Minnesota State Literacy Goal:
The state of Minnesota legislature seeks to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3 and that teachers provide comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction.

Local Literacy Plan:
A school district must adopt a local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade no later than the end of grade 3. The plan must include a process to:
1. Assess all students level of reading proficiency K-6 – including a summary of the District’s efforts to screen and identify students with dyslexia and convergence insufficiency disorder
2. Notify and involve parents and provide strategies that parents can use at home to help their child succeed in becoming grade-level proficient in English and their native language
3. Intervene with students who are not reading at or above grade level
4. Identify and meet staff development needs

Reading Proficiently by 3rd grade:
The state mandate requires school districts to design their programming to make sure that students are reading proficiently by the end of grade 3. A review of conducted research consistently reveals a very strong correlation between children’s reading proficiency at grade 3 and rate of high school graduation. Students who are reading at grade level by the end of grade 3 consistently perform better in school for the years to come as compared to those students who are not reading proficiently at the end of grade 3. It is our responsibility to ensure that our students are college or career ready when they leave our educational system.

Commitment to Sound Literacy Instruction:
New York Mills Elementary is committed to ensuring that all children read proficiently by grade 3 and are making sure that all children reach their academic potential. At New York Mills Elementary ensuring that every child can read is our #1 priority.

We recognize that we are living in the information age. Without the ability to read and understand what is being read, a person will have difficulty functioning and succeeding in our society. Over the past decade alone, the amount of information requiring more advanced levels of comprehension, writing skills, problem solving abilities and critical thinking has grown tremendously. As a result, adults with limited reading skills will have fewer opportunities for success in society. Therefore, it has never been more important to us that every child learns to read and we are committed to do whatever it takes to ensure every child in our district becomes a functional reader.
Written below are the details to the plan that New York Mills Elementary is prepared to follow to ensure that the necessary components are in place so that all children will be reading well by the end of 3rd grade.

**Sound Literacy Instruction:**

During the past 6 school years, the teachers at New York Mills Elementary conducted an extensive study of the Minnesota State Standards for English Language Arts. Using a process titled “The 6As Process for Aligning your Curriculum to the State Standards” teachers identified which standards were priority standards for their grade level and then re-wrote those standards in parent and student friendly language or “I Can Statements.” During the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years, our teachers committed to joining a Literacy Action Network to intensely study best practices in the area of elementary reading instruction. Though this is an on-going process, from this research, New York Mills Elementary has created a draft Universal Expectations Guide to guide literacy instruction for grades Pre-K-6 and plans to continue to modify this guide as we continue to research and attend best practice trainings. We have also committed to training all teachers in Grades K-6 with the Daily 5/CAFÉ framework and strategies for literacy instruction in addition to the purchase of and commitment to implement The American Reading Company program.

We are very excited to continue to implement the American Reading Company program. This framework for teaching reading is built around the Common Core State Standards and will provide our teachers with the on-going training and tools needed to ensure, through classroom instruction and through individual conferences, that students not only learn to read more difficult books, but also learn to think about and critically analyze the information they read. Along with our new Reading Program, we are also very excited to have hired a part-time Literacy Coach Assistant and are continuing with a Literacy Coach for the 2018-19 school year! Our new Reading Program incorporates the following:

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<tr>
<td><strong>Smart School Systems</strong></td>
<td><strong>Educator Efficacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Baseline Reading Levels</strong></td>
<td><strong>Schoolwide Reading Culture</strong></td>
<td><strong>Academically Successful Home Routines</strong></td>
<td><strong>Purposive Standards-Based Instruction at Grade Level</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5 Touchstones for Excellence and Equity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Goal</strong></td>
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<td>1. Create a climate where all students feel safe and supported.</td>
<td>Students demonstrate effective reading habits and strategies when reading both grade level and challenging texts.</td>
<td>Every student should be able to read at grade level by the end of third grade.</td>
<td>All students are provided opportunities to read daily and engage in meaningful discussion about their reading.</td>
<td>Students are provided opportunities to read daily and engage in meaningful discussion about their reading.</td>
<td>Classroom teachers provide opportunities for students, regardless of background or socio-economic status, to achieve reading and academic success and college and career readiness.</td>
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<td>2. Engage in professional learning that builds classroom teachers’ capacity and confidence to meet the needs of all learners.</td>
<td>Students demonstrate effective reading habits and strategies when reading both grade level and challenging texts.</td>
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<td>3. Provide ongoing professional development and coaching to support teachers in implementing evidence-based instructional and assessment practices.</td>
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<td><strong>Data Dashboards Track Student Growth</strong></td>
<td><strong>Differentiated Support for Individual Students</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strategic Interventions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instructional Design Built on the 3 Pillars of Common Core State Standards</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effective Professional Learning Communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Operating System Alignment</strong></td>
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<td>Classroom teachers provide opportunities for students, regardless of background or socio-economic status, to achieve reading and academic success and college and career readiness.</td>
<td>All district versions are transparent and aligned to meet the needs of all students across the district.</td>
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100% of students will be college and career ready!
Pre-K students must be immersed in books and learning how books work if they are going to be on-level when they start Kindergarten. We are excited to say that we have implemented this Reading Program in Pre-K. This program will ensure that every little one has had at least 1,000 books read to them during this crucial stage of learning so we are very excited about that!

