



## **BULTUM ACADEMY LITERACY PLAN**

### **OVERVIEW**

Bultum Academy is a rigorous academic institution that expects students to read and be read to from a wide variety of beautiful and challenging printed works: primary source documents, non-fiction text, and classic works of fiction—both prose and poetry. To help our students access these great works, which are often well above grade level as they advance in grades, we have an abiding commitment to ensuring students have the best instruction in reading decoding and comprehension (both when reading and while read to).

This literacy plan gives families an outline of our systematic approach to teaching and assessing learning in reading across all subject areas and for students with diverse language backgrounds.

Bultum Academy reviews this literacy plan on an annual basis in the late spring after our standardized test season ends for MCA-IIs and NWEA MAPs. After reviewing data, we revise our planning for the following school year to continue to improve outcomes for our students in this critical skill area. As new faculty are welcomed to the school, this literacy plan is shared with each of them as part of their onboarding.

### **MINNESOTA STATUTE-READ WELL BY THIRD GRADE**

Minnesota Statute 120B.12 requires that, beginning with the 2022-23 school year, all schools:

- Assess students' level of reading proficiency and identify students not yet reading at grade level
- Notify and involve parents/guardians of students who are not yet reading at grade level  
Intervene and accelerate learning growth for students who are not yet reading at grade level
- Ensure that elementary teachers have appropriate training and support to provide comprehensive, scientifically-based and culturally sensitive instruction
- Adopt and post a "Local Literacy Plan" to ensure that all students are reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade by June 1 of each year



## COMPONENT 1: GOAL STATEMENT

**Bultum Academy ’s primary reading goal is to ensure all students read at or above grade level, especially by grade three.** Our classic novels, poetry, plays, speeches, primary source documents, and informational text across subject areas demand a technical proficiency in decoding, understanding, and evaluating text. There is no area of learning in a classical school that does not require fluency in reading.

## COMPONENT 2: ASSESSMENT

Bultum Academy measures students’ reading proficiency using valid and reliable assessments. Data collected from these assessments are analyzed by our entire staff team to determine if students are making adequate progress towards our goal to have all students reading at or above grade level by grade three.

### **Assessments Used**

#### *A. Beginning of Year Benchmarking*

For new students, Bultum Academy uses SRA’s Direct Instruction Reading Mastery (the school’s core reading program) reading placement tests in the fall to determine grade level proficiency in decoding and comprehension. Returning students will continue where they left off the prior year. Within the first five to ten lessons, all students take a Reading Mastery leveled fluency checkout (similar to the AIMSWeb fluency one-minute tests) and mastery test to determine comprehension and vocabulary mastery. The school’s Data Team reviews placement test data along with data from the first two mastery tests and fluency checkouts to determine correct placement into a reading skill-group. Because data is reviewed weekly, students may be reassigned to a new group (up or down) as the data demonstrate a need. Parents are notified of all student reading level placements and may receive student data to support placements.

#### *B. Fall Standardized Assessment*

i. In the fall and late spring, all students in grades K-5 take the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) test in reading. There are two levels of MAP test.

**MAP in the Primary Grades (Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup>) measures:**



1. Phonological Awareness
2. Phonics
3. Concepts of Print
4. Vocabulary and Word Structure
5. Comprehension
6. Writing

**MAP in the Secondary Grades (2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>) measures:**

1. Word Meaning and Vocabulary Knowledge
2. Literature: Understand and Integrate Key Ideas and Details
3. Literature: Understand and Interpret Craft and Structure
4. Informational Texts: Understand and Integrate Key Ideas and Details

ii. Each spring, students in grades 3 and up take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA-II) for reading. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) and alternate assessment, Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS), are the statewide tests that help districts measure student progress toward Minnesota's academic standards and meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Results are shared with parents in the late summer.

iii. During the late winter, students in every grade who are identified as English Learners will take the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) test. This test evaluates and monitors students' progress in English language proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Results are given to parents in the summer after the test. (\*Students who qualify in the fall by their Home Language Questionnaire results take the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test, or W-APT, to determine placement in English Language services.



