

Administrative Procedure 5050
Early Literacy Program

Board Governance Policy Cross Reference: [1, 7, 12](#)

Administrative Procedures Cross Reference:

[Appropriate Educational Programming and Inclusion](#)

Form Cross Reference:

Legal/Regulatory Reference:

Early learning experiences are linked with school achievement, emotional and social well-being, and with later adult productivity. Proficiency in reading, writing, language and literacies is foundational to future learning and participation in society and Grade 1 is a critical year for beginning the journey toward proficiency.

For these reasons, the Interlake School Division has established the ISD Early Literacy Program (ELP). This represents a shift from the Reading Recovery Model at Grade 1 to the ELP. The ELP is a Responsive and Tiered Instructional (RTI) approach to the teaching and learning of reading in Kindergarten through Grade 2.

The ELP will identify student needs, deliver appropriate, tiered reading instruction to students in Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 and monitor student achievement with an eye to adjusting programming as required. Details of each aspect of the program are below.

Program Aspects

Personnel

1. The Early Literacy Program (ELP) is supported and implemented by the following professional staff:
 - a. Literacy Support Teacher
 - b. School-based Early Literacy Co-teachers
 - c. Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 Teachers
 - d. School based Student Support Teams
 - e. School Learning Support Teachers
 - f. School Principals

- g. Interlake School Division Program Support
- h. Interlake School Division Superintendent's Department

2. Schools with Grade 1 classes will be allocated professional staffing time for an Early Literacy Co-teacher (ELC).
 - a. Each school will designate one member of their staff as the ELC.
 - b. The ELCs will work alongside, and in the classes of, Grade 1 teachers for a minimum of 30 minutes each school day.
 - c. School principals will implement routines and procedures so that ELCs are not pulled from their ELC duties to other tasks in the school.
 - d. It is not the intent of the Early Literacy Program that students be pulled out of classrooms by the ELC.

Program

1. The Early Literacy Program is founded on the structured literacy approach.
 - a. In Kindergarten, the focus is on phonological awareness and learning letter names and sounds.
 - b. In Grade 1, the focus is on developing automaticity with letter sounds and names, and on decoding words with consistent letter-sound relationships. Decodable texts provide substantial opportunities for learners to practice reading words with the letter patterns they have been taught, following each small group phonics lesson. Decodable texts are used to help students develop a habit of accurate reading.
 - c. In Grade 1 and 2, students will transition from decodable texts to leveled readers, and authentic texts, upon mastery of specific foundational reading skills.
2. The structured literacy approach is used to support the teaching of reading and writing in Kindergarten to Grade 2. This approach involves explicit, direct instruction of the rules of the English language. New concepts are introduced systematically, following a clear scope and sequence. In structured literacy, the "units of language are introduced in a systematic sequence of increasing complexity from simple vowels and consonants through multiple syllable words"¹. Structured literacy lessons are multi-sensory in that many senses are engaged as students learn new concepts. For example, lessons include features like simultaneous oral spelling, in which students say the sounds of the letters or letter patterns aloud as they write them.
3. The Early Literacy Program uses small group differentiated reading instruction to implement the strategies, methods, and assessments described in this document.
 - a. The strategies and techniques of structured literacy form the core of the ELP practice.
 - b. These strategies and how to implement them in the classroom are the foundation of the ELC, Grade 1 and Grade 2 teacher training.
 - c. Decodable texts will be in use for small group instruction until students demonstrate proficiency in certain foundational skills, such as the ability to decode words accurately.

¹ Uhry & Clark, as cited in Ring et al, 2017, p. 384.

4. Program targets

a. By the end of Kindergarten, students will:

- identify all letters by name;
- identify the letter sounds for all lowercase letters; and
- demonstrate phonemic awareness through segmenting and blending words with three sounds.