The following is our Universal Expectations Guide for all literacy instruction Pre-K-6 at New York Mills Elementary:

**New York Mills List of Universal Expectations for the 2019-2020 School Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Organized classroom</td>
<td>- Boredom</td>
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<td>- Engagement</td>
<td>- Large classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Group reading</td>
<td>- Unorganized</td>
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<td>- Teacher greeting and build positive relationships</td>
<td>- Shaming</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Colorful</td>
<td>- Sitting all day</td>
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<td>- Lots of books – efficient classroom library</td>
<td>- Worksheets</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Inviting learning environment</td>
<td>- Dis-engaged</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Interactive/collaborative</td>
<td>- Overwhelmed</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Take a break and MOVE!</td>
<td>- Isolated child</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Incorporate reading and math skills in PE</td>
<td>- Follow through not done, “choppy” “scattered”</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Create spaces to help readers flourish</td>
<td>ideas taught too fast</td>
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<td>- Provide CHOICE</td>
<td>- Rigid AR levels/choices</td>
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<td>- Purposeful inferring of text as a whole group</td>
<td>- Pulling kids out of read-aloud</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Making connections</td>
<td>- Pulling small groups during independent reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Guided reading – flexible groups</td>
<td>- Rigid AR levels/choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher keeping running records</td>
<td>- Pulling kids out of read-aloud</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Staff development</td>
<td>- Pulling small groups during independent reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Daily read aloud</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Confer with students during independent reading time</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Discuss, share and reflect good literature with teachers and students</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Daily assessment rubrics provides purposeful teaching</td>
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- New York Mills Elementary expects that all children will be taught at their own instructional level. Differentiation is the key to student growth. (Fountas and Pinnell, 2009).
- New York Mills Elementary will use a balanced literacy approach to teach the 2010 Minnesota English Language Arts Standards with the Common Core standards embedded. (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996).
- New York Mills Elementary will provide all students with the opportunity to read texts at their independent level and of their own choice every day. (Allington, 2012).
• New York Mills Elementary expects reading instruction to include the essential pillars of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension. (National Reading Panel, 2000).

• New York Mills Elementary expects reading instruction to span up to 90 minutes daily and contain a balance of large group, small group and individualized reading instruction. (Allington 2002). Core whole group instruction should span 20-30 minutes daily. Small group 1:1 instruction and independent reading will be approximately 60 minutes daily.

• New York Mills Elementary expects children to have writing instruction and writing practice every day for a minimum of 30 minutes. (Research on Writing 2012). In addition, all students will write to persuade, explain and convey experiences as outlined by the 2010 Minnesota English Language Arts Standards.

• New York Mills Elementary expects all students to read a variety of texts both fiction and non-fiction. (MN ELA Standards, 2010).

• Scientific, research-based literacy interventions for selected students will be provided in addition to core literacy instruction and will directly target student needs. (Buffum, Mattos & Weber, 2010).

In addition, our elementary has a Leveled Library in which numerous books are classified according to students’ individual reading levels. Each classroom has their own reading center where students can enjoy books and other resources selected by their classroom teacher. On a daily basis, our teachers use relevant technology to engage our students in meaningful literacy activities. A variety of technologies have been integrated into the curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of the district’s diverse learners.

