

- Web-based educational level assessment services, providing customized educational programs to aid in the instruction of students and children in connection with core scholastic subjects such as reading, writing and math; providing and administering educational assessment tests and online educational assessment tests to students and children. LEAPS is an Educational program exclusive to MTCS's online school, MTCS Connections Academy.

In addition to the above assessments, other systems are in place to help achieve the districts' goal. Other systems include: classroom differentiation, learning targets and success criteria, Title I services, Title III services, an EL District Coordinator, District Literacy Coordinator, Minnesota Reading Corp., 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 sites review and preform a comprehensive needs assessment. 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. Curriculum and Aligned Materials are important to an effective reading program. Curriculum should be scientifically research based and focus on the six essential components related to strong reading instruction: oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. American Reading Company curriculum was purchased as a resource for teachers to use during literacy instruction.

Viable and Reliable Assessments are important to an effective reading program. Good assessments can help teachers know and understand what skills students are missing and what skills they have already acquired. 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 Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS) as referenced on page 11.

The sites will meet 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 (MTCS) 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 I teachers, EL Coordinator, and Special Ed. teacher.

Data included:

- Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA), Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), NWEA Primary MAPS and unit test scores
- MTCS designed Emergent Literacy Assessments, Fountas & Pinnell
- Staff turnover
- Classroom management
- Parent participation – attendance of conferences, parents nights, etc.
- Number of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch

In 2021, MTCS purchased a viable curriculum for literacy, American Reading Company Core. MTCS restructured the literacy block to meet the needs of all students and will continue to provide teachers with ongoing professional development to become better teachers. Teachers will receive training throughout the year on how to best implement the reading curriculum.

MTCS will implement common instructional practices and train teachers to use these practices that leverage high achievement for all students in the primary grades. This includes the use of practice profiles for vocabulary building, a practice profile for math talks, word wall visible in each classroom, the use of gradual release of responsibility, close reading strategies and co-teaching.

All students in grades K-6 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 level of need, teacher concern, standard assessments and the interventions are implemented through the collaborative efforts of the classroom teacher, title teachers 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.

Process of Assessment

Currently, MTCS uses the Reading NWEA MAP assessment in grades K- 6, MTCS Designed Emergent Literacy Assessment in grades K – 1. Students are assessed using the above reading data points throughout the year; fall, winter, and spring.

The district uses Professional Learning Community (PLC). Teachers, teacher leaders, and specialists are analyzing data on a weekly basis in collaborative, small group settings at each site along with a district wide PLC once a month. Other opportunities to work with data throughout the year include, Title I meetings, Title III meetings, Multi-Tier System of Support Meetings, and intake, placement and reclassification processes.

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

Screening Tools	Grade Range	Timeline
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)	3-8, 10, 11	Once a year
Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)	Students with Special Needs	Once a year
IRLA Leveling	K-6	3 times a year
ACCESS	ELL Students	Once a year
W-APT	ELL Students: Kindergarten	Once a year
WiDA Screener	ELL Students: 1 st -12 th	Once a year
NWEA	K-12	3 times a year

Progress Monitoring Assessments					
Grade	Test Product	Assessments	Proctor	Date	Data stored
K-1	Journeys Emergent Literacy Assessments (if applies)/ Dibels/ Fountas and Pinnell	*Fluency *Print concept/Name identification *Initial Sound *Naming letters *Rhyming *Segmenting and blending	Classroom teacher	Fall, Winter and Spring	Data warehouse
K-6	Sight Words – Dolch K-1 Fry 2-6	Word Knowledge	Classroom Teacher	Fall, Winter and Spring	Data warehouse

K-8	Writing Sample	Writing knowledge	Classroom Teacher	Fall, Winter, Spring	Portfolio
K-6	Reading Comprehension Test	Comprehension tests based off the MN state standards	Classroom Teacher	Weekly	Data warehouse
2-8	Academic Vocabulary/ LEAPS	Vocabulary Assessment Oral Language Assessment	Classroom Teacher	Fall, Spring	Data warehouse
K-1	Primary NWEA	Comprehensive Reading	Classroom teacher	Fall, Winter and Spring	Data warehouse
2-8	NWEA	Comprehensive Reading	Classroom teacher	Fall, Winter, Spring	Data warehouse
2-8	LEAPS	*Oral Reading *Comprehension *Word Knowledge *Retelling	Classroom teacher	Fall, Winter Spring	Data warehouse
1-6	IRLA Leveling	fluency	Classroom Teacher	Fall, Winter, Spring	Data warehouse

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 assessments, Journeys, Fountas & Pinnell, and NWEA. Teacher recommendations also play an important role in providing services to students who lag behind in their reading skills. Based on these diagnostic assessments, instruction and interventions will be matched to the student’s needs in one or more of the five pillars of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension).

