



Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #4189-07

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LITERACY PLAN

Read Well by Third Grade

2023-2024

Our Mission:

JJ Legacy provides an excellent and equitable Montessori education in North Minneapolis to an intentionally diverse community of students.

Our Vision:

Our scholars will develop character strengths, social and emotional skills, creativity, passion for learning and college-preparatory academic capabilities that will enable them to lead lives of joy and purpose.

Purpose:

Our school works to fulfill its purpose by providing an intentionally diverse public charter school in North Minneapolis dedicated to providing its students with an authentic, equitable Montessori Influenced education. We believe in the power of a culturally relevant environment to ignite curiosity and student-led learning, to pursue equity, and to build a community of support and love. We align our work with Minnesota state academic standards while focusing on the development of the whole child and our collective community. Our school is authorized by Osprey Wilds and it is a complementary partnership, as we put an added emphasis on environmental education and taking care of our planet.

Our Philosophy

We use various pedagogies and researched educational best practices from exemplars in the field of Black Culture, Education, Child Development and Race that allow us to create learning environments where children have space to explore, expand and discover the beauty, wonder and power of Black culture. We blend the most relevant, impactful parts of Montessori Pedagogy and institute it in a way that fits the needs of the student population we serve. We are driven by principles that are based on an understanding of human development established through research and observation of children and families through a Black racial lens.

Environmental Education

Our school has an environmental focus and incorporates elements of environmental education (EE) in project-based learning at all classroom levels. The students engage in deep learning around social justice and its connection to EE. They learn about pertinent BiPoc leaders in their own communities and around the world. Students and staff strive to have an attitude of appreciation and concern for the environment. They are dedicated to increasing their problem solving skills and critical thinking skills to enhance engaged learning as it relates to environmental education and human life.

Students and staff are dedicated to increasing their capacity to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment.

Our History:

Year Opened

In 2004 Bright Water Montessori Preschool opened. In 2007 the school expanded by opening Bright Water Montessori Elementary. In 2018 the school was led by Tonicia Abdur Salaam & Jamaal Abdur Salaam as a Turn Around Specialists. In 2020, Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson was founded under the continued leadership of Tonicia Abdur Salaam & Jamaal Abdur Salaam. In 2023, JJ Legacy moved to a new location in North Minneapolis. and enrolls ages 3 through grade 6.

Overview of Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori's Local Literacy Plan

MN Statute 120B.12 states that a school district must adopt a local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3. This legislation is commonly referred to as "Reading Well by Third Grade". The literacy plan "must include a process to assess students' level of reading proficiency, notify and involve parents, intervene with students who are not reading at or above grade level, and identify and meet staff development needs."

The purpose of this document is to outline how Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori plans to address each of these requirements for our students in Kindergarten through Third grade.

Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori Local Literacy Plan Goals

1. Identify all K-3 students who are not performing at grade level and align academic supports and progress monitors to ensure accelerated learning.
2. Form a support team for students including homeroom teacher, intervention support, and families.
3. Ensure that all students are challenged to reach their projected growth target by spring as measured by NWEA.

How Will JJ Legacy Know If Our Students Are Read Well By Third Grade?

Reading proficiency will be defined as students who score at or above grade level benchmarks and who perform at grade level in the classroom. Reading proficiency will be assessed for ALL students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 by multiple measures of assessment, data driven decision-making, and a multi-tiered system of support and commitment to improve literacy skills. Progress monitoring tools are aligned to the core curriculum and intervention strategies are responsive to current data.

Students who are not reading at grade level will receive research-based interventions and their progress will be monitored until proficiency is attained. Interventions will happen in addition to core reading instruction. Core curriculum is aligned to the Minnesota English Language Arts Standards. Curriculum maps are updated annually.

What Kind of Assessments Will Be Used and When?

NWEA Measures of Academic Progress

All students are assessed in the fall, winter, and spring using the NWEA/MAP test to measure growth and progress throughout the school year. This assessment is adaptive, which means that it adjusts based on how well a student performs on the test to determine their current level. The adaptability allows the test to pinpoint skill gaps that may have occurred in the instruction of previous years, rather than simply attending to the standards of the students' current grade level.

Diagnostic Screeners

The following tools will be used to identify student skills and areas of growth:

- Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST)
- Phonics and Word Reading Survey (LETRS)
- Basic & Advanced Spelling Screener (LETRS)
- Orton Gillingham - Phonological Awareness & Phonics Screener (SONDAY)
- Super Kids Screening Tools

EL Progress Monitoring and WIDA ACCESS Administration

Upon enrollment in the EL program, students identified as English Learners (EL) will be progress monitored by the EL teacher working with the classroom teachers to track student progress throughout the year. The EL teacher will provide direct instruction on all aspects of the English language as needed, including reading, writing, listening and speaking, both in the classroom and in small groups outside of the classroom. Annually EL students will take the WIDA ACCESS, which will provide a form of progress data to help with the re-enrollment or exiting of the EL students in the upcoming year.

How Will Parents be Informed That Their Child is Not Reading Proficiently?

All parents will be notified of universal screening results from the diagnostic screeners including NWEA during fall conferences. Goal setting and identifying ways the family can help their student progress at home, will be discussed during conferences. Teachers also connect with families in a variety of ways to communicate progress and concerns in the classroom, in addition to report cards. Students flagged for needing further intervention outside of regular classroom instruction will receive a letter detailing the perceived need and an action plan, which they are welcome to actively participate in creating. Parents can expect an update at mid-quarter in addition to report cards and universal screening communication.

Parents of students who are identified through classroom measures as needing extra help will be notified via phone or letter prior to the student being referred to Child Find. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in helping to identify strategies that might be effective with their child.

