

**Review of Screening Instruments for the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA)**

**Date:** June 28, 2018

**Summary of Findings**

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) in partnership with the Southwest Regional Education Laboratory (REL-SW) has conducted a review of possible screening instruments to fulfill the requirements of the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA).

Nineteen submissions for a screening instrument under the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA) were reviewed. Of those submissions, six **met all criteria** to be submitted to the Oklahoma State Board of Education for consideration of approval:

* AIMSweb Plus,
* Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST),
* Istation,
* Measures of Academic Progress (MAP),
* mCLASS: DIBELS Next, and
* STAR Early Learning Assessment System.

**Process**

Based on Title 70 O.S. § 1210.508C(B), “*each student in kindergarten, first, second, and third grade of the public schools in this state shall be assessed at the beginning and end of each school year using a* ***screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education*** *for the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.”*

The REL-SW and OSDE established five criteria for screening instruments. The criteria include: (1) identified as a **screening instrument** based on criteria defined by the OSDE and the National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII), (2) demonstration of **convincing evidence** for **reliability and validity**, (3) assessment of all **five reading skill** areas defined in statute (phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), (4) **reporting scores** provided in all ways defined by statute, and (5) **accommodations** for subgroups provided as required by statute.

The results of the review can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Reading Assessment Instruments Reviewed by the REL-SW and OSDE

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Screening Instrument**  ***Vendor*** | **Type of Assessment** | **Reliability & Validity** | **Assesses All 5 Reading Skill Areas** | **Reports Scores in All Required Forms** | **Provides Required Accommodations** |
| **AIMSweb Plus**  *NCS Pearson, Inc.* | Screener | Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **FAST**  Formative Assessment System for Teachers  *Fastbridge Learning, Inc.* | Screener | Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Istation**  *Imagination State* | Screener | Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **MAP**  Measures of Academic Progress  *NWEA* | Screener | Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **mCLASS: DIBELS Next**  Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills  *Amplify Learning, Inc.* | Screener | Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **STAR** Early Learning Assessment System  *Renaissance Learning* | Screener | Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **ELQA-K**  Early Learning Quick Assessment  *Center for Early Childhood Professional Development* | Screener \* | Not Available | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **iReady**  *Curriculum Associates LLC* | Screener | Partially Convincing | No | Yes | Yes |
| **ITBS**  Iowa Assessments Form E  *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing* | Screener | Unconvincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **KTEA-3**  Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement - Brief  *NCS Pearson, Inc.* | Screener \* | Convincing | Yes | No | Yes |
| **DRA2+**  Developmental Reading Assessment 2nd Edition Plus  *NCS Pearson, Inc.* | Diagnostic | Convincing | Yes | No | Yes |
| **Fountas & Pinnell BAS**  Benchmark Assessment System  *Greenwood Publishing-Heinemann* | Diagnostic \* | Partially Convincing | Yes | No | No |
| **Literacy First**  *Catapult Learning West* | Diagnostic \* | Partially Convincing | Yes | No | Yes |
| **Mindplay**  *Mindplay, Division of Methods & Solutions* | Diagnostic \* | Partially Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **WRMT-III**  Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests, 3rd Edition  *NCS Pearson, Inc.* | Diagnostic \* | Partially Convincing | Yes | No | Yes |
| **AIMSweb**  *NCS Pearson, Inc.* | Progress Monitor | Partially Convincing | No | Yes | Yes |
| **DIBELS Next**  Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills  *Voyager Sopris* | Progress Monitor | Partially Convincing | No | Yes | Yes |
| **easyCBM**  Curriculum Based Measures  *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing* | Progress Monitor | Unconvincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **HMH Reading Inventory**  *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing* | Progress Monitor &  Diagnostic | Partially Convincing | Yes | Yes | Yes |

*\* Type of assessment not identified on NCII. Categorical determinations were made by REL-SW and OSDE based on descriptors for assessment types from NCII.*

**Consideration 1: Type of Assessment**

The OSDE and REL-SW used NCII evidence standards to define the criteria for each of the assessment types under the Reading Sufficiency Act. NCII is housed at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the work is led by nationally recognized experts in assessment, who conduct comprehensive reviews of measures and set standards for assessment quality.

* **Screener -** A screener is a **brief** assessment that is **valid, reliable**, and **evidence-based**. It is conducted with **all students** to identify those who are at-risk or not at-risk of academic failure and need additional or alternative instruction.
* **Diagnostic -** A diagnostic assessment provides a deeper dive into a student’s **specific skill deficits and strengths** in order to make individualized instructional decisions. These assessments usually are administered after a screening instrument. Because of the **time intensive** and specific nature of these assessments, they are only used for the **subset of students** identified as not making sufficient progress.
* **Progress Monitor -** With progress monitoring, assessment is used to **measure growth** for students **already at-risk** for reading difficulties. Guidance provided by a progress monitoring tool informs teachers when they should make an intervention change.