**Bultum Academy Annual READING Testing Calendar by Grade Level**

<b>GRADE LEVEL</b>	<b>FALL</b>	<b>WINTER</b>	<b>SPRING</b>
<b>Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	<b>NEW: Reading Mastery Placement Test</b>  <b>ALL: Reading Mastery Fluency Checkouts and Mastery Tests</b>  <b>ALL: NWEA MAP (Primary for K and 1<sup>st</sup>)</b>  <b>NEW EL: W-APT</b>	<b>ALL: Reading Mastery Fluency Checkouts and Mastery Tests</b>   <b>EL: ACCESS</b>	<b>ALL: Reading Mastery Fluency Checkouts and Mastery Tests</b>  <b>ALL:NWEA MAP (Primary for K and 1<sup>st</sup>)</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>NEW: Reading Mastery Placement Test</b>  <b>ALL: Reading Mastery Fluency Checkouts and Mastery Tests</b>  <b>ALL: NWEA MAP NEW EL: W-APT</b>	<b>ALL: Reading Mastery Fluency Checkouts and Mastery Tests</b>   <b>EL: ACCESS</b>	<b>ALL: Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs)</b>  <b>ALL: Reading Mastery Fluency Checkouts and Mastery Tests</b>  <b>ALL: NWEA MAP</b>
<p><i>Note: Math and Science assessments are not included on this table.</i></p>			

**Data Analysis Process, Decision-Making, and Coaching for Success**

Bultum Academy 's Data Team, which comprises every teacher, administrator, and paraprofessional, meets every week to collect, monitor, and analyze students' reading placement scores, homework and mastery test scores, fluency checkout grades, and



attendance. They also analyze standardized test data when available each testing cycle (ACCESS, MAP, MCA). An in-house and external reading coach meet with the team to apply learning from the data to determine groupings, create and implement research based interventions for struggling readers, and model with guided practice instructional best practices as a group. Peer and administrative coaches also observe reading courses to give side-by-side coaching on a monthly to quarterly basis. Data from observations are generalized and shared at Data Team meetings and in-services in the summer and throughout the year are devoted to teaching reading effectively and aligning the reading program with the state standards. Students in intervention groups are given double doses of reading instruction and/or additional diagnostic testing to pinpoint areas of need quickly and regularly so teachers can revise their instruction to meet their needs. The goal of skill-grouped reading is to meet each child at his or her skill level and move the children's progress rapidly so that each child is reading at or above grade level each year. Additionally, students with Individualized Education Plans may also have alternative curriculum and measures along with reading-specific programmatic accommodations/modifications.

### **Parent Notification of Progress**

Parents are given notice of their child's reading group placement. They also receive regular updates from reading teachers via newsletters and grade updates in our online grading portal that is updated regularly. The Data Team monitors reading progress and will assign a staff member to alert parents to needs and extraordinary successes in checkouts or mastery tests. Additionally, after each season of NWEA MAP testing (Fall and Spring), parents receive a two-page reading assessment that details their child's scores, reading growth compared to the grade level and whole school, RIT scores in the domains assessed by the test, Lexile score ranges, and recommendations for support. The MCA-II tests also furnish a report for parents that gives growth scores, comparisons to various statewide or school-level groups, and skill improvement recommendations.

## **COMPONENT 3: CURRICULUM, INTERVENTION, PARENT PARTNERSHIP**

### **Core Reading Program**

To teach reading, Bultum Academy has selected SRA's Direct Instruction Reading Mastery as our core reading program. Bultum Academy selected Reading Mastery as it is one of the top, research supported reading programs in the country that is still rich in background knowledge. It has been studied and refined for over fifty years and also is used as a top intervention program by many districts across the country. Bultum Academy supplements the Reading Mastery program, which largely aligns with national common core standards,



with the **Minnesota state reading content standards** to ensure students can meet or exceed grade level expectations.

