UNIVERSAL EARLY LITERACY SCREENING & INTERVENTION

Purpose and Scope

Swan Valley School Division is committed to implementing universal early screening and monitoring for early years literacy to proactively identify students at risk of reading difficulties and ensure they receive the necessary support to succeed. This procedure establishes consistent guidelines for early literacy instruction, assessment, intervention, and communication, aiming to enhance literacy outcomes and reading outcomes for students, ensuring no student is left behind. All Kindergarten to Grade 12 teachers contribute to a student's growth in reading in various ways, acknowledging that literacy involves listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing as interrelated processes. The Division's Early Years Literacy Framework will focus on phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, oral language, vocabulary, writing skills, and reading comprehension. The Division recognizes that reading is a developmental process where students progress at different rates and have diverse needs.

Screening Population, Frequency, and Duration

- All Kindergarten to Grade 4 students in both English and French Immersion programs must be screened for early reading skills.

- Universal implementation will be for Kindergarten to Grade 4 students, and the tools will also be used for students in Grades 5 to 8 who are not reading at grade level.

- Students must be screened at least twice a year.

Screening Cadence and Procedures

- Early reading screening will take place by October 10 each school year to ensure students have access to developmentally appropriate literacy instruction and tiered supports as soon as possible.

- The second screening should take place prior to March 10 each school year to provide time for ongoing targeted intervention.

Selection Criteria for Early Reading Screening Tools

- Selected early reading screening tools must be evidence-based, statistically reliable, valid, and predictive of students who may be at risk for future reading difficulties. The tools must also provide the ability to monitor progress.

- Selected early reading screening tools should focus on specific, developmentally appropriate reading skills (e.g., identifying letters, sounds and their relationships, decoding words, and reading text).

- Selection of early reading screening tools must be done in consideration of language of instruction, including American Sign Language, English as an Additional Language learners, and students with diverse learning needs.

Identified Evidence-Based Early Reading Screening Tools

The Division has identified and will implement specific evidence-based formative assessment tools. This list is expected to be congruent with the Division's Early Years Literacy Framework and be dynamic as the Framework evolves. These tools will be used uniformly and consistently across all schools within the division.

English Program: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and UFLI Assessment. PARA (K and 1 English assessment and Accelerated Reader - STAR Reading can be used as supplemental assessments if required.

French Immersion Program: GB+ and Son-au-graphe (UFLI assessment).

Kindergarten (English and French Immersion streams): Early Years Evaluation (EYE) - Pre-Reading (PR) Skills.

Building Teacher Capacity and Data Utilization

- The Division will ensure that each school is trained to collect formative data from the screening tools and respond to it with instructional strategies.

- A working committee will be established to identify a consistent literacy framework and create training targets for the Division in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy.

- The Division will utilize data analysis processes to inform reading instruction and develop responsive instructional strategies.

- Ongoing, job-embedded professional development is essential to support teachers in responding to the literacy needs of individual learners. The Division will be responsible for providing necessary professional learning opportunities for staff to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Communication Protocols with Guardians

Schools will inform parents of all screening practices in advance via either letter or electronic communication.

The letter will communicate the purpose of the formative assessment, the dates it will be administered, the assessment tools being used, and when the results will be shared with the guardians.

The November and March report cards will include the results of the assessment(s) and any prescribed interventions if the child does not meet the benchmarks of screening tests.

If assessments indicate additional literacy needs, the school team will develop responsive intervention plans in collaboration with the guardians.

Intervention and Support Processes

- The Division will support all learners with established intervention processes and a common approach to tiered intervention to support learners who do not reach the screening benchmarks.

- For students struggling with reading, interventions will begin as soon as educators observe difficulties, including student-specific instruction, practice, access to appropriate reading materials, and/or assistive technology.

- Effective intervention includes direct instruction, strategy instruction, and practice within literacy tasks.

- The Division will build processes to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions offered to students.

Data Reporting and Continuous Improvement

- Classroom practices will consistently demonstrate evidence of understanding of the screening results and influence planning in all schools.

- The Division will use the collected data to summarize efforts, identify areas for improvement, and plan for changes as part of our Strategic Plan and Early Years Literacy Framework, including instructional practices, assessments, and interventions.