In addition, we have committed to the following “must-haves” for our reading program:

**MUST HAVES for American Reading Company**

• Integrated Literacy daily non-negotiables in every classroom including:
  o Learning Target (I Can) Posted
  o Interactive Modelling/Mini Lesson (set the focus for the lesson) using any text that relates to Learning Target – teacher uses key questions and rubric – 20-30 minute
  o Guided Practice (Small Group) (Daily 5) – student applies Learning Target to Independent Reading – 30 minutes - teacher works with small groups
  o Independent Reading – teacher conferring – Student working on Power Goal - 30 minutes
  o Accountable Talk – 5-10 minutes
  o Read Aloud Pre-K-6 daily – at least 15 minutes (one step)
  o 30 Minutes of Reading at Home with follow-up by Literacy Coach Assistant or RTI paraprofessionals to get them caught up at school if “at home” doesn’t work
  o Handwriting without Tears – grades Pre-2 – Cursive – 3rd – 6th Grade – 15 minutes daily

• Daily 5 – do all three every day:
  o Read to Self – working on Learning Target (I Can) of the day and Power Goal
  o Listen to Reading
  o Word Work – spelling (Everyday Spelling for grades 2-6), skill card work from their color level, phonics, sight words, vocabulary
  o Writing
Partner Reading

- Entering data every day into E-IRLA *(note: we are working on find ways to make this requirement more efficient as we are finding that not every teacher is finding the time to get this done)*
- Student reading logsheets every day
- 100% - all students on track for steps (each step = 15 minutes of reading – we will commit to 1 hour of independent reading per day – ½ hour at least at school and ½ hour at least at home with parents signing on as partners = 4 steps per day or more)
- Ensure students progression and celebrate success
- Encourage open doors, teacher modelling and peer review
- Daily 5/CAFÉ menu on board
- I CANS posted
- Be using formative assessments to gauge student learning – thumbs up/down, learning mountain, scale of 1 to 5, red/green cards
- AIMSweb Benchmark for Reading – Grades K-6
- Effective PLCs – Pre-K, K and 1, 2 and 3, and grades 4, 5 and 6 together
  - Form for Norms
  - Structure for each time: 1 hour Step 11 Checklist
  - All PLCs meet in library including SPED, Jeff R. (who rotates between PLCs) Principal, Literacy Coach
  - 1 PLC brings the treats – rotate monthly
  - Bin exchange for books so choice available

**Response to Intervention:**
At New York Mills Elementary we are committed to implementing a multi-tiered system of support for our students as follows:

The first level of support occurs in the classroom with 90 minutes of core instruction delivered by the classroom teacher using the district’s reading curriculum that is aligned with the 2010 English Language Arts Standards. Research-based reading instruction will address the 5 strands of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). Teachers differentiate instruction in small groups, according to the needs of their diverse learners.

Based on screening and diagnostic assessments, the second level of support identifies students not meeting grade-level targets who are then provided supplemental reading interventions according to their skill deficit(s). This level of support will be provided by the classroom teachers on a daily basis and supplemental RTI trained paraprofessionals during a scheduled RTI time.

Students not responding well to the interventions provided at the second level receive the most intensive and individualized level of support outside of the 90 minutes of core instruction. Students receiving Special Education services are included at this level.

The Multi-tiered systems of support can be traced to the work on data-based decision making by Deno and Mirkin (1977) and the US Department of Education’s report *A Nation at Risk* (1983). The framework is a systematic use of assessment data to efficiently allocate resources to improve learning for all students (Burns and VanDerHeyden, 2006). A meta-analysis of research found that multi-tiered systems of support led to improved outcomes such as fewer children referred to and placed into special
education programs. Additionally, results included higher achievement scores and reduced behavioral difficulties among all students (Burns, Appleton, and Stehouwer, 2005). Children at-risk for reading failure demonstrated improved reading skills (Marston, Muyskens, Lau, Canter, 2003; Tilly, 2003).

**Assessment and Intervention:**

At New York Mills Elementary, we are committed to ensuring assessments administered assist us in providing instructional changes to best meet student needs.

