Literacy Assessments Meeting the Requirements of 279.68/ELI

for universal screening and progress monitoring
2024-2025 school year

Introduction

This document contains assessments reviewed and approved for use as universal screening and progress monitoring measures to meet the requirements of 279.68 Early Literacy Implementation (ELI). The review process identified assessments that meet the minimum requirements, as well as provide feedback on the assessment's ability to accurately predict future reading performance via universal screening, and to frequently and reliably measure student improvement via progress monitoring. These are requirements of ELI, as well as keys to an effective assessment system to inform a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). The current review was open to any vendor and added qualifying assessments to the existing approved list from Spring of 2022. The same evaluation criteria were used to identify measures to include. Therefore, approved assessments provided are aggregation of those assessments approved in the Spring of 2022 and those submitted and approved in the Spring of 2024.

A local district's assessment selection(s) must have approved assessments at each grade, for both universal screening and progress monitoring, as indicated by a "Y" in the reporting tables. Also consider the available notes and comments that provide more information about the relative merits and weaknesses of the other assessments. Districts may not use assessments to meet ELI requirements that do not meet approval criteria, but may choose to use them for other purposes in addition to an approved measure. The review team used established criteria to identify those that clearly met the minimum standards. With the exception of the FastBridge assessments which are provided to Iowa users at no cost, the presence of an assessment on this list does not represent a specific endorsement or recommendation. The reports indicate which assessments met the minimum requirements. Users of these assessments need to review and understand the capabilities of the assessments prior to adoption.

Reviewed Assessments

Below are the individual assessment vendor submissions and the review team's results, indicated by "Y" for approved measures, with comments inserted if appropriate.

Additional information about the review and approval process can be found in the Assessment Review Criteria with more general assessment recommendations to schools also found in the Selecting an Assessment System section.

Pending Review

Please note: This list of Early Literacy Assessments meeting the legislative requirements of Iowa's Early Literacy requirements is under review. The pending review will not result in the removal of any currently approved assessments, it may, however, result in the addition of assessments. The updated list will be posted at the conclusion of the pending reviews.

FastBridge
Renaissance Learning

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
aReading		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
CBMR			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
earlyReading Composite	Y	Y												
Onset Sounds								Y						
Letter Names								Y						
Letter Sounds								Y						
Sight Words-50								Y						
Word Segmenting								Y	Y					
Decodable Words								Y	Y					
Nonsense Words								Y	Y					
Word Blending									Y					
Sight Words-150									Y					
AUTOreading: Composite			Y	Y		Y								
AUTOreading Letter Names								Y						
AUTOreading Letter Sounds								Y						
AUTOreading Word Identification									Y	Y	Y	Y		
AUTOreading Encoding									Y	Y	Y	Y		
AUTOreading Vocabulary														

The FastBridge assessments include both fixed form and computer adaptive assessments. While aReading meets screening criteria at first grade, the developers have recommended starting its use at grade 2 and older. aReading assessment time ranges from 10-20 minutes. aReading administration time is 10-15 minutes for K-5 and 20-30 minutes for older students. AUTOreading Composite and subtests are new additions to this review. While AUTOreading measures met minimum standards for PM, they are less sensitive to improvement over time and are not encouraged as PM measures.

The FastBridge assessments were adopted previously and continue to be available to all Iowa schools to meet ELI requirements. FastBridge K-6 literacy assessments are available at no cost to all public school districts and interested nonpublic schools that have the necessary technology to support implementation. However, any district may choose to use other approved assessments.

Acadience Reading
Lexia Voyager Sopris with Acadience Learning

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Composite		Y	Y	Y	Y									
Nonsense Word - CLS	Y	Y	Y					Y	Y					
Nonsense Word - WWR								Y	Y					
Phoneme Segmentation								Y	Y					
First Sound								Y						
Oral Reading Fluency			Y							Y				
Maze											Y	Y		

aimsweb Plus
NCS Pearson

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Letter Naming Fluency	Y													
Oral Reading Fluency		Y												
Composite			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							

The aimsweb Plus measures submitted for progress monitoring usage lacked Reliability of Slope evidence across the grades.

