

Introduction:

The State of Minnesota Legislature adopted statue 201B.12 in 2011. The primary goal of the statue is to have every child reading at or above grade level by the end of 3rd grade. The statue requires that teachers provide comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction consistent with sections 122A.06 subdivision 4 of the state law. Statue 120B.12 requires school districts to identify children before the end of kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 who are not reading at grade level. The statue also requires that school districts must use reading assessments and provide a summary report to the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner each year.

Stephen/Argyle Central School District has developed and adopted the following literacy plan in order to meet the requirements of the statue and best serve students. The literacy plan has been developed with the mission of Stephen/Argyle Central in mind – “to provide the best quality learning environment for all students. Working cooperatively with home, school and community, all learners will develop the knowledge and skills for citizenship to be successful participants in a democratic society and rapidly changing world.” The plan also aligns with the district’s objectives of maximizing students achievement and maintaining an environment of continuous improvement.

The components of the literacy plan include the following:

- A process to identify students who are not reading at grade level in grades kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2
- Procedures for notifying parents about reading performance
- Interventions used for students in school for children who are not reading at grade level
- Intervention materials and ideas that will be distributed to parents to help promote literacy and improve reading skills at home
- Staff development plan for teachers and support staff to ensure that they have access to training in reading instruction and intervention strategies
- Annual summary report to Minnesota Commissioner of Education

The plan was constructed by the Superintendent/Elementary Principal. It was reviewed, edited, and approved by the Stephen/Argyle Central Elementary teaching staff, and the Stephen/Argyle Central School Board.

Identification of students who are not reading at grade level:

Stephen/Argyle Central School District continually assesses the reading progress of students. Students in grades K-3 take reading unit tests as the end of each reading unit that examine student’s phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Students in Stephen/Argyle Central also are assessed twice per year by taking the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) test of reading skills. The NWEA benchmark assessments help prioritize which students are in the greatest need of reading interventions, the areas of greatest need for the students and the overall reading curriculum, and provides a tool that can monitor school-wide growth in reading.

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Students in kindergarten are determined to be at grade level if they are consistently achieving 70% or higher on their reading assessments, score 50% percentile or higher on the NWEA assessment, and rate grade level appropriate on quarterly classroom reading assessments.

Students in grade 1 and grade 2 are determined to be at grade level if they are consistently achieve 75% or higher on their reading unit assessments, score 50% percentile or higher on NWEA assessment, and rate grade level appropriate on quarterly classroom reading assessments.

Students must meet the minimum requirements in all three areas of assessment to be considered reading at grade level. If a student meets two of the three assessment requirements, a teacher narrative supported by student reading performance evidence may also be considered to make a final determination about overall reading ability. Students who meet zero or one of the assessment targets will be determined to not be reading at grade level.

Process for notifying parents:

Communication with parents on the academic progress and growth of their children is a focus point of Stephen/Argyle Central. As a result of this focus, Stephen/Argyle Central hold a Back to School Night at the start of the new school year to introduce parents and students to the academic expectations for the year and the reading curriculum. The teacher demonstrates to parents what their children will be learning in school that year and what curriculum components will require support from home. The school district holds Parent/Teacher Conferences twice each year. One conference is held in the Fall at the end of the first quarter and one conference is held in the spring. Each parent receives a scheduled conference time and academic progress is shared. The school district distributes report cards at the end of the academic quarters in November, January, March, and May of each year. All staff are encourage to communicate with parents at any time the identify a student having difficulty learning to read and offer ideas on how the school and family can work together to improve student progress.

Parents will be notified if their child is at risk of falling behind grade level at the following times:

- Fall Parent/Teacher conferences (K-3)
- Spring Parent/Teacher conferences (K-3)

In May of a child's kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade year an official form letter will be issued by the school office notifying parents if their child is not meeting the requirements to be reading at grade level.

The notification letter will detail the following information:

- Students NWEA achievement percentile achieved
- Average percentage achieved on unit reading assessments
- Students current grade earned in reading report card assessments
- List of school interventions planned to improve child's reading performance

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- Intervention strategies for family to begin at home that will help improve child's reading skills

School Interventions:

Stephen/Argyle Central School District has many different levels of interventions available to students that fall behind in reading. Many of the intervention the school district offers are available to all students and become implement as needed. Title I/Response to Intervention and Special Education services are only offered to children that meet qualifications. For students to be eligible for Title I/RTI they must meet three of the following criteria: score below the 30th percentile on the NWEA assessment, have received Title I/RTI services during the previous year, have received a referral from classroom teacher/student assistance team, score below target level on reading series benchmarks tests. For students to be eligible for special education they need to demonstrate poor academic progress and need to go through the special education evaluation process to determine if they qualify for special education services.