All students have been administered American Reading Company’s Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) at least three times throughout the course of the year in fall, winter, and spring. Using this data, struggling and at-risk students have been identified and referred for interventions. Specific interventions are based on these assessments and the interventions are implemented through the collaborative efforts of the classroom teacher and other specialists who meet weekly in grade level data team meetings. Each student’s progress is monitored regularly and if the intervention selected is not working, another intervention is selected and implemented. Students not responding to these interventions are referred to the Student Assistance Team to determine further intervention or needs for special education services. Parents are kept informed of their child’s progress at every step of the process. Parent/Teacher conferences are also held twice per year where teachers can update the parents during a face-to-face meeting.

During the 2019-20 school year, we are planning to continue using the NWEA or MAP Assessments in Grades 3-6 and to have 100% of teachers up to date in entering data into the E-IRLA assessment that accompanies our American Reading Program.

A combination of screening and progress data after a period of evidence based instruction provides the greatest predictive accuracy for supporting students who are likely to have dyslexia. In an effort to screen and identify students with dyslexia we will amend our data interpretation and documentation procedures to include NWEA (MAP) and E-IRLA Assessments so that we can find students and match their needs with more intensive evidence-based practices so students can make progress in meeting proficiency expectations.

We have discovered that EnVision Eye Care in Fergus Falls, MN will do convergence training but parents are required to take their children there as they do not make private visits to local and area schools.

We feel strongly that by using NWEA/MAP and E-IRLA we will ensure that all educators will use documented student progress to measure their success in real time. The following is some information on the E-IRLA:
Claims Proven by 2014 Measurement Incorporated Study of the IRLA®

1. The IRLA can be used to find a valid and reliable baseline (independent reading level, PreK-12). All MI reviewers agreed that the IRLA content was grade-level appropriate and that it posed no content or bias issues that would affect its validity as an assessment of student reading ability. An expert review by Dr. Kristin Connell of North Carolina State University found that the IRLA could be used to find a valid and reliable baseline reading level.

2. The IRLA provides diagnostic information on each student that is useful to students, parents, teachers and administrators. 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the IRLA helps students know how well they are doing in mastering reading skills. 97% thought that the IRLA helped teachers communicate with parents about how well their students are doing; 94% thought it helped identify students who might need additional help in reading; and 94% thought it helped with planning instruction. From Dr. Connell, NC State: “The IRLA is probably the most beneficial aspect of the framework and will serve parents, teachers, and administrators well. Because both foundational levels and comprehension standards are unpacked in the assessments, teachers can immediately use information to then inform instruction and help their students make progress.”

3. The IRLA helps teachers track student progress in real time. 100% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that using the IRLA helped them track student progress. 100% of administrators responded strongly agreed that the IRLA helped track student progress school-wide.

4. The IRLA is built on the Common Core State Standards for Reading. All MI content specialists who reviewed the IRLA agreed that it was well aligned to the Common Core State Standards for Reading at each grade level. From Dr. Connell, NC State: “The IRLA is clearly grounded in the Common Core State Standards, with explicit connections made to specific standards throughout. This is a decided strength of the framework, and teachers and school leaders will not doubt appreciate the explicitness of these connections. The use of informational texts for some of the cold reads further underscores the central importance of the Common Core places on moving beyond narrative literature only.”

5. The IRLA helps teachers learn to teach reading. 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that using the IRLA had helped them learn to teach reading; 97% thought it had improved their teaching of reading.

6. The IRLA helps teachers get to know their students. Over 96% of respondents to the IRLA User Survey reported that the IRLA made it easier for teachers to conduct student reading conferences with students. 94% agreed or strongly agreed that using the IRLA had increased the time they spent in individual conferences with students, and 93% that using the IRLA had increased the time they spent working with students on their individual reading goals.

7. The IRLA helps teachers get to know the Common Core. 92% of respondents to the User Experience survey noted that using the IRLA had helped them get to know the Common Core. One teacher commented: “With the IRLA showing the scaffolding on the Common Core Standards it also drives my whole group teaching.”

8. The IRLA helps teachers improve their instruction by moving them to the 3 shifts in the Common Core. Alignment survey respondents overwhelmingly rated the IRLA highly in Key Shifts in the CCSS—how well the IRLA supports teachers in making the instructional shifts required in moving from earlier standards to the CCSS—and Instructional Supports. How well the IRLA helps teachers respond to varied learning needs. The percentage of respondents rating the IRLA as “very well” or “well” aligned was 92% for Key Shifts in the CCSS and 93% for Instructional Supports.

