

ELI Screening Guidance for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Early Literacy Implementation (ELI) requires all students to be screened and progress monitored (K-3). 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. Whenever possible, students with hearing loss should participate in district default reading assessments with [allowed accommodations](#) (Appendix I of the Iowa Department of Education Early Literacy Implementation Technical Assistance Guide). Many districts within the state of Iowa choose to use the [FAST Bridge suite of assessments](#) to fulfill ELI requirements.

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 or Hard of Hearing due to their unique sensory needs. The Avenue PM applications utilize a visual format. It is noted that not all applications in [Avenue PM](#) are approved for universal screening.

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. The decision to select and use a state approved ELI assessment that is different from the district default, including Avenue PM, must be discussed with the student's support team including parents/guardians. Assessments, like Avenue PM, are not reportable to the state and information should be maintained in the student records.

It is recognized that any ELI measure or benchmark provides only one means of data for a student. AEAs and local education personnel may find these screening assessments helpful for determining students at risk and to assist in differentiating the instruction to match the student's needs.

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 any additional questions about this approval, please contact Thomas Mayes at thomas.mayes@iowa.gov.