Nerstrand Elementary School

Local Literacy Plan

District/Charter and School Site Identification Information	
District Name and Number: Nerstrand Elementary School, District 4050	Phone: 507-333-8650
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All Minnesota School Districts are required to develop (revise) and implement a local literacy plan based on the five elements prescribed under MS section 120B.12
This document shall seek to satisfy the requirements. On a broader level, we seek to share our current efforts to create the optimum environment for student success, with the goal that each and every student is reading well by third grade. Nerstrand's overall reading proficiency rate was 67.5 percent, as indicated by the MCA testing, and the MMR was 71.60 percent in 2014.

Literacy Goals:
At Nerstrand Elementary, we believe that literacy is the fundamental academic asset and that literacy skills are among the most critical skills our students can learn. The ability to read, write, speak, listen, view, visually represent, and think in order to communicate and contribute to society has a direct bearing on the quality of our students' lives. More than another ability, the ability to use language and read defines the parameters of a students potential to learn as well as his or her ability to demonstrate proficiency in standards across curriculum.
1. Reading instruction will be provided utilizing a comprehensive literacy approach with consideration to the developmental needs of students.
2. Students will demonstrate enjoyment of reading as well as capacity to gain new knowledge via a variety of reading materials including electronic texts.

Ensuring Reading Proficiency for All Students in Kindergarten Through Grade 3

Our on-going commitment to excellence in teaching and learning is grounded in:
- Comprehensive, ongoing assessment of each student
- The school/district has an identified academic goal each school year that aligns to student reading proficiency as a key performance indicator for the school authorizor
- The 2010 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts, which use the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects as a base.
- Classroom Curriculum and materials are research-based for effectiveness
- Research-based teaching and learning protocols
- Utilizing a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS is a multiple level framework for student growth in the classroom. The framework provides a process for teachers to ensure personalized learning for all instruction and interventions.
- Professional Learning Community (PLC) for teachers that focus on improving literacy* (PLCs are cohorts of teachers that study student data, work and teaching strategies to improve student learning) *not all PLCs have a literacy/reading focus
- 'Child-Check Ins' have been an agenda item at weekly faculty meetings. Teachers share relevant student-specific updates (challenges/accolades) that could be important information for the entire faculty to know. Child-Check Ins are also part of the dialogue during discussions about MTSS and interventions and progress monitoring. Special education teachers collaborate with grade level teams to support teachers with current practices in intervention and instructional differentiation.

Assessing Literacy Proficiency

GRADE KINDERGARTEN				
Common Test Name	**Formal Test Name**	**Test Subject**	**Purpose**	**When**
ACCESS FOR ELL's (WIDA)	Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Formative Assessment System for Teachers From University of MN	Early Literacy	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators to enable evidence-based evaluation and date-driven instruction.	Fall, Winter, Spring
Reading Benchmark	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of text over time. The word 'benchmark' means a standard against which to measure something.	Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading	Measures each child's growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Winter

GRADE 1

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
ACCESS FOR ELL's (WIDA)	Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Reading Fluency	Oral Reading Fluency	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators to enable evidence-based evaluation and date-driven instruction.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child's growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Fall and Winter
Reading Benchmark	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of text levels over time. The word 'benchmark' means a standard against which to measure something.	Fall, Winter, Spring

GRADE 2

Common Test Name	Formal Test Name	Test Subject	Purpose	When
ACCESS FOR ELL's (WIDA)	Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
AIMSweb	Benchmark Gr 2-6 (AIMSweb)	Oral Reading Fluency	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators to enable evidence-based evaluation and date-driven instruction.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child's growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Fall and Spring
Reading Benchmark	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of text levels over time. The word 'benchmark' means a standard against which to measure something.	Fall, Winter, Spring

GRADE 3				
Common Test Name	**Formal Test Name**	**Test Subject**	**Purpose**	**When**
MTAS	Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) Required by State of Minnesota	Alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.	Provides performance and growth data to parents, teachers, and administrators. Links assessment results to instruction. (Test is an alternate for the MCA-II/III) These tests are also used to determine whether schools and districts have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward all students being proficient for NCLB.	Spring
ACCESS FOR ELL's (WIDA)	Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs	Oral Reading Fluency	Results of these tests assist parents, teachers and administrators to know students English proficiency levels, set learning goals and determine the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) calculations for Title III	Early Spring
FAST	Benchmark	Oral Reading Fluency	Provides student performance data and reporting improvement to parents, teachers, and administrators to enable evidence-based evaluation and date-driven instruction.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) developed by Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Reading and Math	Measures each child's growth and general knowledge in reading and math skills. These tests track the progress, or growth, in basic skills. They let teachers know where student's strengths are and if help is needed in specific areas.	Fall and Spring
Reading Benchmark	Fountas & Pinnell	Reading	A benchmark assessment system is a series of texts that can be used to identify a student's current reading level and progress along a gradient of text levels over time. The word 'benchmark' means a standard against which to measure something.	Fall, Winter, Spring
MCA - III	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment III (MCA III) Required by State of Minnesota	Reading, Math and Science	The state tests in reading, math and science meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. These tests are given every year to measure student performance on the Minnesota standards in reading and science. The reading and math tests are also used to determine whether schools and districts have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward all students being proficient for NCLB.	Spring