Reading Mastery is leveled from Kindergarten through level 5. Students are assessed and skill-grouped in reading at Bultum Academy, so children are taught at their reading level regardless of grade level. Each staff member at Bultum Academy is trained to teach and coached regularly in Reading Mastery in order to create more small-group intervention opportunities throughout the school day. The core reading program is taught for 60 minutes each day of the calendar year. Students whose data support additional reading instruction will receive up to 90 minutes of reading each day.

Instruction includes a sequence of modeling new content, providing guided practice, offering individualized practice, and applying skills. It also utilizes a special orthography designed to assist students identify letter sounds. Each Reading Mastery lesson includes seven to nine short activities encompassing multiple strands of content including:

- Phonemic Awareness
- Letter-Sound Correspondence
- Sounding Out of Words
- Word Recognition
- Vocabulary
- Oral Reading Fluency
- Comprehension

In addition to using a researched-based direct instruction decoding and comprehension program, we also model strong reading from text that has withstood the test of time. It is important for children's literacy development to hear teachers demonstrating how to read well and to identify tone, vocabulary, humor, and other areas of writing that reveal an author's skill and intent for the work. These read-aloud moments are some of our most critical to teach students how to:

- Assimilate excellent diction and syntax,
- Copy and rework masterworks of fiction and non-fiction to identify their underlying structure,
- Answer challenging comprehension questions to test understanding, and
- Imagine a world that is true, beautiful, and good.



## **Intervention Reading Programs**

As part of their duties, the Data Team (also known as Bultum Academy’s Child Study team) monitor students’ reading progress in the core reading program for all students. When student data or special education programs dictate, the school uses SRA’s Corrective Reading program in Decoding and Comprehension. Bultum Academy’s EL or Special Education IEP teams sometimes determine that alternate curriculum and methods are adopted to meet student needs. For students who do not qualify for an EL plan or IEP, the Data Team create an intervention plan that provides an online fluency and decoding program for double dosing at school and/or for at-home extra practice to accelerate student learning to help the child catch up to and exceed grade level reading expectations as quickly as possible. Corrective Reading intervention programs are 60 minutes of daily reading class while supplemental interventions add 30-60 more minutes of instruction.

All intervention groups are closely coached and monitored by trained administrators and national Direct Instruction coaches who know how to provide side-by-side/intervention coaching. Coaching takes place at a minimum of six times per year. Peer coaches also conduct observations with feedback and conduct data review of tests, homework, fluency checkouts, and attendance. Coaches may also establish a more frequent cycle of student reading assessment to track interim stage progress and also to determine if grade level reading standards are being taught, especially if the child’s reading skill group is below grade level.

## **Tiers of Intervention and Staff Support (\*from formative and summative assessment data)**

### **Level 1—Grade Level/All-Student Support:**

- All students receive research-based reading instruction across skill levels
- Slight classroom modifications are made (proximity seating, removal of distractions, providing a ball chair or fidget, etc.)
- Address the length of the class—90 minutes—and implement a regular break schedule every 15 to 20 minutes to ensure students can focus
- Data Team review all pertinent data—standardized test data, reading homework and fluency test data, mastery test data, any test results or needs from prior years
- Tutoring during breaks, recess, or before/after school
- Tip sheet goes home with lists of ways families can support fluency or comprehension at home
- Parent signature required on homework or tests, grading portal monitoring by parent



- Calls/Emails home to discuss any concerns that emerge or to share successes
- Homeroom-based read aloud from great literature with dynamic and expressive reading coupled with scaffolded levels of questions to engage all learners regardless of home language or ability level
- Review state standards and compare against reading level curriculum to ensure standards are being addressed and the child has full advantages of the program and preparations for assessments to show has been learned
- Peer Coach in reading may assist in classroom with observations with corrective recommendations or hold coaching conversations for the teacher to reflect on instruction
- EL teacher may assist with language of instruction coaching for teacher and also help break lesson into manageable parts with more gestures or visual support for children who are naive learners or new to English

