Columbia Heights Public Schools
Early Childhood Local Literacy Plan: Birth to Age 5

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CREATING WORLDS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH AND EVERY LEARNER
— ALL BELONG, ALL SUCCEED —

Meets Requirements for:

WBWF: World's Best Workforce (Minn. Stat. § 120B.11)

RWBTG: Reading Well by Third Grade (Minn. Stat. § 120B.12)

ESSA/SRCL: Every Student Succeeds Act's Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy
Grant (Public Law No. 114-95, § 1177)

Columbia Heights Public Schools is committed to providing high quality education to students beginning at birth and supporting ALL students in achieving reading proficiency in Kindergarten through Grade 5 in order to lay a strong foundation for continued literacy development throughout the remainder of their formal educational process. Our goal is that every child is college and career ready upon graduation from high school with the skills and passion to be a lifelong reader. Building a strong foundation in reading at an early age is critical to realizing this goal.

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1. Data

Columbia Heights Public Schools (CHPS) recognizes the need to provide instruction to students targeted to their specific needs. In order to customize instruction to individual students, it is important that accurate data are reviewed on a regular basis to determine the level of incremental growth in proficiency students demonstrate in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. The use of multiple assessments for screening proficiency level, diagnosing specific areas of need, and monitoring progress is an important part of the process. With these data, staff determine the steps needed for Columbia Heights students to reach their highest potential.

a. Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Columbia Heights Public Schools is a small urban district with many needs. The district borders Minneapolis and has three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school with a total enrollment of 3,309. The racial and ethnic makeup of the district is 43% Hispanic students, 30% Black students, 16% White students, with a smaller number of students identifying as Asian, American Indian, Biracial and other. CHPS students and their families speak more than 30 languages in their homes. The free/reduced lunch rate, an indicator of poverty, in CHPS is presently 82%, which is 39% higher than the statewide average and higher than urban districts such as Minneapolis and St. Paul. All five schools qualify for Title I services due to such a high student poverty level. Additionally, CHPS has a homeless rate of about 2%, which is almost double the statewide average. Finally, the population of English Learner students in CHPS is more than four times greater than the statewide average (37% vs. 9%). While the district averages surpass the statewide average, each individual school also varies. For example, Valley View Elementary contains 57% Hispanic students, 84% free/reduced lunch rate and 55% of the students receive English language services. . The demographics for participants in our early childhood programs are aligned with our K-12 demographics.

Data has become part of weekly conversations by Columbia Heights Public Schools administrators and teachers. It is used to support instructional decisions, intervention plans, progress monitoring assessments, and discussions with families. Monthly, time is dedicated for early childhood teachers and administrators to collaborate and look at data to see what students are telling us through their previous assessments of TS GOLD.

While there isn't comparison data for early childhood programs across the state, when looking at K-12 data, academically, CHPS has performed significantly below state averages in reading, math, and science.

b. Assessment Plan

Assessments are given to students in our PreK 3 and PreK 4 program on a regular basis. These assessments include screening assessments, diagnostic learning assessments, progress monitoring assessments, informal assessments, and formal assessments. Below is a chart of the various assessments by grade level, type, frequency, and proficiency determination.

Type of Assessment	Purpose of Assessment	Assessment	Frequency	Proficiency Determination
Screening Assessment	Used to identify students in need of interventions.	Early Childhood Screening	Once between the ages of 3-5 prior to the start of Kindergarten	Proficiency benchmarks provided by the Minneapolis Preschool Screening Instrument
Progress Monitoring Assessment	Provides ongoing feedback on the level of growth being made by students. Data also provides essential information to teachers on how effective an intervention is for a given student and helps them to determine in a timely manner whether or not a different intervention is needed.	PreK 3 & PreK 4: TS GOLD assessment	Three times per year (beginning of school, January, and May)	Benchmarks for proficiency provided by TS GOLD
Informal Assessments	Teachers use informal assessments to adjust instruction including flexible guided reading groups and technology intervention support.	Birth-5ys (ECFE): -Teacher created materials (utilizing ECIPS and TS GOLD objectives) PreK 3 & 4: -TS GOLD	Every day in various forms	Proficiency for teacher created materials determined by District Literacy Leadership teams
Formal Assessments	Standardized testing used to show student growth throughout the year as compared to others in the state or others of a similar age.	Birth-5 yrs (ECFE): No formal assessment PreK 3 & PreK 4: TS GOLD Assessment	Three times per year (beginning of school, January, and May)	Benchmarks for proficiency provided by TS GOLD