Every student in grades k-5 was screened early in the Fall/Winter/Spring using assessments from the Formative Assessments System for Teachers (FAST). Students who were not proficient were identified. Students who did not meet the following criteria were provided academic interventions in their classrooms and also in an Academic Enrichment Pullout program. Student progress was monitored and interventions were changed depending on the response to intervention. Oral Reading fluency rates are screened three times per year using FAST system.

FAST end of year (Spring) benchmarks (Words Read Correct per Minute (WRCM) assuming 95% accuracy.
Grade 3   129 words per minute read correctly with 90% accuracy.
Grade 2   105 words per minute read correctly with 90% accuracy.
Grade 1   70   words per minute read correctly with 90% accuracy.

Instruction, Interventions and Instructional Supports

Nertrand's framework for literacy development is supported by Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) philosophy, and provides for a tiered model of instruction and supports for all students. The framework provides a process for teachers to ensure personalized learning for all students to reach their potential. hCore elements include: clearly identifying students' needs, designing a tiered system of support that rests on strong core instruction, frequently monitoring students that are underachieving, and changing interventions when students are not progressing to their expected level. Interventions and instructional supports are available to students not reading at or above grade level in grades Kindergarten through grade 5. We believe that with strategic instruction and intervention strategies, all students can achieve success. The goal for all students is to make one or more year of growth in reading. All students mean those achieving below, at or above grade level standards.

Core Instruction: Tier One

At the first tier of instruction is the core instructional program for students. All classroom staff are expected to utilize best-practices instructional methodology and the adopted frameworks and materials with fidelity. All primary students interact with text to build a foundation of strong reading skills, deep comprehension strategies and critical thinking about text. Students not yet at grade level need supported instruction with grade-level and above grade-level texts to:

- Build foundations of background knowledge
- Experience excellent writing and language models
- Engage in discussions to build oral language and vocabulary
- Enjoy a variety of text genres
- Engage with informational text, and
- Participate in critical thinking with teachers and peers

Tier Two Instruction

The second tier of instruction includes targeted interventions for students not yet making sufficient growth. While benefiting from whole class and flexible grouping instruction, some students need more time and sometimes different materials or instruction to accelerate growth and reach grade level benchmarks. Intervention needs occur in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics/word study, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The purpose of reading comprehension, therefore all interventions are designed to support achieving that goal. Motivating and engaging students in the reading process is also critical in reading success.

Tier Three Instruction

At the third tier of instruction are targeted interventions for students not yet making sufficient growth with classroom and differentiated instruction (described in tier two above). Students receive increased instruction and may use alternative curriculum to meet standards and make a year or more of academic growth. They may be taught by a special education teacher. Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) that specifically identify goals and objectives are created for students who qualify for special education services. Special Education teachers choose from a base of scientifically researched reading curriculum and collaborate with classroom teachers and other educational staff.

Interventions are based on learner data

Teachers use progress monitoring data, classroom assessments, professional observation, and diagnostic assessments to ascertain student growth, benchmark students' achievement in grade level standards and plan instruction to target student learning goals. Achievement benchmarks are set using norms consistent across the grade levels.

School Day Services

All students are instructed in their targeted growth areas by a licensed teacher. Some identified students receive additional minutes of reading instruction in their school week. Services during the school day are provided in a variety of formats based on student needs. Models of intervention include, but are not limited to:

- An additional instructional flexible group with classroom materials

Example: Phonemic Awareness lessons

Example: Phonics work with Words Their Way and making words

Example: Fluency work with repeated reading of classroom text

Example: Vocabulary with leveled reader texts

Example: Comprehension work with strategy application, discussion and writing to read strategies

- Direct instruction with a research-based reading intervention program and practice with the teacher

Example: Intervention from University of MN Center for Reading Research, PRESS intervention handbook

- Direct instruction in targeted goals with a teacher

Example: Fluency work with repeated readings

Communication with Parents

Parents are invited to attend three student led conferences each school year. The team includes the student, parent(s)/guardians, classroom teacher, and special education teacher if the student is identified with special education needs. The fall conference is considered a 'goal setting' conference. At that time the student team identifies goals for the student including goals in literacy. At winter and spring conferences the student team shares progress. Parents may request additional conferences as needed throughout the year.