Amira
Amira Learning

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Amira Benchmark Assessment	Y	Y	Y	Y										
Amira Progress Monitoring									Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Capti Assess with ETS ReadBasix
Charmtech Labs

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Word Reading and Decoding														

The Capti Assess with ETS ReadBasix Word Reading and Decoding measure's ability to accurately identify students who are not at risk (i.e., specificity) was lower than criteria at some grades. Additionally, the developer indicated that risk-setting standards do not exist. This measure is not approved for use to meet ELI requirements at any grade.

easyCBM
Riverside

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Letter Sounds								Y	Y					
Letter Names								Y	Y					
Word Reading									Y					
Passage Reading									Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Phoneme Segmentation														
Vocabulary														
Proficient Reading														

In the easyCBM suite of assessments, none of the universal screening assessments met the requirements for use with ELI, primarily due to the lack of a defined standard setting process that would provide benchmarks established and recommended by the developer (i.e., left to individual users). Progress monitoring measures met requirements at some grades.

i-Ready Literacy
Curriculum Associates

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
i-Ready Diagnostics	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
Letter Sound Fluency								Y						
Word Recognition Fluency									Y					
Passage Reading Fluency														

Curriculum Associates i-Ready Diagnostics is a computer adaptive assessment for literacy. It meets all of the reviewed criteria for use as a screening measure with assessment times ranging from 25-35 minutes for early

elementary students up to 60-75 minutes for the upper grades. Two measures can be used for progress monitoring with Passage Reading Fluency administration duration being too long (i.e., 10 minutes) for efficient weekly monitoring.

MAP: Growth and Reading Fluency
NWEA

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
MAP Growth		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
MAP Reading Fluency	Y	Y	Y	Y										

The MAP Growth assessment is a computer adaptive test of reading with a traditional test format where the student provides a selected response to questions. MAP Reading Fluency is a newly developed computer administered test using an adaptive testing approach, with computer scoring of student oral responses. Administration times for MAP Growth range from 30 to 65 minutes with MAP Reading requiring approximately 20 minutes. MAP Reading Fluency does not have data transfer capability that will allow automated nightly data transfers. Instead, a manual export/import process by the user at the close of a screening window is required.

mCLASS, DIBELS 8th Edition
Amplify

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Composite	Y		Y		Y	Y								
Phoneme Segmentation														
Nonsense Words - CLS								Y	Y	Y	Y			
Nonsense Words - WRC									Y	Y	Y			
Word Reading Fluency								Y	Y	Y	Y			
Oral Reading Fluency									Y	Y		Y		Y

The composite score at some grades did not meet all criteria for screening approval. Oral Reading Fluency's Reliability of Slope estimates fell below the required minimum in some grades and is thus not approved at all grades for which it was reviewed.

STAR: CBM, Early Literacy and Reading
Renaissance Learning

	Universal Screening							Progress Monitoring						
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
STAR CBM			Y											
STAR Early Literacy	Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y	Y			
STAR Reading		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Three separate assessments from Renaissance Learning were submitted. Administration time for Early Literacy universal screening and progress monitoring is approximately 9 minutes with STAR Reading ranging from 19 minutes during screening and 8 minutes for progress monitoring.

Screening Preschool

Universal screening in preschool is a best practice as part of a healthy educational system. In Iowa, preschool universal screening is complementary to the required data collection in GOLD. The primary intended purpose of GOLD is for formative decision making to shape instructional planning to meet the needs of students. Screening data is currently encouraged in literacy for preschool, as described in the Universal and Supplemental and Intensive Tier guides with think-abouts for young learners in a structured educational setting.

