2026-27 Approved Early Literacy Assessments

Introduction

This summary contains assessments reviewed for use as universal screening and progress monitoring tools to meet the requirements of 279.68 Early Literacy Implementation (ELI) and House File 2618 which, in part, requires schools to screen all students in kindergarten through grade six, three times a year using a valid and reliable assessment. This summary provides the list of approved assessments schools must choose from for screening and progress monitoring. Presented alphabetically and indicated by ✓ in the following tables are the reviewed and approved assessments. Following each assessment are the administration format(s), approximate administration time and if there is a current Panorama Student Success data integration. For those without an integration see MTSS Data System Integration note.

Universal Screening

Acadience Reading (Acadience Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Composite		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Oral Reading Fluency			✓				

Individually and group administered: Composite grades 1-2 (4-8 min.), grades 3-6 (6 min. per student + 5 min. group). Individually administered: Oral Reading Fluency (5 min.). Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

aimswebPLUS (NCS Pearson)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Composite	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Individually administered: Composite (5-7 min.). Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

Benchmark ISIP Assess (Amira Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Benchmark Assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Computer administered. 20 minutes. No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

Classworks Reading Univ. Screener (TouchMath dba Classworks)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Classworks Reading Universal Screener				✓	✓	✓	

Individually and computer administered. Grades 3-4 (25-35 min.), grade 5 (30-40 min.). No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

Early Learning Quick Assessment (Early Learning Quick Assessment)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Early Learning Quick Assessment	✓						

Individually administered. 30 minutes. No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

easyCBM (Riverside Assessments)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Word Reading Fluency		✓					
Passage Reading Fluency			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Proficient Reading					✓	✓	

Individually administered. Word Reading and Passage Reading Fluency (3 min.). Group administered: Proficient Reading (45 min.). No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

EPS Reading Assistant (EPS Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
EPS Reading Assistant	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Computer administered. 10-18 minutes. No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

Exact Path (Edmentum)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Exact Path	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Computer administered. Grades K-3 (15-40 min.), grades 4-6 (45-50 min.). Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

FastBridge (Renaissance Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
earlyReading Composite	✓	✓					
aReading		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CBMR			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
AUTOreading Composite			✓	✓	✓	✓	

Computer administered: aReading (10-15 min.), AUTOreading (4-6 min.). Individually administered: CBMR (3-5 min.), earlyReading Composite (5-7 min.). Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

i-Ready (Curriculum Associates)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Inform	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Computer administered. Grades K-2 (25-35 min.) grades 3-6 (40-60 min.). Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

IXL assessments (IXL Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
LevelUp Univ. Screener Reading Foundations		✓	✓	✓			
LevelUp Diagnostics for ELA			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LevelUp Univ. Screener Reading Comprehension						✓	✓

Individually or group administered. Reading Foundations (6-10 min.) Reading Comprehension (16 min.) Diagnostics for ELA (45 min.). No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

Literably Screener (Literably)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Literably Screener	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Computer administered. 25-40 minutes. No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

MAP assessments (NWEA, Division of HMH)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Reading Fluency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Growth		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Individually or group administered: Reading Fluency (30 min.), Growth Grades K-2 (32-44 min.) and grades 3-6 (50-70 min.). Reading Fluency has no current data integration with Panorama Students Success. Growth has an existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

mCLASS DIBELS (Amplify Education)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Composite	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

Individually administered. 4-7 minutes. Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

Star assessments (Renaissance Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
CBM Reading - Letter Sounds	✓						
CBM Reading - Nonsense Words		✓	✓				
CBM Reading - Oral Reading Fluency		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Early Literacy			✓	✓			
Reading		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Individually administered: Three CBM Reading subtests (1-2 min.). Computer administered: Early Literacy (9 min.) and Reading (19-20 min.). Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

Progress Monitoring

Acadience Reading (Acadience Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
First Sound	✓						
Phoneme Segmentation	✓	✓					
Nonsense Word - CLS	✓	✓	✓				
Nonsense Word - WWR	✓	✓	✓				
Oral Reading Fluency			✓				
Maze				✓	✓		

Individually administered: 1-2 minutes. each subtest. Individually or group administered: Maze 5 minutes. Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

easyCBM (Riverside Assessments)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Letter Naming Fluency	✓						

Individually administered. 1-2 minutes. No current data integration with Panorama Students Success.