Current practices and instructional systems

The American Reading Company provides guidance to teachers in delivering differentiated instruction for diverse learners with lesson plan sequences coordinated to move instructional delivery from cognitively simple skills and strategies to more complex skills and strategies. Just as the skill and strategy levels increase in complexity, the variety of text genres increase from the simple to more complex levels. Techniques such as modeling, previewing and predicting, visualizing, summarizing, clarifying, and direct instruction in strategic reading are embedded throughout the program. Lesson plans for whole group instruction include the introduction of skills and strategies, embedded teacher modeling opportunities, systematic and explicit lesson sequences, guided and independent application, and review of skills and strategies with frequent re-teaching opportunities. Whole group instruction focuses on the introduction of skills and strategies embedded in the context of grade-level resources for the teacher to provide scaffolded support as needed by all students. The small group instructional lesson plans are aligned to the whole group lessons and differentiated to meet the needs of on-level learners, advanced learners, below-level learners, and English language learners. Daily lessons for small group incorporate the use of leveled readers, decodable texts, and vocabulary readers to provide numerous reading opportunities for application and mastery of skills and strategies within and across a variety of reading contexts that include multiple genres.

A variety of both informal and formal literacy assessment opportunities are included in recommending the district's Elementary Multi-Tiered System of Supports for monitoring students' progress and match students with appropriately-leveled text for independent, instructional, and challenging reading experiences.

MTCS 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 including interactive read-aloud, interactive writing, shared reading, shared writing, guided reading, guided writing, independent reading and independent writing, and literate conversation.
- Reading instruction spans at least 90 (120) minutes daily and contains a balance of large group, small group, and/or individualized reading instruction. (Allington 2002).
- Reading Series whole group instruction is integrated with the Guided Reading Approach and should span 20-30 minutes daily throughout the focus lessons.
- Structure student learning opportunities around the conceptual framework of the Guided Reading Approach that helps students develop the daily habits of reading, writing, and working independently to build the foundation for a lifetime of literacy independence.
- Guided Reading Approach rotations and focus lessons with Small group, 1-1 instruction, and independent reading.
- Guided Reading Approach 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.
- Use complex informational text for instruction at a ratio matching the Language Arts Minnesota Standards.
- Provide effective instructional scaffolding that enables all students to access complex texts directly without preempting or replacing a text by translating its contents for students.
- Provide a gradual release of responsibility towards decreasing teacher scaffolding and increasing student independence as demanded for success on accountability measures such as summative statewide literacy assessments.
- Ask text-dependent questions that require students to cite strong and thorough textual evidence to demonstrate they follow the details of what is explicitly stated as well as make inferences from the text, ensuring valid claims are based on evidence in the text.
- Provide extensive writing opportunities for students to draw evidence from texts (i.e., write to sources) to support logical inferences and reasoning, present careful analyses, and construct objective summaries of information.
- Ensure that questions and learning tasks require careful comprehension of the text before asking for further connections, evaluation, or interpretation.

- Support students in writing arguments and analyses using valid reasoning and relevant evidence.
- Engage students in literacy learning tasks in which they integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media.
- Engage students in research to answer substantive questions (including those that are student-generated), investigate and solve a problem, narrow or broaden an inquiry, and synthesize multiple resources.
- Ensure that word study focuses on students using a variety of strategies to acquire and use academic and content-specific words sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- 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).
- Scientific, research-based literacy interventions for selected students are provided in addition to core literacy instruction and directly targets student needs. (Buffum, Mattos & Weber, 2010)

