

South Carolina Department of Education
Read to Succeed **Primary and Elementary** Reading Plan
2026-2027

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

LETRS Questions:

- How many teachers in your school have completed Volume 1 ONLY of LETRS? 1
- How many teachers in your school have completed Volumes 1 and 2 of LETRS? 18
- How many teachers in your school are beginning Volume 1 of LETRS this year? 1
- How many teachers in your school are beginning Volume 2 of LETRS this year? 1
- How many CERDEP PreK teachers in your school have completed EC LETRS? 2
- How many CERDEP PreK teachers in your school are beginning EC LETRS this year? 0

Section A: Describe how reading assessment and instruction for all PreK-5th 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.

At McDonald Elementary School, comprehensive reading assessment and instruction for all PreK–5th grade students are intentionally designed to address each of the five pillars of reading—oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—in order to meet grade-level English Language Arts standards. Instruction in each component is explicit, systematic, and research-based, delivered through the gradual release model so that students receive direct teaching, guided practice, and opportunities for independent application. Teachers consistently utilize high-quality instructional materials, including Heggerty, HMH Into Reading, and Letterland, to ensure that instruction is cohesive and aligned to the SC College and Career Ready Standards. These resources provide a structured scope and sequence that integrates the five pillars of reading into daily practice.

Equally important to instruction is the school’s commitment to ongoing assessment and targeted intervention. Both formal and informal assessments are used to monitor literacy achievement and guide instructional decisions. Tools such as iReady, iReady Literacy Tasks, DIBELS, Heggerty Phonological Awareness Screeners, the CORE Phonics Survey, the PAST test, Letterland Reading and Spelling Assessments, and grade-level common formative assessments provide teachers with timely and reliable data. This information ensures instruction remains responsive to each child’s needs and allows for early identification of gaps in foundational skills.

Students’ literacy development is further supported through purposeful instructional strategies that strengthen oral language, vocabulary, and comprehension while reinforcing phonological awareness and phonics. Purposeful play centers, morning meetings, academic discourse, and community-building activities foster rich oral language development, while Elkonin Boxes, manipulatives, blending, dictation, and word chains

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reinforce phonics and phonological awareness. Vocabulary instruction is expanded through the LINC strategy, semantic mapping, and the Frayer Model, while comprehension is deepened using graphic organizers, annotating text, and teacher think-alouds.

When students require additional support, McDonald Elementary provides strategic interventions designed to strengthen specific areas of reading and writing. Resources such as Phonics for Reading, Vocabulary Surge, Morpheme Magic, and foundational literacy lessons, such as FCRR or Letterland Intervention, are used to deliver personalized instruction that accelerates growth and builds confidence. These interventions are not only aligned to the science of reading but are also strategically designed to meet students where they are and move them toward proficiency.

Through this comprehensive and intentional approach—integrating systematic instruction, high-quality resources, purposeful strategies, and responsive assessments—McDonald Elementary demonstrates a strong commitment to equipping every student with the literacy skills necessary to access and comprehend grade-level texts successfully.

Section B: Document how Word Recognition assessment and instruction for PreK–5th grade students are further aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy and foundational literacy skills.

At McDonald Elementary School, word recognition instruction for PreK–5th grade students is purposefully aligned to the science of reading, structured literacy practices, and foundational literacy skills. Instruction is explicit, systematic, and carefully sequenced to ensure that each new skill builds on previously mastered content. Teachers provide direct phonics instruction that enables students to connect phonemes to letters and apply sound-spelling patterns in decoding and encoding words. Students also engage in orthographic instruction, learning to identify graphemes for phonemes and blend them to decode unfamiliar words. This work is strengthened by phoneme-grapheme mapping, which helps students understand why words are spelled the way they are, and explicit phonemic awareness instruction, which reinforces the foundational connection between sounds and letters that is essential for both reading and spelling.

Instruction extends beyond basic decoding to include the study of morphology, where students learn to recognize and apply knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes. By examining meaningful word parts, students build vocabulary, strengthen word recognition, and deepen their comprehension of complex text. Skills are taught in a logical, research-based sequence, beginning with simple concepts and progressing to more complex applications. Instruction is diagnostic and responsive, with teachers using data to identify students' unique strengths and weaknesses and tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. Students also engage with read-aloud texts rich in academic and inferential language, allowing them to build background knowledge and comprehension skills while strengthening oral language development. Teachers explicitly model metacognitive strategies, such as setting a purpose for reading, monitoring for meaning, and making inferences, to equip students with strategies that foster independence and critical thinking.