JJ LEGACY will host a parent informational night at least once per year focused on parent education and involvement in their students' literacy development.

What Instructional Supports and Interventions Will Be Used?

If a student is identified as not reading at or above grade level, and/or not meeting some or all benchmarks based on screener results will receive tiered intervention. The foundations of reading will be met through our core curriculum (Super Kids grades K-2 implemented 202-2023 & iReady grade 3 implemented 2022-2023). Teachers foster students' understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and other basic conventions. In addition, a necessary and important component of an effective reading program is that it is structured to develop proficient readers with the capacity to think critically, read fluently, and comprehend texts across a range of text structures.

Intervention programs assist students who are struggling with literacy. Based on the results of screening, diagnostic assessments and teacher recommendation, students will receive a multi-tiered level of support that includes research-based interventions. These interventions target skill deficits in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Core, High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Group Interventions

Within core instruction, all students receive high-quality, evidence-based instruction provided by highly qualified personnel to ensure that their difficulties are not due to inadequate instruction. Super Kids was implemented (grades K-2) during the 2022 and 2023 SY. Teachers received Super Kids professional learning during the 202-2023SY to increase their knowledge on foundational literacy. This curriculum provides students a strong foundational literacy instruction. Grade 3 implemented iReady during the 2022-2023 SY. Again, this curriculum provides continued foundational literacy instruction beyond grade 2 Super Kids. All students are screened three times per year to establish an academic and behavioral baseline and to identify struggling learners who need additional support. Students identified as being “at risk” through universal screenings and/or results on state- or district-wide assessments receive supplemental instruction during the school day in the regular classroom. The length of time for this step can vary, but it generally should not exceed 8 weeks. During that time, student progress is closely monitored using a validated screening system such as curriculum-based measurement. At the end of this period, students showing significant progress are exited from tiered intervention services. Students not showing adequate progress after 8 weeks are referred to the intervention support team for further data analysis and an additional 6 to 8 weeks of intensive research-based intervention instruction will be implemented.

Title I Intervention (Tier 2)

Students not making adequate progress in core instruction and classroom intervention are provided with increasingly intensive intervention, through Title I services, matched to their needs on the basis of levels of performance and rates of progress. Intensity varies across group size, frequency and duration of intervention, and level of training of the professionals that are providing instruction or intervention. These services and interventions are provided in small-group settings, in addition to instruction in the general curriculum. In the early grades (kindergarten through 3rd grade), interventions are usually in the areas of reading and math. A longer period of time may be required for this tier, based on student growth. Students who continue to show too little progress at this level of intervention are then considered for more intensive interventions as part of Tier 3.

Intensive Intervention (Tier 3) & Comprehensive Evaluation

At this level, students receive individualized, intensive interventions that target the students’ skill deficits. Students who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions are then referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). The data collected during core intervention, strategic intervention, and intensive intervention are included and used to make the eligibility decision.

What if I Suspect That my Child has a Reading Disorder?

Dyslexia

JJ Legacy teachers are trained to watch for indicators of dyslexia and will communicate concerns with parents and the Child Find team. Parents then have the option to seek additional medical screening through their family doctor or outside resources if they wish to follow up on the school’s concern.

All students who are not reading at grade level before the end of kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 must be screened for characteristics of dyslexia.

*Note: Dyslexia screening also required in grades 3+ “Unless a different reason for the reading difficulty has been identified.”

MDE has an FAQ pamphlet available addressing reading problems or dyslexia in schools that is available by following this link: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/fam/sped/>

Convergence Insufficiency Disorder

Convergence Insufficiency is a vision disorder. Convergence is the inward turning of the eyes, one aspect of accommodation, which is the ability to focus accurately at near such as when reading. A person with convergence insufficiency has a remote near point of convergence or difficulty sustaining convergence which results in visual discomfort. Difficulties in accommodation neither interferes with students’ ability to learn to read nor their reading proficiency. However, it can affect their ability to concentrate on print for prolonged periods of time (Handler et al, 2011).

Convergence insufficiency is not identified by typical school vision screening. If a child states that he or she gets headaches or eye strain while reading for extended periods, this information can be shared with a parent(s) for possible further screening by the family’s eye health professional. A student with convergence insufficiency alone would not be served by a teacher of blind/visually impaired. Handler, S.M., Fierson, W.M., et al. (2011). Joint technical report—Learning disabilities, dyslexia, and vision. *Pediatrics* 127(3), e818-e856. DOI:

10.1542/peds.2010-3670 (taken from MDE’s Reading Well by Third Grade publication)

JJ Legacy teachers are aware of indicators, including headaches, after extended periods of reading that might be underlying a more serious problem such as Convergence Insufficiency Disorder. Teachers will contact parents to relay their concerns for follow up at the family’s discretion with a family physician or ophthalmologist.

What Opportunities do Teachers Have for Professional Development?

- **Super Kids** additional training support
- **iReady** implementation training and support
- Orton Gillingham phonics training (SONDAY)
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Professional development and support will be provided to all JJ Legacy teachers in required curriculum components, e.g., Super Kids and iReady. Teachers will engage in Professional Learning Communities to evaluate data and make collaborative decisions regarding instruction based on the data. Common planning time across grade levels has been built into the schedule to allow for analysis of student work and research based instructional strategies.

Classroom teachers will also work in conjunction with the Exceptional Scholar teacher and Interventionist to provide students with access to the classroom curriculum. Teachers who attend off-site professional development training will bring their knowledge back to the group to share and further innovate as a school.

Where Can I Find JJ LEGACY’s Annual Report Detailing Reading Progress?

JJ Legacy communicates overall district reading proficiency through its World’s Best Workforce and Annual Report. The most recent report can be found on the district website:

<https://www.jjlegacy.org/school-plans-reports-policies>