Progress towards, and proficiency in, these foundational skills will be assessed using the Really Great Reading (RGR) Letter Knowledge Survey, the RGR Phonological Awareness Survey, and the Early Years Assessment (EYE).

b. By the end of Grade 1 students will:

- demonstrate a proficiency in decoding real and nonsense CVC words (short vowels, digraphs, and blends) in isolation;
- decode 2-syllable words (e.g., comment, napkin, tennis, submit, gallon) and known 3-syllable words in isolation (e.g., penmanship, fantastic, magnetic, accomplish, electric) that have short vowels (closed) or schwa; and
- decode 1 and 2-syllable words with r-controlled vowels and silent e.

Progress towards, and proficiency in, these skills will be assessed using the RGR First Grade Foundational Skills Survey.

c. In Grade 2, students will transition to reading leveled readers and authentic texts in small group instruction when they:

- have demonstrated proficiency in word and sentence reading accuracy, as assessed in the RGR first Grade Foundational Skills Survey (FSS1) or the RGR Diagnostic Decoding Surveys (DDS); and
- achieve a score of 95% or higher on the FSS1 or DDS. These assessments measure mastery of the skills listed in section 4b, above.

Data Overview

1. Proactive data:

- ##### a.
- Proactive data is used to identify students for whom implementation of additional reading instruction would be most beneficial.

2. Sources of proactive data:

- ##### a.
- The Kindergarten Early Years Evaluation (EYE-TA)
- ##### b.
- Recommendations of Kindergarten teachers
- ##### c.
- Really Great Reading (RGR) First Grade Foundational Skills Survey (FSS1)

Use of Data

- #### 1.
- The data sources listed provide an initial indicator of student risk. With respect to the EYE-TA, it is not the intent that teachers overtly teach to improve the scores. Instead, teachers may use these results to better understand the needs of individual students and their classroom. With respect to the FSS1, it is the expectation that teachers overtly teach the underlying skills for

accurate word and sentence decoding. No high stakes decisions should be made based solely on the results of these assessments.

2. The primary use of the data sources listed above are:
 - a. to indicate which students are at risk of needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 responsive targeted instruction (RTI);
 - b. to indicate which students might be at risk for reading difficulties;
 - c. to inform student and classroom profiles. All data collected as part of the Early Literacy Program should form part of student and classroom profile meetings; and to monitor student progress and response to instruction.
3. For clarity, the ISD Early Literacy Program serves all early year's students with appropriate, responsive, targeted instruction. It is important to identify students who might require Tier 2 or Tier 3 instructional responses as early as possible.
4. The secondary use of this data is:
 - a. to monitor program efficacy; and
 - b. to provide division level literacy data.

Assessments and Data Collection

1. Kindergarten

- a. ISD will evaluate all Kindergarten students using the EYE-TA assessment.
- b. For non-colony schools the EYE-TA data entry typically takes place in mid-November and late April each year.
- c. For colony schools the EYE-TA data entry takes place in Spring and then the following Fall as these students enter Grade 1.
- d. The EYE RTI level for all students will be entered into Clevr.
- e. The full EYE report for students who indicate Tier 2 or Tier 3 will be uploaded into Clevr.
- f. The Literacy Support Teacher will consult with all non-colony K teachers and school SST in November and December of each year to examine EYE data and construct learning plans for students.
- g. The Literacy Support Teacher will consult with colony SST in May of each year to examine EYE data and construct learning plans for students.
- h. In January and May of each year, all students will be assessed for letter knowledge and phonological awareness using the RGR Letter Knowledge Survey and the RGR Phonological Awareness Survey.
- i. This data will be entered into the RGR Grouping Matrix and Clevr.

2. Grade 1

- a. In September and May of each school year, all Grade 1 students will be assessed for knowledge of letter sounds and names using the RGR Letter Knowledge Survey.

- b. In September, all Grade 1 students will be assessed for beginning reading skills using the RGR First Grade Foundational Skills Survey (FSS1).
- c. The FSS1 will be used to assess student progress again in January and May, for students who continue to work toward proficiency in the beginning reading skills described above (Section: Program, 4b).
- d. The PM Benchmark will be used only after proficiency in the foundational skills has been demonstrated by the student; that is, when the student achieves a score of 95% or higher on the FSS1. The PM Benchmark assesses reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension.
- e. Students who score far below benchmark on the FSS1, when tested in September and May, will be assessed using the RGR Phonological Awareness Survey. This information will support teachers in planning for explicit phonemic awareness instruction, which is an essential underpinning of successful decoding.
- f. All students' spelling accuracy skills will be assessed through the Words Their Way Spelling Inventories.
- g. Summary data will be entered into the RGR Grouping Matrix and Clevr.