### **Level 2—Specialized Interventions:**

- Data Team or parent or teacher addresses a growing concern with skill in reading • Team collects and analyzes data to help support the reading and homeroom teachers
- Administrative-level or hired external reading coach conducts side-by-side coaching for reading teacher and implements additional level 1 interventions with student
- Specialists (EL/Special Education) are members of the Data Team and provide additional suggestions for interventions both in curriculum and instruction, modifications to the level 1 programming or double dosing of instruction may occur. EL or special education teachers may mentor, team-teach, or observe to give feedback and resources to support students
- Parent is invited in to meet with members of the Data Team to ensure collaborative problem solving occurs, effective interventions are planned, and timelines for data collection are clear
- Data is collected throughout the period of one or two research-based intervention cycles of about 4-6 weeks each, data is charted to show clear progress or lack of progress
- Effective interventions may remain in place until student data reveal no additional need for them

### **Level 3—Referral:**

- Data Team continues to monitor data. For a student who is not making adequate progress with one or two research based interventions (in addition to all other





implemented strategies in levels 1 and 2) are referred to special education director, principal, nurse, school psychologist, or EL staff as appropriate to call a meeting. At this meeting, the parent and school team will discuss making an evaluation plan to determine if there is a disabling condition inhibiting reading progress or if there might be other health or language needs that need to be evaluated and possibly ruled out.

### **Parent Notification and Partnership**

Parents are notified of their children's reading level, and teachers send regular newsletters and homework home to engage parents in strategies to support reading at home. Teachers also send home formal progress reports quarterly and have conferences at a minimum of once per semester so that parents may track growth and needs.

When the Data Team determines that a student is at-risk in reading or needs to change groups, the child's reading teacher alerts the family. A team of teachers and administrators will meet with parents or conduct observations to provide information and/or specialized reading training to help accelerate progress at home if the child is reading below grade level. Bultum Academy's administrators, special programs staff (EL and special education), and Reading Coaches also support intervention planning, progress monitoring, assessment, and staff development. Parents are notified if a student advances to the next reading level or is exited out of an intervention program. Students are not exited without passing an exit assessment that shows mastery of grade level content and skills. For special education-level reading interventions, IEP teams work together to analyze student reading data and determine if the student qualifies to exit the intervention or requires a change in programming. EL students take the ACCESS test to show levels of proficiency that will exit them from services.

### **COMPONENT 4: JOB-EMBEDDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Bultum Academy provides yearlong, high-quality training and coaching in reading. Staff development is critical to ensure teachers understand expectations, know how to deliver curriculum and assessments, compare reading program to state standards to address any gaps in knowledge or skills, collect and evaluate data to inform instruction, and have a clear understanding of resources they can use to get help. In addition to reading training and coaching, staff also receive behavior coaching once per week to help manage



student behavior which might be a factor in limiting student success in reading. Specialist teachers receive additional training to be content or skill area coaches in the building who can mentor or team-teach. Bultum Academy prefers team-teaching, push-in style models as much as possible. But these program models require a lot of structure and practice for staff to use them successfully. All additional staff development efforts are borne out of student needs/data.

### **Calendar of Reading Training:**

1. All-staff reading training during three weeks of staff summer in-service (up to three days for new staff learning the model)
2. All-staff Read aloud training during summer in-service to support excellent models of fluency and comprehension; companion training in writing and questioning to aid comprehension and assessment
3. All-staff overview of Data Team purpose and of Bultum Academy's current intervention tiers of support activities and curriculum; special education and EL staff have additional training in intervention models and curriculum
4. Coaching framework is presented for peer observations and side-by-side coaching so staff know what to expect throughout the year to receive feedback on instruction, engagement, assessment, data analysis and application
5. New faculty are assigned a teaching partner to mentor them in all areas of teaching
6. Professional reading coach provides follow-up training and coaching one time per month for most of the school year
7. Weekly classical lesson plan workshops may address current student needs in reading
8. Quarterly in-service meetings may include reading training/reflection time with peer coaches, administrators, or as a whole group
9. Coaching tracks are established for teachers who wish to advance to the train-the-trainer level in reading so that they