Classroom teachers also communicate instructional goals, activities and support for instruction via a variety of formats:

- Annual Curriculum Night: Parents are invited to a classroom community to learn about the classroom/grade level instructional goals.
- Classroom newsletters and blogs: Parents receive these classroom communications electronically (or hard/paper copy) highlighting instruction practice and classroom activities/events.
- Classroom learning fairs or events: Learning Fairs are instructional demonstrations or events showcasing student learning in a particular course of study or unit. Parents are invited to attend.

'Book in a Bag'
The Prairie K/1 Reading program, includes a 'book in the bag' system. Students take home a book to read at home with a parent/guardian. Using the system, parents are aware of the current 'just right' reading level of their student and share in the enjoyment of reading with their student.
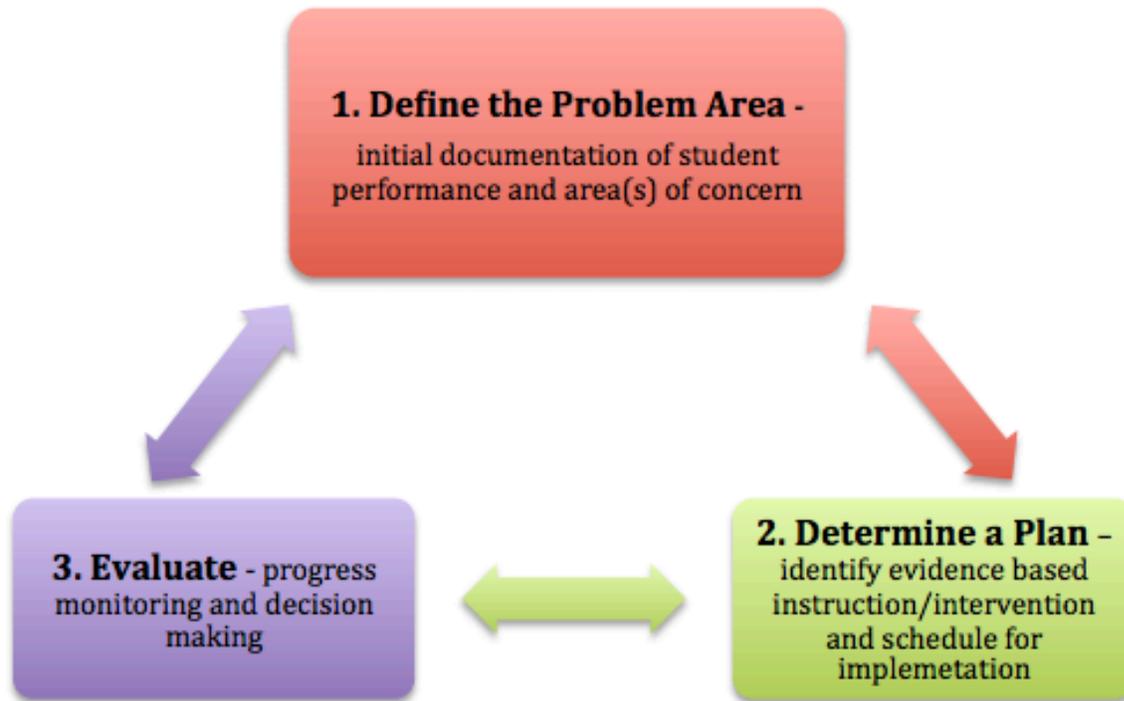
Book Club and Other Parent Volunteer Opportunities
Parents are invited to participate in the academic life of the school in many ways. This is one way to describe our practice as a 'community school.' Parent volunteers provide support within the classroom to listening to students read and by facilitating more structed small group activity like 'book club.' At the 2/3 level, students participate in optional 'book bunch for lunch'. Also at 2/3 level, parents are invited to be 'mystery readers' in classroom.

MCA Scores: MCA scores (Grade 3, 4, & 5 only) are delivered to parents in a detailed report from the MN Department of Education when they are received from the school district, typically in the Fall conference report materials.

Child Study Process
Nerstrand utilizes a thorough 'child study' process to support a student who may be demonstrating academic, social, or behavioral concerns. Concerns reported by parents or teachers are communicated within grade level teams and child study team meeting is scheduled. A child study team will collect preliminary information/data and execute a problem solving process in order to support the students' academic program. The team is composed of special education teacher, classroom teacher(s) and building administrator. Parents are notified and are informed of the child study process and are invited to participate in the team planning process. The child study team utilized the framework:

1. Define the Problem Area -
initial documentation of student performance and area(s) of concern

3. Evaluate - progress monitoring and decision making

2. Determine a Plan –
identify evidence based instruction/intervention and schedule for implemetation

There are a variety of diagnostic tools used to gather information for Child Study Teams. Preliminary information is gathered incorporating grade level assessments. The team uses that preliminary information to identify discrepancies between student performance and grade level standards in order to identify effective interventions. Additional information may be gathered using a menu of assessments to better determine the student's greatest area of need and plan accordingly.