FastBridge (Renaissance Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Onset Sounds	✓						
Letter Names	✓						
Sight Words-50	✓						
Letter Sounds	✓	✓					
Word Segmenting	✓	✓					
Decodable Words	✓	✓					
Nonsense Words	✓	✓					
Word Blending		✓					
Sight Words-150		✓					
CBMR		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Individually administered. 1-2 minutes each subtest. Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

i-Ready assessments (Curriculum Associates)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Letter Sound Fluency	✓	✓					
Word Recognition Fluency		✓					
Pseudo Word Decoding		✓	✓	✓			
Passage Reading Fluency		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Individually administered. Monitoring Literacy Tasks 1-3 minutes. Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

mCLASS DIBELS (Amplify Education)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nonsense Word Fluency - CLS	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Nonsense Word Fluency - WRC	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Word Reading Fluency	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Oral Reading Fluency		✓	✓		✓		✓

Individually administered. Progress monitoring measures 1-2 minutes. Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

Star CBM Reading (Renaissance Learning)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Letter Names	✓						
Phoneme Segmentation	✓						
Letter Sounds	✓	✓					
Nonsense Word		✓	✓				
Oral Reading Fluency		✓	✓				

Individually administered. Existing data integration with Panorama Student Success.

MTSS Data System Integration

Also reported for each assessment is if there is a current data integration with Iowa's MTSS data system, Panorama Student Success. Assessment vendors without a current data integration will require districts to securely share fall, winter, and spring screening files with the Department at the end of each screening window. The Department will contact districts to provide information on how to securely share files. Progress monitoring data for these vendors will not be automated and data will need to be manually entered into interventions for these measures.

Review Criteria

Universal screening is administered three times per year to identify students who are at risk. For this, the measure needs to accurately identify students who are likely to be below proficiency in future reading while also minimizing incorrect identifications. For universal screening, Area Under the Curve, and related Specificity/Sensitivity statistics, needed to be provided by the vendor and at least meet a minimum standard in prediction to a broad indicator of reading. The review team needed to find developer established criteria for success/risk (i.e., benchmarks) with a reasonable, documented process for establishing the benchmarks.

Requirements for progress monitoring state are that assessments be able to be used weekly, be time efficient, reliable, sensitive to change, and able to show improvement with as much consistency as possible. The review process also required a description of how the developer worked to make the forms similar as well as the number of available forms.

The review process considered test administration time. For screening and progress monitoring measures there is a give and take between using a longer test that might produce more accurate or more detailed results, versus a shorter test that minimizes the amount of instructional time lost to testing. In addition to minimum technical characteristics (e.g., accuracy, reliability) it is important that assessment duration minimizes lost instructional time.

Selecting an Assessment System

When considering options for an assessment system to be used for screening and monitoring progress, a system that contains individual and group administered measures is valuable because it offers options for implementation, as well as accommodating students who may not be a good fit for one or the other mode of administration. Teams may want to look for a coherent system - one where there are no gaps at any grade or season.

Consider the content measured by the screening measures. A screening system should measure phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension as appropriate to the grade of the student. Curriculum based measures typically require students to produce a response in a literacy

area such as phonemic awareness, phonics, or oral reading fluency, while most computer administered tests rely on auditory presentation of items, silent reading and a multiple-choice response format. Both oral reading fluency and computer adaptive measures are usually general outcome indicators for overall reading and comprehension.

Other CBM measures are typically single prerequisite skills that contribute to predicting whether or not the student is on track for becoming an independent reader of connected text. Tests using a battery of different measures with a composite may provide feedback on multiple skills, as could oral reading fluency when accuracy and rate are considered. However, adaptive tests typically provide a global ability level with limited or no skill-specific feedback. Some students benefit from the individually administered tests for focus and attention, compared to the more independent computer adaptive measures. An assessment system with a variety of types of screening is helpful because there are often unique situations that require decision-making for individual learner characteristics. Individually administered tests provide more opportunity for monitoring and redirecting poor student attention to the tasks as compared to computer administered tests.

There is value in an assessment system that includes opportunities to evaluate student production of various reading processes including reading out loud and demonstrating decoding skills. ELI requirements and best practice both rely on selection of a set of assessments that support the universal screening and progress monitoring of students at risk for reading difficulties, including students who may have dyslexia. Keep the focus on a quality assessment system to support literacy, not simply on compliance.

Alternate Literacy Assessment

Students whose individualized education program (IEP) teams have determined they are eligible to participate in Iowa's alternate assessments will complete the Early Literacy Alternate Screener (ELAS). The ELAS is the only approved literacy screener for students in kindergarten through grade 6 who participate in the alternate assessment. The ELAS contains the scales of reading literature and informational text: key ideas and details, reading literature: key ideas and details, reading informational text: integration of knowledge and ideas, reading foundations: letter identification, writing: text types and purposes, and language: vocabulary acquisition and use.