

South Carolina Department of Education
Read to Succeed Middle School Exemplary Literacy Reflection Tool

Key Changes:

- High schools are no longer required to complete annual reading plans.
- Only middle schools where 50% or more of students scored Does Not Meet (DNM) on SC Ready ELA in the prior school year must complete this survey.

Directions: Please provide a narrative response for Sections A-I.

Section A: Describe how reading assessment and instruction for all 6-8th grade students in the school includes oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to aid in the comprehension of texts to meet grade-level English/Language Arts standards.

- South Carolina Virtual Charter School reading assessment and instruction follows a comprehensive framework that targets essential components of reading utilizing the state approved McGraw Hill StudySync curriculum and Renaissance STAR Literacy program. The curriculum focuses on the critical components of literacy- oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension- as these areas work together to help students comprehend texts and meet grade-level English/Language Arts (ELA) expectations and standards.
 - Oral Language: Instruction supports the development of reading comprehension by placing emphasis on students' listening and speaking skills. Teachers provided structured opportunities such as small and whole group discussions, read-alouds, debates, interactive oral presentations: think-pair-share, Socratic seminars, student led presentations to enhance the students' ability to express ideas, ask questions, and engage in critical thinking.
 - Phonological Awareness and Phonics: Instruction is typically applied in early elementary years; however, some middle school students need support in these areas. Targeted strategies to assess the gaps and provided targeted instruction are STAR Diagnostic Assessments, MTSS Tiered Instruction – provide small-group or one-on-one instruction based on multiple data points (Tier 1 Teacher Lead weekly and ELA WIN Small Groups 30 minutes once a week , Tier 2 small-group serviced 30 minutes twice a week with an interventionist, and Tier 3 students served M-Th for 30 minutes with an interventionist), and STAR Literacy/Reading program targeted lesson instruction to focus on phonemes, decoding, and phonic skills.
 - Fluency: The students' ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression is practiced routinely though both silent and oral reading activities. Strategies included choral reading, repeated reading, readers' theater, whole-class and small-group work, tape-assisted reading, and modeling fluent reading.
 - Vocabulary: Teachers integrate direct and indirect vocabulary instruction following McGraw Hill StudySync curriculum and content specific SC College- and Career-Ready ELA Standards vocabulary, allows students to learn vocabulary decoding skills, word meanings, applying prior knowledge of using sentence context clues, engage in complex texts for understanding and learning new vocabulary. Assessment of vocabulary acquisition helps tailor instruction to enhance students' language and communication skills.

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- Comprehension: Reading comprehension is the ultimate goal to interact meaningfully with a variety of texts. Instruction includes strategies such as questioning, summarizing, making inferences, visualizing, and clarifying to help students understand and interpret texts. Regular assessments using McGraw Hill StudySync, Progress Learning, Freckle, and extended open-ended responses to monitor comprehension skills to guide and adjust instruction based on these results to meet ELA indicators and standards.
- By integrating these components through daily instruction and ongoing assessments – formative and summative- to guide teacher targeted instruction, South Carolina Virtual Charter School ensures all students are receiving the support they need to develop and meet reading skills that align with grade-level ELA standards through the use of complex texts and higher-order thinking skills.
- South Carolina Virtual Charter School integrates the principles of the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills through the use of McGraw Hill StudySync Curriculum, STAR Reading Literacy Assessments and Freckle Practice, and Progress Learning for 6th-8th grade students.

Section B: Document how reading instruction and assessment for 6-8th grade students who are not on grade-level are aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy and foundational literacy skills.

- Students not on grade-level, instruction and assessment align to evidence-based research through the science of reading, structured literacy and foundational literacy skills to ensure effective targeted interventions are provided through daily reading instruction, guidance, practice and assessments.
 - Science of Reading
 - Phonological Awareness: Direct, explicit instruction in sound-symbol relationships, decoding strategies and word recognition using phonological skills ensures that the students can effectively segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in words. This is achieved through targeted practices, assessments and interventions that are aligned with evidence-based research.
 - Phonics: Instruction follows a systematic and cumulative approach through explicitly teaching sound-symbol relationships and decoding strategies by teachers using decodable texts aligned with students’ structured curriculum and standards.
 - Fluency: Building fluency using below-grade-level and grade-levels texts – variety of genres, literary and informational texts- to improve automaticity. This is a natural progression from mastering phonics and decoding and includes both oral reading and silent reading practice with teacher feedback.
 - Vocabulary development: Direct and indirect instruction with an exposure to a variety of texts (literacy and informational) through teacher direct teaching, guided and independent practices. This includes high-frequency academic vocabulary and morphology (prefixes, suffixes, roots) to support word recognition and comprehension. Provided targeted instruction using comprehension strategies such as summarizing, predicting, and making inferences to help students develop skills to determine and understand meaning of complex texts.
 - Structured and Foundational Literacy: Systematic, explicit and sequential instruction geared for struggling readers through a variety of instructional methods and assessments.