Interventions and Instructional Supports

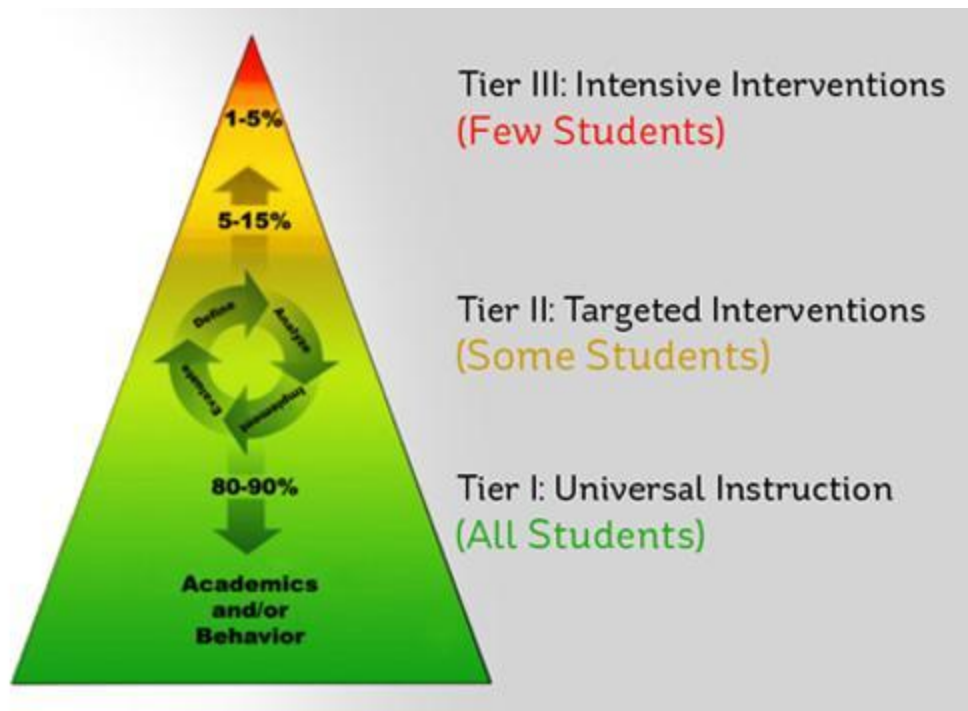
Students are considered for additional services if a student is identified as not reading at or above grade level on any of the screening assessments. Data used to determine whether they receive services includes the screening data and classroom observational data. Students are not considered meeting 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 special education services will receive their targeted interventions in accordance with their IEP.

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

- Targeted instruction and Tiered instruction using assessment data
- Smaller class size
- Family involvement through Title Nights
- Tiered Intervention Models within buildings and classrooms
- Tier II small group intervention with specialist
- District Academic Coaches
- Help with implementation of improvement plan
- English Language Learners (ELL services)
- Reading Corp.
- Special Ed. Services

All staff use supplemental materials and practices that help achieve the MTCS initiative to improve student learning. - Leveled Literacy Intervention, IXL, small guided group, differentiation in the classroom, flexible grouping, best practices strategies, and Sheltered Instruction strategies.

MTCS Elementary Multi-Tier System of Support:



- ❖ 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. Including students who require curricular enhancements for acceleration.
- ❖ Tier II is intended to serve students who are struggling in the general ed classroom academically and need more support in addition to the core curriculum. This is Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) one-on-one or 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 I or classroom teachers serve the Tier II students. Progress monitoring occurs every 1-2 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.

Scientifically based Reading instruction:

The scientifically-based reading curriculum MTCS uses is Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt Journeys which has been aligned by the classroom teachers to meet the Minnesota Academic Standards. Small group instruction is used to differentiate for our diverse learners.

- Reading interventions may include:
 - Leveled Literacy Intervention
 - IXL – Provides students with an individualized learning path geared toward MN state standards
 - Differentiated resources provided by the Core Curriculum
 - Other specialized approaches delivered by a classroom teacher, Early Intervention
 - Service teacher and/or Title Specialist.
 - ARC Core
- Intensive reading interventions may include:
 - Leveled Literacy Intervention
 - Minnesota Reading Corps (MRC)
 - 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 MTCS district is designed for students who are in the process of English language acquisition. The instructional model is a hybrid of pull-out instruction, push-in collaboration and training for mainstream teachers. Topics covered include differentiated, scaffolding and various other sheltered language

instruction strategies. Additionally, MTCS offers elective classes in English Language Development.

MTCS 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 MTCS'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.

Upon enrollment, incoming students complete the Minnesota Language Survey (provided by MDE). If the student speaks a language other than English, the student will be given a placement test. If the student is in Kindergarten, the student will be given the W-APT. If the student is in grades 1-12, the student will be given the WiDA Screener. Due to the fact that Minnesota is a member to the WiDA Consortium, all formal language assessments administered to EL students are WiDA tests.

The W-APT provides a broad sampling of proficiency in the four major language domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. 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 to ensure 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 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-APT 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.

Teachers will continue to familiarize themselves with WIDA developmental rubrics and analyze incoming ACCESS data to improve instruction. Given that MTCS has a large ELL population; it's paramount that WIDA standards and assessments closely align to ELA standards.

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 a 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.

Data warehouse is an online 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, and scientifically based reading interventions and the MTSS team.

Parent Notification and Involvement

Family involvement is essential to the success of our students as readers. MTCS schools seek to contact and involve families in a variety of manners within each of our school communities. 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 the MTCS literacy plan.
2. Parents will receive benchmark information two times a year during conferences. An additional explanation of the literacy program and supports will occur in September or November during fall parent/teacher conferences.
3. In addition, parents of students who are receiving supplemental instruction will be informed of progress multiple times a year.
4. Assessment results will be provided to parents upon request.

5. Parents of students who need supplemental instruction will be informed by the school that their student has been identified as needing additional academic services. This notification will include an invitation for the parents to participate in the planning to address the needs of the student.
6. Parents of students receiving interventions will receive monthly progress reports (upon request).