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To ensure consistent acquisition of word recognition skills, McDonald Elementary employs a variety of evidence-based instructional tools and practices. Letterland serves as the foundation of phonics instruction, providing an engaging and systematic scope and sequence that has been adjusted to align with South Carolina standards. Instruction integrates phonemic awareness with phonics, and students are explicitly taught the difference between regular spelling patterns and irregular “tricky words.” Multisensory strategies, such as writing in sand trays, air writing, finger tapping, and the use of motions for phonics sounds, support students in internalizing concepts through multiple modalities. Additional strategies, such as Elkonin boxes, blending, sound boxes, repeated reading, and the use of decodable texts, provide repeated opportunities for students to apply their developing skills. Instruction also includes explicit teaching of syllable division and morphology, ensuring students are equipped to decode and comprehend increasingly complex words and texts.

Progress in word recognition is carefully measured using both formal and informal assessments. Tools such as iReady, iReady Literacy Tasks, DIBELS, the CORE Phonics Survey, the PAST test, Heggerty Phonological Awareness Screeners, Letterland Reading and Spelling Assessments, and grade-level common formative assessments provide valid and reliable data to screen, monitor, and guide instruction. Assessment results are used to plan differentiated lessons, monitor progress, and provide targeted support when needed.

Through this integrated and systematic approach, McDonald Elementary ensures that all students in PreK–5th grade develop the essential word recognition skills necessary for literacy success. Instruction is firmly anchored in the science of reading and structured literacy, supported by ongoing assessment and responsive teaching practices that accelerate growth and promote mastery for every learner.

Section C: Document how the school uses universal screener data and diagnostic assessment data to determine targeted pathways of intervention (word recognition or language comprehension) for students in PreK-5th grade who have failed to demonstrate grade-level reading proficiency.

At McDonald Elementary, universal screener data and diagnostic assessments serve as the foundation for identifying and supporting students in PreK–5th grade who are not demonstrating grade-level reading proficiency. The school administers iReady and iReady Literacy Tasks as universal screeners to all students, ensuring that early indicators of reading challenges are identified quickly and consistently. When results from these screeners reveal that a student is performing below grade-level expectations, the data is carefully analyzed to pinpoint whether the area of need lies within word recognition or language comprehension.

Following this initial identification, students participate in diagnostic assessments that provide a more detailed picture of their literacy strengths and weaknesses. These assessments enable teachers to identify whether difficulties stem from decoding, phonological awareness, or other word recognition deficits, or whether comprehension skills such as vocabulary knowledge, inferencing, or understanding of complex text structures need to be addressed. By gathering this deeper level of information, teachers are able to move beyond general concerns and develop a precise understanding of each student’s instructional needs.

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Using this layered data, McDonald Elementary creates targeted intervention pathways to ensure every student receives appropriate and effective support. Students with word recognition difficulties are provided with interventions that emphasize explicit phonics instruction, phonological awareness, and/or decoding strategies. Meanwhile, students whose primary challenges are related to comprehension receive interventions focused on building vocabulary, background knowledge, and higher-level comprehension strategies. These interventions are implemented in addition to Tier 1 instruction, ensuring that students not only receive remediation but also continue to engage with grade-level content.

This data-driven approach allows the school to tailor interventions to the unique learning profiles of individual students. Progress is monitored regularly, and pathways are adjusted as students grow and demonstrate mastery of targeted skills. The partnership between universal screening, diagnostic assessments, and responsive instructional planning ensures that students who are reading below grade level are provided with intentional, research-based interventions that address their specific needs and accelerate their literacy development.

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

At McDonald Elementary, strong systems are in place to ensure that parents are fully equipped to support their children as readers and writers at home. The school recognizes the critical role families play in literacy development and intentionally fosters a partnership between home and school. Parents are engaged through Curriculum Nights, where teachers model effective strategies for reading, vocabulary development, and writing support that can easily be implemented at home. These events not only provide parents with practical tools but also build confidence in their ability to reinforce literacy learning outside the classroom.

Communication with families is ongoing and purposeful. Teachers send home regular progress reports that highlight each child's literacy strengths and areas for growth, accompanied by specific strategies parents can use to provide targeted support at home. Parent newsletters further extend this communication by offering timely tips, reminders, and encouragement to help establish strong reading and writing habits within the family routine.

In addition to these structured supports, McDonald Elementary prioritizes building strong school-home relationships through conferences and family involvement activities. Parents are encouraged to attend conferences where student progress and literacy expectations are discussed in detail, ensuring parents are informed partners in decision-making about interventions and supports. Family events, such as Donuts for Dads and Muffins for Moms, foster a welcoming environment where literacy is celebrated and parents feel valued as essential contributors to their child's success.