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- Explicit instruction focuses on word recognition including decoding, spelling, and word study. This instruction combined with integrating a variety of multi-sensory learning opportunities to increase knowledge and memory development. Teachers provide direct and clear instruction and utilize continuous progress monitoring and assessment is utilized in those specific areas to help improve reading skills.
- Continually focus on syntax, morphology, etymology and semantics are critical components of reading comprehension. To ensure instruction and assessment are meeting students' needs at their level providing targeted lessons (McGraw Hill StudySync) based on data-driven evidence, diagnostic and criterion assessments through SC Ready scores, Renaissance STAR Literacy Diagnostics and Progress Learning Assessments will help students to meet each area of the structured literacy to continually reinforces and connect to new skills learned.
- Differentiated Instruction: provides support through a variety of strategies such as scaffolding texts to practice reading fluency and comprehension, fluency practice paired or echo reading, and continual integration of analogies (morphology: prefixes, suffixes, roots). This enables targeted instruction in small groups, ensuring students' make gains in their reading abilities that are met by addressing specific deficits and promoting growth to meet grade-level standards.

Section C: Document how the school uses interim assessment data and diagnostic assessment data to determine intervention supports for students in 6-8th grade who have failed to demonstrate grade-level proficiency in reading.

- Interim assessment and diagnostic assessments data is vital for identifying and supporting students who have not mastered grade-level proficiency. South Carolina Virtual Charter School utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) model to help identify struggling students.
 - Tier 1 (Universal Instruction- Teacher Led)
 - All students receive high quality, research-based instruction aligned with structured literacy principles through core instruction following McGraw Hill StudySync and SC College- and Career-Ready ELA Standards.
 - Tier 2 (Target Small Group Intervention)
 - Students who do not meet grade-level expectations as identified through SC Ready Scores, Renaissance STAR assessments, and Teacher Recommendations receive small-group, targeted explicit instruction using SC College- and Career-Ready ELA Standards through Nearpod targeted lessons with an interventionist twice a week for 30 minutes. The interventionist focuses on reading difficulties determined by SC Ready Scores and Renaissance STAR assessments.
 - Tier 3 (Small Group or One-on-One Interventions)
 - Students who require intensive intervention receive 30 minutes of small group instruction with an interventionist four times a week. The interventionist focuses on reading deficits determined by SC Ready Scores and Renaissance STAR assessments.
- Continuous progress monitoring and monthly reviews of data is conducted to track progress and adjust instruction as needed. Teachers collaborate to adjust instruction for students not showing adequate progress in their deficits.

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Section D: Describe the system in place to help parents in your school understand how they can support the student as a reader and a writer.

- Parents are informed of their child’s progress through regular reports from STAR assessments, teacher feedback, and receive resources to support reading and writing development at home. Parents meet to discuss student’s progress in teacher parent communication as needed through phone calls, emails, conferences, and MTSS meetings. Additional methods of instruction of what parents can do at home include daily journal writing, aiding in proofreading written responses, 20 minutes independent daily reading through student choice genre, and parent-student questioning (Example: 5 W’s: Who, What, When, Where and How).

Section E: Document how the school provides for the monitoring of reading achievement and growth at the classroom and school level with decisions about 6-8th grade intervention based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading.

- South Carolina Virtual Charter School uses a comprehensive approach for monitoring reading achievement and growth. Progress monitoring is an essential component to ensure all students achieve grade-level proficiency in reading. Interventions and instructional practices are centered on a variety of data sources to ensure a well-rounded understanding of each student’s literacy development and achievement in our virtual learning environment.
 - Classroom Level Monitoring
 - Teachers are responsible for monitoring reading progress and instructional decisions based on data they collected. Teachers use formative assessments during daily instruction such as bell ringers, exit tickets, discussion questions, informal and formal quizzes, and evaluate comprehension responses using a variety of questioning formats.
 - Continually collection of detailed student performance to analyze reading achievement through classroom activities, assignments, and assessments to guide instruction, intervention, and differentiation within the virtual classroom.
 - Tier 1 Monitoring and Benchmarking
 - All Tier 1 students participate in benchmark assessments conducted at three key points in the school year: Beginning of the Year (BOY), Middle of the Year (MOY), and End of the Year (EOY). South Carolina Virtual Charter School uses Renaissance STAR Reading Diagnostic and Progress Learning platforms to conduct assessments. These assessments are administered virtually with students’ cameras on, and proctor view permissions enabled to allow teachers to observe engagement, authenticity, and technology troubleshooting in real-time.
 - All Tier 1 students participate in an Independent Writing Sample, which is used to assess their ability to compose a coherent paragraph using structure, coherence, unity and sentence skills to tailor writing instruction at three key points in the year: Beginning of the Year (BOY), Middle of the Year (MOY), and End of the Year (EOY). The Independent Writing Sample is

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scored on a five-point scale rubric assessing four criteria: topic sentence, detail sentences, concluding sentence and writing conventions.