In the Spring of 2019 the Department opened a Request for Information (RFI) and provided early childhood vendors the opportunity to provide information regarding early childhood screening tools as a downward extension of the legislated ELI work. At that time the Department identified the myIGDIs (Individual Growth and Development Indicators) as a valuable tool and is providing access to interested schools. Schools interested in using this tool to screen early childhood skill development may contact Mary Breyfogle, mary.breyfogle@iowa.gov.

Screening Students who are Deaf

Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing vary significantly in the degree of hearing loss and the effect their hearing loss has on their educational needs. It is ideal for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing to participate in the "district default" universal screening assessment, or another approved screening measure in the suite of assessments adopted by the district. However, in some unique circumstances, the educational needs of the student exceed the allowed accommodations on the district default universal screening assessment.

Avenue PM is approved for universal screening and progress monitoring for students who are Deaf, due to their unique sensory needs and the adaptation of the measurement to the critical domains of early literacy for this population. The decision to select and use Avenue PM must be discussed with the student support team, including parents/guardians, and documented in the student record. Avenue PM may be given when it is educationally necessary to use another approved measure to predict the student's future reading performance. Avenue PM may not be given to increase the student's score or avoid designating the early literacy support the student may need, especially if they are able to participate in the district default screening measure.

Note the technical adequacy of this measure is still under review, however it is approved for this low incidence population because it confers the same educational benefit and attention to literacy as other approved measures, but with accommodation for the early literacy instructional needs of the deaf population. The Iowa Department of Education has statutory authority to approve alternative assessments that confer the same

educational benefit for specific student populations. (IAC 281, Chapter 62). For more information about the specifics of the measure, contact Jennifer Denne at jennifer.denne@iowa.gov.

Assessment Review Criteria

Universal screening is typically administered three times per year to identify students who are at risk in reading. For this, the measure needs to efficiently and accurately identify students who are likely to be below expectations on future reading outcome measures, while minimizing incorrect identifications. Area Under the Curve is one statistic used to indicate this quality, with a 1.0 indicating perfect prediction and 0.5 indicating essentially random prediction. 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 of 0.7, with higher values preferred. The review team also expected to find developer established and recommended criteria for prediction of success/risk (i.e., benchmarks) with a reasonable, documented process for establishing the benchmarks. This is based on the expectation that the test developer, with full access to their body of research evidence, will be in the best position to recommend suitable and defensible benchmarks informed by the sensitivity/specificity statistics and other data rather than leave the task to individual users.

ELI requirements for progress monitoring state that progress monitoring must be administered weekly and the assessment used must be reliable, sensitive to change, and able to show improvement with as much consistency as possible. Reliability of Slope is a statistic used to quantify the consistency of the progress monitoring probes. More consistent or reliable sets of passages means that there's less randomness (i.e., score bounce) across probes, making the child's progress easier to discern. The review process considered a reliability of slope score of 0.60 to be the minimum acceptable score, with higher scores being more desirable. In addition, test developers need to have multiple equivalent forms available to minimize practice effects over time. The review process looked for descriptions of how the test developer went about the process of making the forms as similar as possible, as well as the number of available forms (minimum 10).

The reviewer 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. Computer-administered tests, especially longer ones, may be difficult for young children. Most curriculum-based measures take a minute or two per test administered. Computer-administered adaptive tests take significantly longer, but allow the efficiency of testing many students at once. Some screening and progress monitoring measures were reported to be in excess of 30 minutes administration time, while others produced valid screening and progress monitoring data with 1-5 minutes of testing.

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. The tables are marked with "Y" where the assessment or composite met the minimum requirements for that grade. Refer to the comments below the table for additional details.

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. Several of the reviewed assessments are experimenting with computer administered and scored tests with verbal responses from students including letter names and sounds and even oral reading fluency. However, none were submitted with all of the required supporting data to be approved as an approved assessment for screening or progress monitoring. Nearly all of the individually administered assessments reviewed rely on student verbal responses. Other online administered tests rely on some form of selected multiple-choice format.

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.