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**OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Community Schools, Thriving Students

# Board Cover Memorandum

**To** Board of Education

**From** Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent  
Sondra Aguilera, Chief Academic Officer  
Alicia Arenas, Executive Director, Academics and Instruction  
Jamilah Sanchez, Director of Early Literacy

**Meeting Date** April 23, 2025

**Subject** Curriculum Adoption/Purchase - Elementary Foundational Skills Curriculum  
- Grades K-2 - Academics and Instruction Department - Chief Academic Officer

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**Ask of the Board** Adoption by the Board of Education of Resolution No. 2425-0213 - Selection and purchase of the following curricular materials:

- *Elementary Foundational Skills: University of Florida Literacy Institute: UFLI Foundations*

**Background** Providing equitable access to standards-based literacy instruction is a central component of OUSD's work to ensure all students graduate college and career ready and that historically underserved students demonstrate accelerated growth to close equity gaps.

To guarantee mastery of literacy standards for all elementary students and set them on pathways to college, career, and community success, it is essential that we provide teachers with high-quality literacy materials and support them in data analysis, instructional planning, and implementation through systematic professional learning. Additionally, adopting a Tier 1 foundational skills curriculum, UFLI Foundations, ensures that all students receive explicit, systematic instruction in the essential components of early literacy.

UFLI Foundations, a Tier 1 Foundational Skills curriculum, aligns with OUSD's literacy framework, which emphasizes a comprehensive approach to reading instruction. Foundational literacy—rooted in systematic and sequential instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency—is a critical component of our district's larger literacy system. By adopting UFLI Foundations, we take the next step in strengthening our instructional practices in partnership with teachers, principals, and families, ensuring that every student builds the strong literacy foundation needed for long-term academic success.

- **The Need for Foundational Skills Curriculum**

- In OUSD, foundational skills instruction currently relies on a suite of resources, including an OUSD-created letter-naming curriculum, SIPPS, and Heggerty. However, SIPPS is designed as a Tier 2 intervention, not a core Tier 1 curriculum. As a result, SIPPS instruction has been supplemented with Heggerty and additional SIPPS components to ensure students receive systematic and explicit foundational skills instruction.
- While this layered approach has supported foundational literacy development, it highlights the urgent need for the adoption of a single, research-based Tier 1 foundational skills curriculum that provides systematic and sequential instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. Establishing a consistent, high-quality Tier 1 curriculum will ensure that all students receive the structured literacy instruction necessary for early reading success, reducing the need for supplementation and intervention. This adoption is a critical next step in strengthening OUSD's literacy framework and ensuring equitable access to high-quality reading instruction for all students.

## **Discussion**

We are grateful to the teachers and staff who served on steering committees, evaluated programs, piloted instructional materials and recommended this rich and promising Foundational Skills curriculum. Below is a summary of the selection process, aligned with California Ed Code (EC Sections 60210 and 60002), and reasons for recommending UFLI as OUSD's core Foundational Skills curriculum for grades K-2.

### **2021-2023 K-2 Foundational Skills Steering Committee and Program Evaluation Committee:**

- Phase 1: In Spring 2021, the Foundational Skills Subcommittee reviewed instructional materials using the CA ELD/ELA framework, International Dyslexia Association guidelines, and OUSD's Language and Literacy framework to ensure alignment with Structured Literacy, the Science of Reading, and evidence-based instruction. After evaluating multiple curricula—including Benchmark Advance, Bookworms, CKLA, EL Education Skills Block, From Phonics to Reading, Foundations with Geodes, and others—the committee selected **From Phonics to Reading** and **EL**

**Education Skills Block 2.0** for further review. These programs were piloted from August to December 2022 at four schools: Hillcrest and Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary piloted **EL Education Skills Block 2.0**, while Acorn Woodland and Korematsu Discovery Academy piloted **From Phonics to Reading**. Pilot classrooms received professional development aligned with the training time expected for any adopted curriculum, and participating educators engaged in focus groups to provide feedback on implementation and instructional quality.

- Following the pilot, the subcommittee analyzed teacher and observer feedback across key instructional categories. Neither curriculum demonstrated strong enough outcomes to justify district-wide adoption, as neither was consistently rated highly by teachers or observers in terms of instructional quality or student experience. With no clear preference emerging and significant recommendations for improving both programs, the subcommittee determined that neither curriculum warranted the time and effort required for full-scale K-2 implementation. As a result, OUSD continues to seek a Tier 1 foundational skills curriculum that ensures systematic and sequential instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency.