3. Grade 2

- a. In September of each school year, all Grade 2 students will be assessed for knowledge of letter sounds and names using the RGR Letter Knowledge Survey. Students who score below 100% in September, will receive direct, explicit instruction in letter names and sounds, and their skill development will be monitored regularly. In May, these students will be reassessed, using the RGR Letter Knowledge Survey.
- b. In September, all Grade 2 students will be assessed for beginning reading skills, using the RGR End of Year First Grade Foundational Skills Survey (FSS1).
- c. The RGR Diagnostic Decoding Surveys (DDS) will be used to assess student reading skills in January and May, for students who have not yet gained proficiency in the foundational reading skills, as measured by the FSS1.
- d. The PM Benchmark will be used only after proficiency in the foundational skills has been demonstrated by the student, that is, when the student achieves a score of 95% or higher on the FSS1 or the DDS.
- e. The PM Benchmark will be used to determine student reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension in September and May, for students who have gained proficiency in the foundational reading skills measured by the FSS1 and listed in the Program section above (4b).
- f. Students who score far below benchmark on the FSS1, when tested in September, will be assessed using the RGR Phonological Awareness Survey. This is to support the teacher in planning for instruction in the skills of identifying and manipulating sounds in spoken words.
- g. All students' spelling accuracy skills will be assessed through the Words Their Way Spelling Inventories.
- h. Summary data will be entered into the RGR Grouping Matrix and Clevr.

4. Data collection and retention

- a. Summary results of all EYE-TA, Really Great Reading, and Words Their Way assessments will be gathered and collated centrally through Clevr by the Literacy Support Teacher and Program Support – Curriculum.
- b. Full assessments will be placed in the student's pupil file.
- c. Data will be triangulated with other data sources such as report card marks and anecdotal observations.

5. Data Flow

In September of each year, teachers and school SSTs will read and analyze the EYE, Really Great Reading, and PM Benchmark data gathered the previous year.

Resources and Training

1. All Kindergarten teachers new to the role will meet with the Literacy Support Teacher for orientation regarding EYE implementation.
2. In schools where a high number of students scored at Levels 2 and 3 in the EYE, the Kindergarten teachers will undergo training on the Foundations Level K teaching materials. Foundations small group instruction, delivered by the Kindergarten teacher, will occur for students who scored at Tier 2 or 3 on the EYE in the fall.
3. All Grade 1 teachers new to Grade 1 and all early years Learning Support Teachers new to that role will be encouraged to take the online course *The Science of Reading*.
 - a. The *Science of Reading* will be suggested as an optional course for any early year's teacher.
 - b. The ISD will cover the cost of *The Science of Reading*.
4. All ELCs, Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2 teachers will undergo training on the Really Great Reading assessment administration.
5. The ISD will arrange for all ELCs and Grade 1 teachers to undergo full Orton-Gillingham training (planned for school year 2023/2024).

Duties and Responsibilities

The ISD Early Literacy Program Team includes:

- Interlake School Division Senior Administration and the Board of Trustees
- Student Services Administrator (SSA)
- Program Support – Curriculum (PSC)
- Literacy Support Teacher (LST)
- School Principals and Vice-Principals
- School-based Student Support Teams (SST)
- Learning Support Teachers
- Kindergarten Teachers
- School-based Early Literacy Co-teachers (ELC)
- Grade 1 Teachers
- Grade 2 Teachers

Responsibilities of Team Members

School Division Senior Administration and the Board of Trustees

- Support and provide staffing for the Early Literacy Program.
- Receive and consider program recommendations from Program Support.
- Provide ultimate oversight of the Early Literacy Program.

Student Services Administrator

- Liaise with Program Support-Curriculum and the Literacy Support Teacher to ensure coherence between the Early Literacy Program and other RTI strategies.
- Communicate with division support personnel regarding the ELP.