2. Continuous Improvement

a. Teams and Meetings

Monitoring and improving literacy in Columbia Heights Public Schools is done through the input and support of many stakeholders. All principals meet monthly with the Superintendent, Director of Technology, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Special Education, Director of Community Education and district coordinators to discuss continuous improvement. Other teams in the district that work toward continuous improvement include:

- World's Best Workforce Committee
- PreK-5 Literacy Leadership Team
- EL (English Learner) Leadership Team
- Teaching and Learning Leadership Committee
- Special Services Leadership Team
- Age Three to Grade Three Committee
- School Board
- School site teams

The aforementioned teams consist of district staff, school-level staff, parents and community members. The teams meet on a regular basis to discuss data and gather input on curriculum, inclusive curriculum/instruction, interventions, and school/home connection.

b. Strategic Action Planning

Columbia Heights Public School District has aligned district-wide required goals and plans such as the World's Best Workforce, Title, Achievement and Integration, American Indian Education Program, Strategic Plan, and AVID so the work of the district maintains a focus on academic achievement of all students. The current World's Best Workforce Goals are listed on the Columbia Heights website linked here: [Columbia Heights Public Schools World's Best Workforce.](#)

c. Action Planning

i. Assessing and Evaluating Student Progress

Assessing and evaluating student progress occurs in a variety of ways. The administration participates in monthly Lead and Learn meetings which consist of data-driven discussions and check-in meetings among all principals, district staff and the superintendent. Additionally, the district PreK-5 academic leadership team meets monthly. During these meetings, staff participate in professional development and then lead the work in their school and grade level. At the building level, teacher teams participate in PLC data discussions to review pre- and post-assessment data, as well as progress monitoring data, disaggregated by student groups. During these collaborative team meetings, staff discuss instructional strategies and interventions. Columbia Heights Public Schools also incorporates district-wide Data Days into the academic calendar. During these specified days, each site/program reviews specific,

relevant and time-appropriate data for their learners in order to best inform instructional practices.

The District Assessment Coordinator meets with administration and teacher teams to facilitate the dissemination of disaggregated data and to support the data analysis process. The district uses a secure online data warehouse where student data can be sorted and disaggregated. The warehouse is used by PreK – 12th grade staff.

ii. Early Admission to Kindergarten
Columbia Heights conducts early childhood screenings twice a month during each school year. Through the results of the screening and in collaboration with parents/ guardians, students have access to early admission to Kindergarten.

iii. Curriculum and Instruction
Columbia Heights staff receive annual professional development on effective instructional practices. The implementation of the instructional practices is monitored by school and district staff using formal and informal walkthrough rubrics, a feedback protocol is used to support the implementation.

The school board-approved curriculum implementation is evaluated by principals, lead teacher teams and the District Curriculum Coordinator. The four-step process includes: Study/ Preparation, Program Design, Implementation, and Refine/ Sustain. Throughout this process, implementation rubrics are used by district and school staff to monitor the curriculum implementation process and its alignment to standards.

iv. Principal Evaluations
The principal evaluations take place on an annual basis. The criteria for principal evaluations are; instructional leadership, school performance, stakeholder survey, smart goals, leadership action and other measures.

v. Teacher Evaluations
The evaluation of teachers' use of effective instructional practices and curriculum implementation is evaluated by a combination of Principals and Peer Reviewers using "Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching" Model. Teachers work with their designated Peer Reviewer to set individual growth and development goals. Peer Reviewers and Principals conduct walkthroughs and formal observations of teachers. Other components of the evaluation process include student learning goals, student survey data and shared goals.

vi. Equitable Distribution of Teachers and Strategies
The district administrative team in Columbia Heights Public Schools, including the Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals when applicable, the Director of Human Resources, Executive Director of Student Services, Director of Special Education, and Director of Teaching and Learning follow an annual process to identify and discuss placement and

evaluation of probationary and veteran teachers. Included in the process is a thorough discussion of evaluations based on the "Charlotte Danielson's Framework of Teaching" Model. During the discussions, the team identifies where additional support or staff development is needed. Probationary teachers who are not performing are not renewed. Tenured teachers are on a three-year cycle for evaluations; when identified as not performing, they are placed on an improvement plan.