#### **2023-2025 K-2 Foundational Skills Steering Committee and Program Evaluation Committee:**

- Phase 2: After an extensive review process, the Foundational Skills Subcommittee, having conducted eleven in-depth reviews, recommended piloting UFLI Foundations and 95 Phonics Core Program. UFLI Foundations offers approximately 35 minutes of whole-group instruction with an additional 30 minutes of small-group differentiation and is praised for its research-based approach, rigorous scope and sequence, engaging materials, strong routines, and informal assessments for differentiation. The 95 Phonics Core Program provides 30 minutes of whole-group instruction and features a structured, research-based scope and sequence, detailed scripted lessons, explicit and engaging routines, and accessible materials. The committee recommends integrating SIPPS for small-group instruction within the Foundational Skills Block alongside both programs as a Tier 2 support.
- Pilots of the two selected curricula were conducted at **four** OUSD elementary schools (UFLI: Acorn and Cleveland; 95 Percent: Hoover and OAK). Schools applied to be a part of the pilot, criteria for selection included: 80% of teachers choosing to pilot, strong implementation of SIPPS/Foundational Skills Block, commitment to

attend Professional Learning and training, and principal participation in training. Participating schools received the following training on the curricular resource selected for their school:

- Baseline PD to unpack resources and understand strategies prior to the school year (3 hours)
- In-person and on-site support from Curriculum Specialists including observation and question and answer sessions (2-3 full days)

This amount of training is representative of the amount of professional development hours that would be allotted to any adopted materials in SY 25-26 and the time that each publisher suggested teachers needed to be prepared for implementation.

- Lesson observations were conducted by members of the Foundational Skills committee to assess the ways in which the materials create opportunities for teachers in providing high quality instruction and supportive student experiences. All staff participating in the pilot observations were offered the opportunity to participate in focus groups to share their experience with the curricular resource. The purpose of the focus groups was to gain additional insight into implementation of the curricular resource and its quality.
- All staff that participated in the pilot were invited to complete a survey about their experience using the curricular materials. The purpose of the survey was to ensure that all users were provided the opportunity to share their experience and recommendation.

**Findings and Recommendation for UFLI Foundations: K-2 Foundational Skills:** On February 25, 2025, the Foundational Skills Piloting Committee recommended UFLI Foundations for adoption. Based on the Committee scores, the strengths of Foundational Skills curriculum are the following:

Scale: 1 - Strongly Disagree to 5 - Strongly Agree

Indicator	UFLI	95 Percent
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Coherent Instruction: The materials support explicit, clear, and accurate foundational skills instruction.	4.4	3.8
Breadth of Instruction: The lessons include adequate opportunities for instruction in core components of foundational skills (phonological awareness, phonics skills/decoding, encoding, fluency).	4.6	3.7
Routines: The resources support the teacher returning to the same engaging routines periodically to build familiarity with students in a developmentally appropriate manner.	4.2	4.3
Multiple Practice Opportunities: Students engage in multiple opportunities to apply target skill in contexts outside of decodable reader and in a variety of application activities.	4.4	2.9
Data Collection: There are opportunities and systems to collect student data (formal and/or informal [e.g. checks for understanding]).	4	3.3
Differentiation: There are resources and directions to support teachers in adjusting instruction for student needs individually or in small groups.	3.8	2
Overall	<b>4.23</b>	<b>3.3</b>

Based on the recommendation of the committee members, we are pleased to put forward ***UFLI Foundations*** for consideration as OUSD's Core foundational skills curriculum.

**Foundational Professional Development:** Once new curricula are adopted, we will implement systematic professional learning including the following direct support:

- **Foundational Professional Development (PD):** Training in new curriculum (Summer and start of school-year options) for teachers, instructional staff and school leaders to get started with curriculum
- **Weekly Teacher Collaboration:** Dedicated time at each school for professional learning communities to meet and conduct inquiry using curriculum.
- **Leadership PD & Learning Walks:** Professional development for principals and at least 3 annual learning walks.

**Fiscal Impact**

**UFLI Foundations**

UFLI Foundations is an open source curriculum that requires the printing of materials for teacher and student use. The cost of the program is essentially the cost of a contract to a vendor to print the curricular materials and the associated professional development. The cost each year after the first year is an estimate and will be dependent on the number of classrooms according to enrollment each year.

- 1) Cost of printing Curricular Materials with a vendor for all elementary schools -
  - 3yr cost for materials: \$465,050.62
  - Year 1 Cost: \$315,050.62 (~800/classroom)
  - Ongoing Cost: \$75,000.00/year (consumables) (~200/classroom)
- 2) Professional Development Contract with UFLI Foundations:
  - Estimate: 1yr, 2025 cost: \$15,000.00
- 3) Teacher Extended Pay through OUSD Payroll - Summer PD and Teacher Leaders - \$120,000.00.