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 September. 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 conference nights throughout the year. These include open houses, breakfasts, portfolio nights, science fairs, and educational game nights. MTCS 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.

✓ **Conferences:**

Parents are invited to attend two scheduled Parent Teacher conference meetings. They are invited to meet with classroom teachers and Tiered Interventionists to go over student data and sign title compacts once entrance and exit criteria are explained. Interventions that are available to students not reading at or above grade level will be explained to parents. Parents and or caregivers are contacted by newsletters, flyer, and phone messages in both Somali, Spanish, and English

✓ **Reading night:**

Families are invited in to enjoy a meal and learn about reading strategies that they can use at home with their child. Each child receives a book at their level to bring home. Reading resources are provided for parents and or caregivers. Parents and or caregivers are contacted by newsletters, flyer, and phone messages in both Somali, Spanish, and English

✓ **Math night:**

Families are invited in to enjoy a meal and learn about math strategies that they can use at home with their child. Each family receives math games to take home. Parents and or caregivers are contacted by newsletters, flyer, and phone messages in both Somali, Spanish, and English

✓ **Survey meeting during Title I night:**

Parents are invited to meet with the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Director to go over student programming and give feedback on family

involvement and Tiered Service model. Parents and or caregivers are contacted by newsletters, flyer, and phone messages in both Somali, Spanish, and English

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. One focus of our conference nights is sharing data with families.

MTCS 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.

- **District Website**
<https://mtcs.org>
- **District Assessment Information and Calendars**
- **Building Newsletters**
Every elementary school has a monthly newsletter. Parents are able to receive electronically and sent home with the student.

MTCS Connections Online Academy - Unique Education at MTCS

MTCS District has an elementary school that is unique and not traditional, but online where students can learn from home. At MTCS Connections Online Academy, education is personalized to each student's individual abilities. This personal touch is what sets this program apart from the rest. When students receive the one-on-one individualized attention they deserve, there's no telling how far they'll go. The Personalized Performance Learning approach gives every student the best chance to flourish. Connections Academy gives students a strong, solid education while following the MTCS initiatives and Minnesota State Standards. MTCS Connections Academy is online education programs that personalizes students learning with continuous progress review that modifies the student's program, and adjust goals as needed. Here's a little more about how we go about personalizing a student's education plan:

Reviewing Student Background and Learning Styles: Teachers, Learning Coaches, and students discuss student strengths, skills, and previous school performance to help inform and guide the best teaching and personalized online learning approach.

Testing Performance: In grades K–8, students take a test called LEAP® (Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress®) both at the beginning and end of the year. The LEAP test is used to identify areas of strength and weakness in the student’s learning profile and to measure student growth during the school year to help formulate learning goals.

Finding the Right Courses and Placement: Testing and assessments are used to identify and evaluate a student’s strengths, weaknesses, and talents. We uncover skills that may need improvement and look for ways to enhance the student’s learning potential. All of this information is then used to help select courses based on the student’s individual needs.

Setting Goals: Leadership teams work together to set goals for the student and determine a time line for accomplishing these individualized learning goals during the school year.

Communicating Regularly: When school starts, Learning Coaches and teachers establish a regular communication schedule for the personalized learning plan, depending on the needs of the student.

Scheduling Modifications and Electives (K–8): Throughout the year, teachers personalize the learning schedule. They inquire about the student’s daily routines and make adjustments to the student’s online learning schedule as needed. They also may decide to add an elective course.

Professional Development

MTCS District/ Schools recognize the importance of professional development and its impact on student learning. The elementary professional development will strive to be job-embedded and focused on the five strands of reading. We will use experts and our local reading specialists to provide resources. We will be providing time for teachers to align standards, materials, and assessments; analyze student data; and study research-based literacy instructional strategies (i.e. Guided Reading Approach and continued training on the new Reading curriculum). We will use our District Comprehensive Needs Assessment from our District Improvement Plan for any other professional development needs.

Our district is committed to professional learning communities and common planning time to promote professional development for our teaching staff. Each professional learning community will meet weekly.

MTCS 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 are planned staff development days built into the school year calendar along with a 2-day Summer Staff Development Institute. Professional development is provided by:

- Internal Leadership Team
- Regional Center of Excellence
- Outside Resources/Consultants
- Curriculum Coordinator

Literacy coordinator works with classroom teachers and Title I teachers 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
- Provide In-house ongoing professional development to all teachers throughout the year.

Professional development monitored by coaches, administrators, and/or consultants.

Communication system for annual reporting:

MTCS 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 October of each year, parents are invited to learn about the local literacy plan for the school and vote for new board members.

Lastly, the MTCS Local Literacy plan is posted on the MTCS website at www.MTCS.org.

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