In addition to the annual staffing process, the district administrative team analyzes and discusses enrollment monthly. In the spring and fall of each year, the team discusses staff and student placement protocols in order to support students with special needs and language development. Enrollment for low-income and minority student is equitably distributed among the three elementary schools based on the attendance areas. Columbia Heights has one middle school and one high school so all students at those grade levels attend the same school and have access to high-quality instruction. .

vii. Personalized Learning
Columbia Heights engages students through Personalized Learning which includes technology. Technology devices are used to create self-paced differentiated instruction to:
- individualize instruction
- use formative assessment to increase rigor
- increase student engagement through relevant, exciting learning
- provide equity by challenging and supporting all students with flexible tools and differentiated content
- increase rigor leading to college and career readiness for all students

3. Parent & Community Engagement

Improving literacy skills of students begins with collaboration between the students, teachers, and families. Through various school events including curriculum night, EL (English Learner) Family Night, and conferences, families learn and provide input on literacy strategies the schools are implementing. Families are supported with literacy activities students can do at home in English or in their native language.

Columbia Heights schools work hard to support families and our community using various tools and engagement strategies to enhance communication. Some of these include:
- College and Career Guides for each step of their journey Pre K-12
- Communication apps such as Seesaw and Remind
- Home Visits by staff
- Neighborhood walks
- PTA and PTO
- PAS (Partnerships for Academic Success) Nights focusing in on student data

- Books, Backpacks, and Breakfast (Families receive books and literacy activities to support students)

World's Best Workforce plays an important part creating our literacy goals, monitoring our progress, and providing input into resources and strategies. More about the role of the World's Best Workforce and District Advisory Committee are included in the Continuous Improvement section.

4. Communication Plan

Literacy Plans are created in collaboration with many stakeholders including teachers, administration, families, and community members. Goals are created and analyzed in partnership with these many stakeholders.

a. Reporting to Stakeholders

Communicating results to the many stakeholders is a joint effort between the Teaching and Learning department and Communications department. Communication around literacy data and results, efforts to identify students including students with dyslexia or convergence insufficiency, and literacy action plans are shared by:
- Publishing WBWF on the district website
- Publishing Annual Report on the district website
- Sharing with each school at Curriculum Nights and/or School meetings
- Holding an annual World's Best Workforce meeting for the public
- Sharing with district committees including World's Best Workforce, leadership teams, administration teams

b. Reporting to Parents/Guardians

Supporting students to the fullest includes a partnership with families. Families are updated with student progress via conferences, access to ParentVUE, report cards, meetings, and/or home visits.

5. Professional Development

Columbia Heights Public Schools' professional development plan is grounded in research, national standards and equips teachers to meet state re-licensure requirements and to work collaboratively to support implementation of instructional practices. The plan articulates the needs identified for staff and by staff to ensure processes and practices are implemented well.

The professional development plan is based on a comprehensive needs assessment and aligned to the district, school, and individual goals grounded in "Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching" four domains: Planning and Preparation; Environment; Instruction; and

Professional Responsibility. The framework aligns with the teacher evaluation program and supports all elements of effective instruction. The plan incorporates systems of provision and monitoring of fidelity tools to inform continuous improvement and future needs for professional development.

The World's Best Workforce comprehensive long-term strategic plan provides direction to professional learning to improve teaching and learning and includes education practices that integrate high-quality instruction, rigorous curriculum, technology, and a collaborative professional culture that develops and supports teacher quality, performance, and effectiveness.

Professional learning is provided in three ways: professional workshops, professional learning communities/collaborative grade-level teams/data teams, and individual coaching. This year's professional development reading goal met staff needs as identified through reading data to ensure the following:

- Teachers are able to implement comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction, including instruction in: oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and other literacy areas, including writing.
- Teachers have sufficient training to provide instruction that meets students' developmental, linguistic, and literacy needs using intervention methods or programs selected by the district for identified students.
- Licensed teachers have regular opportunities to improve reading and writing instruction.
- Licensed teachers recognize students' diverse needs in cross-cultural settings and can meet the oral language and linguistic needs of students who are English Learners by maximizing strengths in their native languages to cultivate English language development (including oral academic language) and build academic literacy.
- Licensed teachers are well trained in culturally responsive pedagogy that enables students to master content, develop skills to access content, and build relationships.

A distributed leadership model is used to provide professional learning in a collaborative setting allowing teacher leaders to facilitate the learning of their peers. Training and support are also provided to administrators to provide quality professional learning for capacity building. Peer Reviewers play a primary role in supporting educators with professional learning around individual goals as well.