



Reading Instruction in Chippewa Valley Schools

In Chippewa Valley Schools, we are committed to continuous growth and ensuring our students meet their highest potential. Not only do we promise to deliver a high-quality education to all students, but we are also committed to giving every child the tools they need to read proficiently. Proficient readers find success in school and life and can enjoy the world that reading makes available. In CVS we want every child to learn to read and apply those skills to other subjects and new learning opportunities. The research makes it clear that 95% of students can learn to read, and we are working toward that goal. We are committed to learning the latest research and reading best practices, so every child learns to read. This research is called the Science of Reading, and it clearly defines how the brain learns to read. In our classrooms, teachers use practices supported by the Science of Reading.

What Does the Research Say?

Reading scores in America have not shown growth for more than 40 years. According to NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress), less than 40% of American 4th graders are proficient readers. Based on our reading proficiency data, there is room to grow. The research indicates that while reading is more challenging for some students than others, with evidence-based reading instruction, nearly every child can become proficient by the end of 3rd grade. With the research available to us now, we can realistically set 95% proficiency as our goal.

Science of Reading

The Science of Reading provides evidence to inform how proficient readers and writers develop; why some have difficulty; and how we can most effectively assess and teach and, therefore, improve student outcomes through prevention of and intervention for reading difficulties. The Science of Reading is also referred to as Structured Literacy.

It is important to know that kids do not just learn to read by placing books in front of them. Kids do not learn to read by guessing or looking at the pictures on a page. In fact, guessing and relying on photos on a page are poor habits that contradict the research. Readers need to sound out words and use research-based strategies to become proficient readers.



Our Focus

In CVS we are committed to improving reading instruction for all students. We have reviewed our teaching, modified our building schedules, and embraced the latest scientific research on how students learn to read.

Our Literacy Block for English Language Arts

To ensure that each student receives the reading instruction geared toward their needs, our literacy block is divided into two sections: whole group and small group instruction. Whole group instruction, where all students receive the five components of literacy instruction, takes place for 90 minutes. Small group instruction, where students meet with their teacher to receive reading instruction aligned to their needs, takes place for 30 minutes daily.



Assessments

When students enter grades K-5, they are administered a reading screening assessment. The assessment we use is called FastBridge. This screening assessment is performed three times per year to ensure that all students are progressing. Staff members review this data to determine the support that each student needs. By reviewing this data, we learn each student's reading skills and identify students who need additional reading instruction or enrichment opportunities. If the reading screener determines that your child needs additional reading instruction, they will be placed into intervention groups. Students will be progress monitored regularly to ensure they are making adequate reading growth.

We believe it is important to share your child's outcome from this screening assessment, and it will be shared with you in a FastBridge Family Report. Current progress in reading from progress monitoring assessments will also be shared with students' report cards.

Reading Instruction and Acquisition

Although some children catch on quicker than others with reading, all children need specific instruction each day focusing on the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Each one is described below.

Phonemic Awareness

Kindergarten through second grade students will learn phonemic awareness, which is the ability to hear and manipulate word sounds. While phonemic awareness will be emphasized in grades K-2, we will ensure all students have this necessary foundation. Students in 3rd – 5th grade may need to practice these skills until they have acquired this foundational skill.

Phonics

All students will be taught phonics, which is the ability to combine sounds and letters to create words. Teachers will teach phonics following an explicit and systematic progression of phonics skills that moves from simple to more complex. As students learn new phonics skills, they will use decodable readers, which will help them to practice that phonics skill in text.

Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with expression. Students will build stamina for reading lengthy or complex texts. Reading fluency serves as a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.

Vocabulary

All students will learn new vocabulary words each week through fun and engaging vocabulary routines.

Comprehension

All reading instruction aims for students to understand what they read. Teachers will help students learn comprehension strategies each week as they read new passages.

Decades of research have shown that learning to read requires decoding written words and comprehending what they mean. Through explicit and systematic instructional practice and a belief that all students can learn to read, the CVS staff is dedicated to successfully teaching all students. We are committed to providing a high-quality education using instructional practices aligned with best practices and evidence. We thank you for your confidence in Chippewa Valley Schools, and we look forward to partnering with you in your child's education.