**Attachment(s)**

- Resolution No. 2425-0213
- Findings Report
- Services Agreement 2024-2025 – Prestige Printing and Graphics (pending)
- Presentation

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**RESOLUTION  
OF THE  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
OF THE  
OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
No. 2425-0213**

**SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL  
MATERIALS: Elementary Foundational Skills Curriculum**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Board Policy 6161.1, the Governing Board is responsible for selecting textbooks and other instructional materials for use in District schools;

**WHEREAS**, the State Board of Education has approved standards for curriculum, certain curriculum frameworks, and has approved a list of basic instructional materials for use in kindergarten (K) through 2nd grade;

**WHEREAS**, the Governing Board shall select instructional materials for use in grades kindergarten through 2nd grade or shall have otherwise determined which instructional materials align with the state academic content standards;

**WHEREAS**, the Governing Board shall select instructional materials for grades K-2 upon determining that the materials are:

- Aligned to applicable academic content standards;
- Are provided by publishers that comply with legal requirements including CDE guidance;
- Do not reflect adversely upon persons because of their race or ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, occupation, or other characteristic listed in Education Code 220, nor contain any sectarian or denominational doctrine or propaganda contrary to law;
- Reflective of California's multicultural society, avoid stereotyping, and contribute to a positive learning environment;
- Are accurate, objective, current , and suited to the needs and comprehension of district students at their respective grade levels;
- With the exception of literature and trade books, use proper grammar and spelling;
- Do not expose students to a commercial brand name, product, or corporate or company logo unless the Board makes a specific finding that the use is appropriate;
- Support the district's adopted courses of study and curricular goals;
- Contribute to a comprehensive, balanced curriculum;
- Provide for a wide range of materials at all levels of difficulty, with appeal to students of varied interests, abilities and developmental levels;
- Include materials that stimulate discussion of contemporary issues and improve students' thinking and decision-making skills;
- Contribute to the proper articulation of instruction through grade levels;

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- Have corresponding versions available in languages other than English as appropriate;
- Include high-quality teacher's guides;
- Meet high publishing standards in terms of the quality, durability and appearance of paper, binding, text and graphics;
- Upon adoption of standards by the State Board of Education, not exceed maximum textbook weight standards;
- Meet the standards for social content that portray in a realistic manner democratic values, cultural pluralism, and the diversity of the state's population, and emphasize people in varied, positive, and contributing roles;

**WHEREAS**, instructional review committees and piloting committees comprised of classroom teachers, teachers on special assignment, administrators and district content specialists, reviewed and piloted Foundational Skills curriculum for potential use in District schools and found the following to meet the standards for adoption, therefore, the following Foundational Skills curriculum is recommended for adoption by the Governing Board:

- University of Florida Literacy Institute: UFLI Foundations

**WHEREAS**, the UFLI Foundations curriculum is considered an “open source” curriculum and therefore does not cost the District funds to adopt, however the associated cost for implementation include 1) cost for printing the materials for teacher and student use through a vendor that has the capacity to print materials for over 800 classrooms annually; 2) the cost for UFLI to provide professional learning to teachers and administrators.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Education hereby finds that the University of Florida Literacy Institute: UFLI Foundations meet the standards for adoption and hereby selects UFLI Foundations for use in District schools.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board approves the Agreement between the District and UFLI Foundations. This shall not exceed the total amount in accordance with the following implementation costs:

- 1) Cost of printing Curricular Materials with a vendor for all elementary schools -
  - 3yr cost for materials: \$465,050.62
  - Year 1 Cost: \$315,050.62 (~800/classroom). Approval by the Board of Education of a Services Agreement by and between the District and Prestige Printing & Graphics, for the period of March 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027, in an amount not to exceed \$315,050.62, subject to Approved as to Form by General Counsel.
  - Ongoing Cost: \$75,000.00/year (consumables) (~200/classroom)- Will be contracted on an annual basis with the approved vendor, not to exceed \$150,000.00.
- 2) Professional Learning Contract with UFLI Foundations:
  - Estimate: 1yr, 2025 cost: \$15,000.00
- 3) Teacher Extended Pay through OUSD - Summer Professional Learning and Teacher Leader Professional Learning - \$120,000.00



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Passed by the following vote:

PREFERENTIAL AYE:

PREFERENTIAL NOE:

PREFERENTIAL ABSTENTION:

PREFERENTIAL RECUSE:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINED:

RECUSE:

ABSENT:

### **CERTIFICATION**

We hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of a Resolution passed at a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Oakland Unified School District, held on April 23, 2025.

### **OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Jennifer Brohard  
President, Board of Education

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Kyla Johnson-Trammell  
Secretary, Board of Education