Program Support – Curriculum

- Oversee the annual operation of the Early Literacy Program.
- Consult and communicate with the Literacy Support Teacher and school principals regarding the Early Literacy Program.
- Receive and analyze data generated by the program.
- In consultation with other team members, identify and recommend program adjustments.
- Report on the Early Literacy Program to ISD Senior Administration, the Board of Trustees, and Admin Council as requested.
- Liaise with the Student Services Administrator and Literacy Support Teacher to ensure coherence between the early literacy program and other RTI strategies.

Literacy Support Teacher

- Direct the Early Literacy Program.
- Identify and secure required program resources.
- Facilitate training of team members.
- Act as resource to principals, school-based SST, ELCs and teachers.
- Liaise and consult with Program Support-Curriculum, Student Services Administrator, and principals to ensure coherence between the Early Literacy Program and other RTI strategies.
- Provide feedback and support to ELC, Grade 1, and Grade 2 teachers with regards to program fidelity.
- Provide EYE-TA data to school-based ELCs at the beginning of the school year.

Principals

- Support the Early Literacy Program in their schools.
- Liaise and consult with Grade 1 and 2 teachers, the ELC in their building, and the LST to ensure coherence between the Early Literacy Program and other RTI strategies.
- Ensure that staffing and schedules facilitate the ELP.
- Ensure that the role of the ELC is not interrupted or compromised by other school activities, duties, or events.

School Based SST

- Liaise and consult with the Literacy Support Teacher and ELC to ensure coherence between the Early Literacy Program and other RTI strategies.

Learning Support Teacher

- Provide or oversee Tier 3 individualized, responsive, targeted instruction for students who indicate such needs during testing.
- Provide or oversee Tier 2 small-group, responsive, targeted reading instruction for students who indicate such needs during testing.

Early Literacy Co-teacher

- Receive EYE-TA data and consult with Kindergarten teachers to identify students who might require Tier 2 or Tier 3 RTI in grade 1.
- In collaboration with the Learning Support Teacher and Grade 1 teachers:
 - implement the Early Literacy Program with fidelity to the program framework;
 - conduct student assessments as prescribed by the ELP;
 - enter student data, including initial assessments, and ongoing formative assessments specified in the Early Literacy Program into the divisional database; and
 - plan student programming.

- In consultation with the Grade 1 teacher, create flexible groupings of students according to developmental reading stages and adjust these groupings as students advance in their skills.
- Analyze and use data provided by the Early Literacy Program.
- Liaise with principals and the school-based SST to ensure coherence between the Early Literacy Program and other RTI strategies.
- Attend training and planning meetings.
- Adhere to the ELP in-class schedule, with consistent, daily, uninterrupted time spent in small-group instruction.

Grade 1 Classroom Teachers

- In collaboration with the ELC;
 - implement the ELP in their classroom with fidelity to the program framework;
 - conduct student assessments as prescribed by the ELP;
 - plan student programming;
 - monitor student progress and reading achievement; and
 - create flexible groupings of students according to developmental reading stages, and adjust these groupings as students advance in their skills.
- Adhere to the ELP in-class schedule, with consistent, daily, uninterrupted time spent in small-group instruction
- Work with parents to encourage at-home reading and, where possible, send home books that students have read in small-group instruction.

Grade 2 Classroom Teachers

- Implement the ELP in their classroom with fidelity to the program framework.
- Conduct student assessments as prescribed by the ELP.
- Plan student programming.
- Monitor student progress and reading achievement.
- Create flexible groupings of students according to developmental reading stages, and adjust these groupings as students advance in their skills.
- Adhere to the ELP in-class schedule, with consistent, daily, uninterrupted time spent in small-group instruction.
- Work with parents to encourage at-home reading and, where possible, send home books that students have read in small-group instruction.

Kindergarten Classroom Teachers

- Administer and report the results of the EYE-TA.
- Identify students for whom early implementation of augmented reading instruction in Grade 1 would be most beneficial and communicate this to the ELC.
- Use the results of the EYE-TA and other data sources to provide responsive tiered instruction to Kindergarten students to develop reading readiness.