Through these intentional systems, McDonald Elementary creates a culture of collaboration in which parents are well-informed, actively involved, and empowered with practical strategies to nurture their child's growth as a reader and writer. This comprehensive approach ensures that literacy development is supported not only in the classroom but also reinforced meaningfully at home.

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Section E: Document how the school provides for the monitoring of reading achievement and growth at the classroom and school level with decisions about PreK-5th grade intervention based on all available data to ensure grade-level proficiency in reading.

At McDonald Elementary, monitoring reading achievement and growth is a systematic, data-driven process that ensures all students in PreK–5th grade are making progress toward grade-level proficiency. Universal screeners and benchmark assessments, including iReady and iReady Literacy Tasks and DIBELS, are administered three times each year to provide comprehensive snapshots of student performance. This data is collected and analyzed at both the classroom and school levels, enabling teachers and administrators to track student growth over time and identify students who may be at risk of falling behind in literacy development.

Intervention decisions are guided by a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that leverages all available data to align interventions with student needs. Students who do not meet grade-level benchmarks are placed into Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions, depending on the severity of their skill deficits. These supports may include small-group instruction or individualized interventions that target specific literacy skills such as phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension. Additional instructional time is dedicated to addressing these targeted areas, ensuring that interventions are intensive and responsive to the unique needs of each learner.

Progress monitoring occurs with a frequency aligned to the level of intervention. Students receiving Tier 2 supports are progress-monitored regularly, while those in Tier 3 receive more frequent checks to ensure timely adjustments can be made. Tools such as DIBELS, iReady Literacy Tasks, and Letterland Intervention Progress Monitoring are used alongside classroom assessments to measure growth and mastery of targeted skills. This frequent monitoring allows for instructional decisions to be data-informed and responsive, ensuring that interventions remain effective and focused on accelerating student learning.

Collaboration is a key component of McDonald Elementary’s monitoring system. Data is reviewed every few weeks in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), where classroom teachers, interventionists, school psychologists, and leadership teams come together to evaluate student progress. These collaborative meetings ensure that interventions are continuously refined based on the most current data, and instructional adjustments are made promptly to meet student needs.

Through this structured system of universal screening, tiered intervention, ongoing progress monitoring, and collaborative data review, McDonald Elementary provides a fluid and responsive process that supports all students in making consistent growth toward grade-level reading proficiency.

Section F: Describe how the school provides teacher training based in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills to support all students in PreK-5th grade.

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At McDonald Elementary, professional development is intentionally designed to ensure that teachers are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to deliver effective literacy instruction aligned with the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills. A cornerstone of this training is the Lexia LETRS professional development program, which provides comprehensive preparation for K–3rd grade teachers, instructional coaches, special education teachers, interventionists, and administrators. This training builds deep understanding of how children learn to read and equips staff with evidence-based instructional practices to support all learners, including those who may struggle with foundational skills.

In addition to LETRS, ongoing professional development opportunities are embedded into the school culture. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), facilitated by the instructional coach, provide teachers with dedicated time to unpack standards, plan aligned instruction, and analyze student data. This collaborative model ensures that professional learning is immediately connected to classroom practice and student needs. Teachers also participate in specialized training led by consultants such as Dr. Mook of Mook Consulting LLC, who provides professional development on developmental writing stages, instructional structures for small group and independent reading, and strategies to strengthen vocabulary instruction.

Teachers receive further training in the Foundations of Literacy instructional practices and vocabulary-focused professional development, ensuring they are prepared to teach students systematically and explicitly across all areas of literacy. Training is also embedded in the implementation of curricular programs grounded in the science of reading, including Letterland, HMH Into Reading, and iReady. These sessions are delivered directly by program consultants, providing teachers with expert guidance on using high-quality instructional materials effectively within Tier 1 core instruction as well as supplementary and intervention contexts.

This layered approach to professional learning ensures that all teachers and instructional leaders at McDonald Elementary receive job-embedded, research-based professional development that directly impacts classroom instruction. The combination of LETRS training, PLC collaboration, consultant-led workshops, and program-specific support creates a robust professional learning system. Teachers are not only equipped to understand the science of reading but are also supported in translating that knowledge into practice, ensuring that every student in PreK–5th grade receives effective literacy instruction aligned to the highest standards.

