Science of Reading for K-5 ELA

Features of Scientifically-Based or Evidence Based Core Reading Programs
This serves as the rubric used for evaluation of instructional materials bid for state adoption

Section 1: Research Alignment - The program reflects current and confirmed research in reading and cognitive science.

1. For the grades for which the program is submitted, the program must include evidence of alignment to ESSA Evidence Level 1, 2, 3 or 4.

2. The program provides evidence of grounding in conceptual research and theoretical models with reference to research articles and websites.

3. There is an emphasis on teaching and learning the five essential early literacy skills (phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension)

4. The program reflects the understanding that reading is a language-based skill and learning to read depends on mapping sounds to print.

5. Word recognition for decodable words is taught through letter-sound correspondence and word analysis skills (e.g. suffixes, prefixes, Greek and Latin roots, syllabication patterns, and known word parts). It is not taught by visual memory, guessing, the shape of the word, or the use of context clues to decode words. Words that cannot be sounded out and that do not follow the rules of phonics, must be explicitly taught.

Section 2: Explicit Instruction – Students are introduced to the new skill before they are asked to perform it.

1. Lessons include instructional routines and/or scripts.

2. Routines include language for the teacher to introduce, define or explain new skills through demonstration and modeling before students are asked to perform the skills.

3. There are multiple opportunities for students to practice new skills with instructions for the teacher to give immediate corrective feedback.

Section 3: Sequential Instruction (Scope and Sequence) - There is a detailed scope and sequence including a list of specific skills taught, a sequence for teaching the skills over the course of the year, and a timeline showing when skills are taught (by week, month, unit).

1. The scope and sequence for a skill within a grade shows a clear progression from easier to harder.

2. Advanced skills are not introduced before students have been taught prerequisite skills.

3. The scope and sequence articulates when skills are taught across grades.

Section 4: Systematic & Cumulative Instruction – The structured lesson format includes a plan, procedure, or routine that is carried through the sequence of teaching skills.
1. A clear and consistent lesson format is evident
2. There is a daily schedule of lessons noting suggestions for the length of lessons and units.
3. Time is spent in whole group and small group formats.
4. Independent or group practice occurs after teacher-led instruction on the skill.
5. Lessons include instructional routines, noting what the teacher should say, which includes a step-by-step sequence, procedures, and consistent language across lessons and grades.
6. The teacher manual(s) include directions for how to implement lessons (e.g., materials, target skill, script or wording for how to teach, examples to use, specific content such as word lists or book list).
7. Benchmark spotlights and supporting benchmarks are cumulatively reviewed.

Section 5: Coordinated Components - Elements of the program are clearly linked.
1. The same routines, terminology, and procedures are used across skill areas and over time.
2. There is a clear link between foundational skills and higher order skills. Skills are integrated across areas (e.g., phonemic awareness and phonics, phonemic awareness and oral language).
3. Lessons and materials are available for differentiating instruction for students who are having difficulty or need enrichment.
4. Differentiation and support are provided for supporting English Learners, students who are having difficulty, and those who need acceleration. Appropriate suggestions and materials are provided for supporting varying student needs at the unit and lesson level (e.g. alternate teaching approaches, pacing, instructional delivery options, suggestions for addressing common student difficulties to meet standards, reteaching strategies or suggestions for supporting texts, suggestions for more advanced texts for extension, etc.)

Section 6: Related Elements – The program contains features that are optimal for delivering effective instruction.
1. Assessment - Formative (e.g., progress monitoring)   - Summative (e.g., unit tests) - Framework for data-based decision making
2. Environment - Classroom management to support small group instruction - Classroom management to support small group instruction - Motivation for students (e.g., built-in choice, charts/graphs of progress, immediate feedback on progress)
3. Professional Development - Professional development and coaching are available to support implementing the program with fidelity.