**Consideration 2: Reliability and Validity**

Based on Title 70 O.S. § 1210.508C(C)(2), *“the State Board of Education shall approve screening instruments for use at the beginning and end of the school year, for monitoring of progress, and for measurement of reading skills at the end of the school year as required in subsections A and B of this section; provided, at least one of the screening instruments shall meet the following criteria:*

2. *Document the* ***validity*** *and* ***reliability*** *of each assessment.”*

* **Reliability -** Reliability is the consistency with which a tool classifies students from one administration to the next. For a tool to be considered reliable, it must have the same results under different conditions, at different times, and using different forms. For a tool to have convincing evidence of reliability, there must be at least two studies that are reported at 0.80 or higher.
* **Validity -** Validity is the extent to which a tool accurately measures the underlying construct that it is intended to measure. If the construct is sufficient mastery of reading, then the tool should accurately measure those skills that lead to reading sufficiency. For a tool to have convincing evidence of validity, all three types of validity (predictive, construct, and content) must be reported to be above 0.70.

**Consideration 3: Assesses all Five Reading Skill Areas**

Title 70 O.S. § 1210.508C(B) states *“each student in kindergarten, first, second, and third grade of the public schools in this state shall be assessed at the beginning and end of each school year using a screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education**for the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to,* ***phonemic awareness****,* ***phonics****,* ***reading fluency****,* ***vocabulary****, and* ***comprehension****.”*

According toTitle 70 O.S. § 1210.508C(C)(1), *“the State Board of Education shall approve screening instruments for use at the beginning and end of the school year, for monitoring of progress, and for measurement of reading skills at the end of the school year as required in subsections A and B of this section; provided, at least one of the screening instruments shall meet the following criteria:*

1. *Assess for* ***phonemic awareness****,* ***phonics****,* ***reading fluency****, and* ***comprehension****.”*

* **Phonemic Awareness**

Phonemic awareness is the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in words. A student’s skill in phonemic awareness is a good predictor of later reading success or difficulty.

* **Phonics -** Phonics is the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between the sounds of spoken language, and the letters and spelling that represent those sounds in written language. Successful decoding occurs when a student uses his or her knowledge of letter-sound relationships to accurately read a word.
* **Fluency -** Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with expression. Fluency is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. When fluent readers read silently, they recognize words automatically. They group words quickly to help them gain meaning from what they read. Fluent readers read aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural, as if they are speaking. Readers who have not yet developed fluency read slowly, word by word. Their oral reading is choppy.
* **Vocabulary -** Vocabulary refers to the words we must understand to communicate effectively. Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in the reading process and contributes greatly to a reader’s comprehension.
* **Comprehension -** Comprehension is the understanding and interpretation of what is read. To be able to accurately understand written material, children need to be able to (1) decode what they read; (2) make connections between what they read and what they already know; and (3) think deeply about what they have read.

**Consideration 4: Reports Scores in All Required Forms**

Title 70 O.S. § 1210.508C(C)(5) states, “*the State Board of Education shall approve screening instruments for use at the beginning and end of the school year, for monitoring of progress, and for measurement of reading skills at the end of the school year as required in subsections A and B of this section; provided, at least one of the screening instruments shall meet the following criteria:*

*5.* *Accompanied by a data management system that provides profiles for* ***students****,* ***class****,* ***grade level*** *and* ***school*** *building. The profiles shall identify each student’s instructional point of need and* ***reading achievement level****.”*

In order to address the instructional needs of students efficiently, data must be available at all levels defined in statute. These reporting levels will guide instructional decisions at the student, class and school level as well as facilitate communication with families.

**Consideration 5: Provides Accommodations for Subgroups**

According to Title 70 O.S. § 1210.508C(C)(4), *“the State Board of Education shall approve screening instruments for use at the beginning and end of the school year, for monitoring of progress, and for measurement of reading skills at the end of the school year as required in subsections A and B of this section; provided, at least one of the screening instruments shall meet the following criteria:*

4. *Can be used to assess* ***special education*** *and* ***limited-English-proficient*** *students.”*

The Reading Sufficiency Act requires that all students be assessed through a screening instrument. In order for data to be accurate, appropriate accommodations must be made for students who receive special education services or are identified as limited-English-proficient. The accommodations ensure the data for students in those sub-groups is reliable.