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Section G: Analysis of Data

Strengths	Possibilities for Growth
- Teachers participate in professional learning opportunities based on data - Teachers ensure that there are plenty of texts (both informational and literary) and other materials available in their classrooms - Schedules are developed to allow large blocks of time for instruction and practice, as well as an additional 30 minutes for intervention - Teachers utilize South Carolina College and Career Ready Standards when planning instruction - Each elementary school has one reading interventionist who focuses on Tier 3 skill gaps. - All K-3, interventionists, instructional coaches, and special education teachers, and administration are trained in LETRS.	- Teachers and students collaborating to set goals, plans, and conferring - Noticing, teaching, and prompting for use of strategic reading behaviors: using all sources of information, word solving (phonemic awareness and phonics), maintaining fluency, making connections, predicting and inferring, summarizing and synthesizing, analyzing and critiquing. - Intentional teaching and reflection of activities - Instruction that is responsive to student needs and is student-centered - Increase teacher knowledge in identifying specific skill deficits to deliver Tier 2 reading intervention.

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). As a reminder, all schools serving third grade were required to use Goal #1 (below).

Goals	Progress
<u>Previous Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</u> Reduce the percentage of third graders scoring Does Not Meet in the spring of [two school years prior] as determined by SC READY from _____ % to _____ % in the spring of [previous school year]. Increase the percentage of third graders scoring Meets and Exceeds in the spring of 2026 as determined by SC READY from 54.7 % to 60%.	The results of the 2026 SC READY assessment show that 50% of third graders are performing at “Meets & Exceeds”. According to this data, we continue to reduce the percentage of third graders who are performing “Does Not Meet” from 17% to 11.7%, however have not shown an increase of students into the “Meets & Exceeds” category.

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<u>Previous Goal #2:</u> Increase the percentage of kindergarten through second grade students performing on grade level in the fall of 2025-26 as determined by iReady from 39% to 49% in the spring of 2026.	The results of the spring iReady assessment show that 57.7% of kindergarten through second grade students are performing on grade level. According to this data, we continue to increase the percentage of kindergarten through second grade students who are performing on grade level.
<u>Previous Goal #3:</u> Increase the percentage of fourth and fifth grade students performing on grade level in the fall of 2025-26 as determined by iReady from 49% to 54% in the spring of 2026.	The results of the spring iReady diagnostic assessment show that 43% of fourth and fifth grade students are performing on grade level. According to this data, we continue to reduce the percentage of fourth and fifth grade students who are performing below grade level from 65% to 57.5%, however we have not shown an increase for students that meet grade-level expectations.

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

- All schools serving students in third grade MUST respond to the third grade reading proficiency goal. ***Note the change in language for the 3rd grade goal to align with the 2030 vision of 75% of students at or above grade level.*** Schools that do not serve third grade students may choose a different goal. Goals should be academically measurable. **All goals should align with academic growth or achievement.** Schools must provide a minimum of two goals.
- Schools are strongly encouraged to incorporate goals from the school renewal plan. Utilize a triangulation of appropriate and available data (i.e. SC READY, screeners, MTSS progress monitoring, benchmark assessments, and observational data) to set reasonable goal(s) for the current school year.

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Goals	Action Steps
<u>Current Goal #1 (Third Grade Goal):</u> Increase the percentage of third graders scoring Meets and Exceeds in the spring of [previous school year] as determined by SC READY from _____ % to _____ % in the spring of [previous school year]. Increase the percentage of third graders scoring Meets and Exceeds in the spring of 2027 as determined by SC READY from 50 % to 56%.	Action Steps: In order to increase percentage of students performing Meets and Exceeds by 6% we will: • Daily explicit systematic phonics instruction • Participate in literacy professional development • Analyze data to inform instruction during PLCs and data team meetings • Hold weekly PLC meetings to unpack standards and plan for Instruction • Utilize data to create Tier 3 intervention groups to close specific skill deficits and create differentiated core small group instruction • Conduct information sessions for parents regarding Read to Succeed requirements
<u>Current Goal #2:</u> Increase the percentage of kindergarten through second grade students performing on grade level in the spring of 2026 as determined by iReady from 58% to 63% in the spring of 2027.	Action Steps: In order to increase percentage of students performing on grade level by 5% we will: • Daily phonological awareness instruction • Daily explicit systematic phonics instruction • Participate in literacy professional development • Analyze data to inform instruction during PLCs and data team meetings • Hold weekly PLC meetings to unpack standards and plan for instruction • Conduct information sessions for parents regarding Read to Succeed requirements

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<u>Current Goal #3:</u> Increase the percentage of fourth and fifth grade students performing on grade level in the spring of 2026 as determined by iReady from 58% to 63% in the spring of 2027.	<u>Action Steps:</u> In order to increase percentage of students performing on grade level by 5% we will: • Daily explicit systematic phonics instruction during intervention • Explicit vocabulary instruction • Participate in literacy professional development • Analyze data to inform instruction during PLCs and data team meetings • Hold weekly PLC meetings to unpack standards and plan for instruction • Utilize data to create Tier 3 intervention groups to close specific skill deficits and create differentiated core small group instruction
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