- Tier 2 Monitoring
 - Students are progress monitored twice during a six-week intervention cycle using STAR CBMs and Independent Writing Samples to measure and track student growth.
- Tier 3 Monitoring
 - Students receive additional progress monitoring three times during a six-week intervention cycle using STAR CBMs and Independent Writing Sample to measure and track student growth.
- Data-Driven Intervention Decisions
 - Data from these assessments – diagnostics, benchmark scores, CMBs, Independent Writing Samples – analyzed to make data-driven decisions regarding reading interventions. Students who demonstrate a need for additional support are placed in Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions, which are designed to support their specific needs. This system ensures that all students, regardless of their initial proficiency, receive the necessary support to achieve grade-level proficiency in reading.

Section F: Describe how the school provides teacher training based in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to support striving readers in 6-8th grade.

- All teachers, principals, SPED, and MTSS team members received training through McGraw Hill StudySync to support striving readers through the curriculum which supports the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to guide their instruction. Teachers received Professional Development from Renaissance and have access to additional virtual professional development. MTSS Coordinator and Reading Interventionists attend monthly Literary Leaders’ meetings and the Charter of Erskine’s professional development meetings for interventionists and coordinators. Teachers participate in regular data meetings to analyze STAR assessment data and plan instruction based on the specific needs of the students. Science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills are incorporated into the instructional planning ensuring consistency across the classrooms.

Section G: Analysis of Data

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Strengths	Possibilities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Spring 2024, SCVCS middle school students produced scores in English Language Arts on the SCReady assessment that surpass the statewide average and places them in the top third of more than 340 middle schools statewide (%M/E: 56.6%, 68th percentile). These scores reflect double-digit longitudinal gains from pre-Covide scores (2018 %M/E: 38.2, +18.4%) and mark SCVCS middle school at the highest performing virtual charter school in the state. • Although the middle school saw a slight decline in the percentage of students meeting state standards in ELA in 2024 (-3.4%), students with disabilities (the group identified for additional support and state-level monitoring through the TSI-CUS designation) produced between-year gains of nearly 6%, indicating this group made progress against the achievement gap identified in the prior year. Additionally, students who identify as Hispanic outperformed their classmates (%M/E: 65.5%) and students who identify as Black or Hispanic narrowed the prior year gap by almost 4%. Combined, these indicate middle school student groups are making catch-up levels of growth. • Rising cohort analyses reveal that rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students have demonstrated longitudinal gains in English Language Arts (gains that surpass 15% over the past 3 years). This within-group measure further reinforces the progress that middle school teachers have been making with each student group (even those that have been more significant affected by Covid and have a baseline that falls below some of their peer cohorts). • High school students produced pass rates on the English 2 exam (70.3%) that reflect increases from the prior year (+1.8%), surpass the statewide average (69.6%), and place them near the 60th percentile of more than 240 high schools statewide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When disaggregating English 2 EOC results by student group, analyses reveal that although SCVCS testers as a whole saw improvement in pass rates, some student groups saw between-year declines in their pass rates. For example, students who identify as Hispanic saw a pass rate decline from the prior year of 10% (2023: 75%; 2024: 65%). Students who identify as Black or African American saw a groupwide decline of 7% (2023: 58.9%; 2024: 51.9%), marking a disparity between their classmates of nearly 20%. Students with disabilities saw very slight declines between years (2023: 29.1%; 2024: 28.2%), but this is the only subject of the four tested that saw declines for this student group. Combined, these suggest that traditionally underserved populations may be an area of focus for additional English 2 strategies and supports. • Analyses that disaggregated EOC scores by standard reveal that Writing may be an area for growth. Only 1 in 2 students scored at levels on these standards that demonstrate strength, with more than 1 in 4 (27.2%) being categorized by the state as requiring additional instruction. • Analyses by standard on the SCReady ELA assessment suggest that two sets of standards that may require additional attention at the middle school level are Writing and Inquiry. In Writing, nearly 42% of students were categorized as requiring additional instruction (and nearly 60% earning a no score or a 1 on the text-dependent analysis), and along the Inquiry standards, this proportion was 37% (this particular standard is also flagged because of the double-digit longitudinal decline in the proportion of students demonstrating strength).

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Section H: Previous School Year SMART Goals and Progress Toward Those Goals

- Please provide your school’s goals from last school year and the progress your school has made towards these goals. Utilize quantitative and qualitative data to determine progress toward the goal(s).