9. The IRLA provides a low-stakes accountability system for schools and districts. Administrators who responded to the User Experience survey identified the IRLA as useful in assessing teaching as well as student progress: 93% of administrators surveyed said using the IRLA had improved how effectively teachers were teaching reading in their schools.

10. The IRLA helps organize written materials, ensuring all students (at every reading level) have enough things they can read and understand on their own and therefore enough opportunity for sufficient independent reading practice. 90% of respondents to the User Experience Survey agreed or strongly agreed that using the IRLA helped students select books for independent reading. Respondents commented that the IRLA allows students to select appropriate individual reading material. From Dr. Connell, NC State: “The IRLA provides a system that should certainly ensure that all students have enough materials they can read on their own.”
Parent Involvement:
Following the assessment, parents will be informed of the results, supports, interventions and further diagnostic assessments during conferences. The results will be used to help their child meet the reading goals for their grade level. Parents will be invited to visit about their child’s educational needs and ask any questions they may have. A list of potential supports (websites) that the parent can access to assist the child in achieving grade-level proficiency will be provided.

Teachers make contact with the parents as needed throughout the year. Contact is made through phone calls, emails, and Report Cards, which are sent out 3 times per year. Conferences are held twice per year to engage with parents in a face-to-face meeting.

Parent Communication plan:
1. Assessment results will be provided to parents following AIMS-web assessments.
2. Parents of students who need supplemental instruction will be informed by the district that their student is receiving these services and invited in for a conference with the student’s teacher.
3. Additional explanation of the literacy program and supports, if needed, will occur in October during fall parent/teacher conferences.
4. All parents will receive an informational letter at least three times a year with suggestions on how to help strengthen their child’s literacy skills. In addition, all teachers will be sending home their child’s color level Skill Card which sets out the requirements and skills needed for their child to be successful in their current color level and what they need to do to help them be successful in the next color level. We have also hired a Literacy Coach who will continue to get information on our website for parents and teachers.

With the American Reading Company program, parents lay a critical role as their child’s “Home Coach.” Their children will arrive home every afternoon with 1-3 or more books that are a mix of classics and new titles hot off the press, which are part of a system designed for their achievement. Daily practice at home will help parents engage in their child’s learning and ensures that every student adopts the independent reading routines of academically successful learners! Parents continued active participation in their student’s education is the singular most critical factor in her/his achievement.

**Professional Development:**
Quality teachers are the single greatest determinant of student achievement. In order to remain informed and up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, and new curriculum resources, providing opportunities for teachers to learn is essential. Professional Development opportunities in reading are provided to meet universal expectations identified earlier in the Local Literacy Plan. A variety of Professional Development experiences are provided through the school year with a hybrid of traditional PD days and after school hours. In addition, professional development opportunities are part of staff meetings and Professional Learning Communities. Staff members also participate in summer learning opportunities and conferences as mentioned above and others.

**Curriculum and Instruction**
In the past years, New York Mills Elementary has identified the need for a balanced literacy approach to teaching reading in the elementary. This work is reflected in the New York Mills Elementary literacy expectations stated above. Through the implementation of the Literacy Expectations, New York Mills Elementary staff will be trained on and will be implementing the Daily 5 literacy framework as well as The American Reading Company program and small group reading instruction. Our preschool teachers have worked with their current Indicators of Progress and have participated in Professional Learning Communities to explore and discuss Kindergarten Standards. Based on this work as well as others, the preschool staff has identified kindergarten ready expectations for those who will be beginning kindergarten.

**English Learners**
At New York Mills Elementary we are in the process of understanding current EL learning trends and continuously identifying ways to meet the needs of these learners. An English Learner instructor will work to build opportunities for vocabulary acquisition, building of oral language and opportunities for students to be successful with reading and writing both inside and out of the traditional classroom setting. We have hired an EL instructor who works with all students identified as an English Learner although our EL population has dwindled as of late.
Communication for Annual Reporting
New York Mills Elementary shares annual reports in a variety of ways with stakeholders. The New York Mills Local Literacy Plan is posted on the New York Mills website. In addition, progress with literacy is reported in the World’s Best Workforce plan also found on the New York Mills website.

Questions/Concerns About Local Literacy Report:
If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Superintendent Blaine Novak at bnovak@nymills.k12.mn.us or call the district office at 218-385-4201.