The following list outlines many of the district intervention plan components:

- Teacher conferences with parents and identifies supplemental interventions.
- The teacher provides students with on level reading material to help support learning.
- Teacher provides in class time for additional small group guided reading.
- Paraprofessional assistance is available to help students who need extra help.
- The district has a Title I/RTI program to provide intensive reading skills practice
- There is an after-school program available to students who need extra support
- A student assistance team (SAT) will collaborate to determine if a student needs more support
 - o SAT members include current teachers, former teachers, support staff, and parents
 - o The team discusses need for further interventions and builds intervention plan (further interventions could include special education referral, additional family support, discussion about retention, and other intervention plans)
- Special Education Assessment determine if a child is eligible for Special Education Services

Intervention and Ideas sent Home:

Stephen/Argyle Central encourages family involvement in our students' education. Our core beliefs are focused around the following priorities for students, staff, and parents:

- Students will strive to reach their potential of academic and social excellence.
- Students will demonstrate personal accountability.
- Parents will be responsible to set high expectations and provide structure and guidance to maximize student potential.
- Parents will be accountable for involvement and communication in their child's educational and social growth.

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- Staff will strive to meet individual needs by individualizing instruction.
- Staff will provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum that sets high expectations for all students.

When a child is not meeting grade level expectations in reading, the school and parent partnership must work together to improve the child's reading. Teachers will communicate with parents when they identify that a student has fallen behind. The teacher will ask parents what they are doing at home to promote reading and practice reading skills. The teacher will provide suggested ideas and resources to help parents know what to do to help a young child that needs the extra help to learn to read. The following list includes items and ideas that have been shared with parents so they can help a child improve his/her reading:

- Parents are encouraged to set up a time to listen to their child read
- Parents are encouraged to set up a time to read to their child
- Parents are encouraged to help children read Accelerated Reader books at home
- Teachers send home reading materials ahead of time to encourage pre-reading of stories
- Teacher send home alphabet cards and charts to support letter recognition
- Teacher send home alphabet games and websites to use as resources to support skill development in letter names, letter sounds, beginning sounds, ending sounds and rhymes
- Teacher send home leveled reading materials, sight word books and cards, and rhyming books
- Teacher send home learning songs – alphabet, rhyming, and calendar
- Teacher sends home short stories for fluency practice
- School shares a list of primary learning websites with reading practice games that can be accessed at home
- Reading software apps are loaded on I-Pod Touches to be used at home for reinforcement and engagement of basic reading skills
- Weekend practice information is sent home
- Summer practice information is sent home

Staff Development Promoting Reading

Statute 120B.12 requires school districts to implement comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction in the five areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension as defined in section 122A.06, subdivision 4 until child achieves grade-level proficiency. Elementary teachers are also to receive sufficient training to provide comprehensive scientifically based reading instruction using the intervention methods outlined earlier.

Stephen/Argyle Central School District regularly reviews its curriculum. The school district has adopted a elementary reading curriculum in 2011 that focuses on the five areas of reading as defined by state statute. The reading curriculum contains components that help develop a child's phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers routinely assess students progress in each of the essential

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areas. The curriculum the school district also works cohesively with the district's intervention methods listed earlier in this plan. The elementary reading curriculum offer leveled guided reading practice books and three different levels of student work allowing teachers to find materials that best fit student's needs.

The Stephen/Argyle Central School District selects curriculum aligns to the state standards and common core standards. As standards change, the district teachers compare the current curriculum and their instructional strategies to state standards and common core standards. The teachers use an online tool to create curriculum maps of their instructional plans for the year. Teachers identify when they teach each standard benchmark in their curriculum maps. The building administration helps teachers make sure they are teaching essential standards by examining standards by examining curriculum maps and using the mapping tool to analyze assessment results.

Stephen/Argyle Central School District utilizes professional learning communities to promote staff development. The elementary teachers in the school district receive ongoing training on how to implement the curriculum to all students. The teachers meet regularly to review students progress, growth, interventions, and curriculum implementation.

Stephen/Argyle Central School District requires all teachers and administrators to receive at least three hours of continuing education in reading before they can renew their teaching license every five years. The district encourages teachers to attend regional workshops offered by the Northwest Service Cooperative and Northern Coalition Education Center, Minnesota Department of Education, and other educational agencies focused in the areas of reading, literacy, and diversity.

Teachers and administrators benefit by professional development in several ways. They remain current on best-practices scientifically based techniques and view new material available to improve curriculum and instruction. Teachers and administrators hear new ideas that are working in other school districts and are able to bring those ideas to Stephen/Argyle Central School District.

Stephen/Argyle Central does not have a significantly diverse population in terms of ethnicity or poverty. We do serve a small migrant population on a yearly basis. Our staff has worked through experience and access to technology to serve students using interventions that meet English Language Learners needs. In addition, we have worked with Tri-Valley, Inc. to find additional resources to serve cultural issues. Our diversity has increased over the past 5 years in terms of poverty and special education. In both cases, the staff of Stephen/Argyle Central has worked to meet the needs of our changing student population.

Annual Report to Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner

A report will be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner each year on or before June 1st. The report will detail the following:

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- Summative NWEA assessment result of Fall and Spring for grades K-3
- Summative results from the K-3 Curriculum Based Unit assessments
- Summative results identifying number of students who are not reading at grade level in grades K-3 based criteria noted in identification section.

The report will also be shared with the district staff development committee, results will be included in the school district's Annual Report on Curriculum and Instruction, and will also be shared with the Stephen/Argyle Central School Board. Teachers will use classroom assessments data and the summary assessment data to make adjustments to curriculum and instruction to help ensure all students will be reading at grade level by grade 3.