Goals	Progress
<p><u>Goal #1</u> SCVCS will reduce the percentage of students in grades 6-8 scoring at the Does Not Meet level on the Spring 2023 SC Ready ELA assessment to a rate that falls below 15% in Spring 2024</p>	<p>The percentage of students in grades 6-8 scoring at the Does Not Meet level on the Spring 2024 SCReady ELA assessment was 18.5%. This reflects a slight increase in proportion from the prior year and indicates the goal was not met.</p>
<p><u>Goal #2:</u> SCVCS reduce the percentage of students earning an F on the English 2 End of Course Examination from 17.1% to 12.1%.</p>	<p>The percentage of students earning an F on the English 2 End of Course Examination in 2024 was 12.9%. This reflects a decline in proportion from the 2023 rate, and corresponds to an overall pass rate increase of 1.8% from 2023, but indicates the goal was not met.</p>

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Section I: Current SMART Goals and Action Steps Based on Analysis of Data

- Schools may continue to use the same SMART goals from previous years or choose new goals. Goals should be academically measurable. The Reflection Tool may be helpful in determining action steps to reach an academic goal. Schools are strongly encouraged to incorporate goals from the strategic plan.

Goals	Action Steps																																				
<p>Goal #1: The percentage of students in grades 6-8 scoring at the Does Not Meet level on the Spring 2025 SCReady ELA assessment will be reduced to at least 15.6%.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #2e7d32; color: white;"> <th colspan="5">Middle School Distribution by Performance Tier on the SCReady in ELA over Time</th> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #c8e6c9;"> <th>Year</th> <th>Does Not Meet</th> <th>Approaches</th> <th>Meets</th> <th>Exceeds</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022</td> <td>17.1</td> <td>31.4</td> <td>30.3</td> <td>21.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>15.5</td> <td>24.4</td> <td>31.4</td> <td>28.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024</td> <td>18.5</td> <td>24.9</td> <td>29.4</td> <td>27.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Value-Add Projection</td> <td>15.6</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note: the method looks at the average change between years, its standard deviation, and projects forward a reasonable reduction based on the mean change + ½ or whole SD (dependent on variance).</p>	Middle School Distribution by Performance Tier on the SCReady in ELA over Time					Year	Does Not Meet	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds	2022	17.1	31.4	30.3	21.2	2023	15.5	24.4	31.4	28.6	2024	18.5	24.9	29.4	27.2	Value-Add Projection	15.6				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize data from SCReady (where available), STAR Reading, teacher input and referral, and other curricular outcomes to accurately identify students for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services within the SCVCS multi-tiered system of support. Provide Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services to identified students. Monitor progress of students using CBM assessments to identify skill and strand gaps, adjust instruction, and adapt programming or student placement as needed. 						
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<p>Goal #2: The percentage of students earning an F on the 2024-2025 English 2 End of Course Examination will be reduced to at least 8.4%.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #2e7d32; color: white;"> <th colspan="6">High School Distribution by Letter Grade on the EOC over Time in English</th> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #c8e6c9;"> <th>Year</th> <th>F</th> <th>D</th> <th>C</th> <th>B</th> <th>A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022</td> <td>8.3</td> <td>18.1</td> <td>24.1</td> <td>26.1</td> <td>23.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>16.8</td> <td>14.7</td> <td>20.1</td> <td>17.9</td> <td>30.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024</td> <td>12.9</td> <td>16.8</td> <td>23.3</td> <td>19.8</td> <td>27.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Value-Add Projection</td> <td>8.4</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	High School Distribution by Letter Grade on the EOC over Time in English						Year	F	D	C	B	A	2022	8.3	18.1	24.1	26.1	23.5	2023	16.8	14.7	20.1	17.9	30.5	2024	12.9	16.8	23.3	19.8	27.2	Value-Add Projection	8.4					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize data from End of Course Assessments, STAR Reading, teacher input and referral, course grades, and other curricular outcomes to accurately identify students for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services within the SCVCS multi-tiered system of support. Provide Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services to identified students. Monitor progress of students using CBM assessments to identify skill and strand gaps, adjust instruction, and adapt programming or student placement as needed.
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<p>Goal #3: The percentage of students in grades 6-8 receiving a ‘no score’ or earning a 1 on the Writing portion of the SCReady assessment will be reduced to at least 55.2%.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #2e7d32; color: white;"> <th colspan="2">TDA Scores of 0 or 1</th> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #c8e6c9;"> <th>Year</th> <th>Combined</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>63.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024</td> <td>59.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Difference</td> <td>-4.1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	TDA Scores of 0 or 1		Year	Combined	2023	63.4	2024	59.3	Difference	-4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize data from SCReady (where available), STAR Reading, and writing samples to create flexible groups based on student skill levels, enabling targeted instruction in small groups. Provide Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services to identified students. Monitor progress of students using grade-level writing samples to identify skill and strand gaps, adjust instruction, and adapt programming or student placement as needed. 																										
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