MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Universal Screening AND Kindergarten Readiness

2020-2021 School Year

State statute requires that the Mississippi Department of Education "shall select early literacy and numeracy screening assessment instrument or instruments to be used throughout the state in the screening of students in Kindergarten through Grade 3" (Mississippi Code § 37-23-16; Mississippi Code § 37-177-5). The Mississippi Department of Education, in collaboration with Mississippi Reading Panel, has established an approved list of reading screeners to be used by local school districts in grades K-3.

The following screeners are approved for use in Mississippi schools:

- FAST: Adaptive Reading, CBMReading, and earlyReading English (suite of three administered together) (Grades K-12)
- i-Ready (Grades K-12)
- Istation Indicators of Progress (ISIP) (Grades K-5)
- mCLASS Reading 3D (Grades K-3)
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth (Grades K-2), MAP (Grades 2-10)
- STAR Early Literacy (Grades PK-3), STAR Reading (Grades 1-12)

Additionally, Mississippi law currently requires a dyslexia screener in spring of Kindergarten and fall of 1st grade from a list approved by the Mississippi Board of Education. Data is collected from Early Learning Collaboratives and public pre-K programs in the fall and spring semester of each year using the Brigance comprehensive early learning observational screener. The Renaissance Star Early Literacy assessment is given statewide as a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in public pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms in the fall and spring of each year.

REQUIRED SCREENERS AND ASSESSMENTS Grades PK-3					
Screener	**PK**	**K**	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
Universal Screener		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dyslexia Screener		✓	✓		
Brigance	✓				
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment	✓	✓			
Mississippi Academic Assessment Program					✓

Guidance on the selection and administration of approved universal screeners can be found here.

ASSESSMENT RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Universal screeners are valid and reliable data collection tools and processes used to assess students' current level of performance in relation to grade level benchmarks, identifying students who need intervention and those who do not. Because screening takes place multiple times per year with all students, screeners are typically designed to be easy, quick, and repeatable.

RELIABILITY

Refers to whether the test used produces consistent and accurate results.

Validity

Refers to the accuracy of an assessment - whether it measures what it is supposed to measure.

How to Use Universal Screeners

Screeners should be used to:	Screeners should NOT be used to:
• Gather data on all students three times each school year (within 30 days of start of school; middle-of-year; end-of-year) to identify need for intervention (Mississippi Code § 37-177-1) • Determine whether each student is likely to meet, not meet, or exceed academic benchmarks • Determine need for tiered support • Measure effectiveness of overall curriculum and instruction for all students, as well as subgroups of students, through the use of aggregated and disaggregated data	• Promote or retain students (Mississippi Code § 37-23-16) • Determine student grades • Determine specific reading deficiencies; diagnostic tools are needed to determine the appropriate starting place for individual intervention

NOTES:

1. Some screeners may only measure phoneme identification, and not require phoneme production.
2. The assessment of oral expressive and receptive language (including vocabulary, syntax, and listening comprehension) provides key information in an individual's reading profile and is predictive of reading outcomes.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

K-3 Screeners and Kindergarten Readiness (Fall 2020)

Can students test from home?

At this time, the expectation is that all districts will administer K-3 screeners and the Kindergarten Readiness in-person for students in a traditional or hybrid setting. Districts should consider how to administer screeners in a small group setting on campus to allow for social distancing among students. For students receiving 100% virtual instruction, districts may choose to screen these students virtually or in-person for the K-3 screener and the Kindergarten Readiness. Please use recommendations for remote administration from your screener vendor for the K-3 screeners. Please see guidance from Renaissance to administer the Kindergarten Readiness virtually.

- Administering Kindergarten Readiness Remotely Teacher Guide August 14, 2020
- Administering Kindergarten Readiness Remotely Family Guide (English) August 14, 2020
- Administering Kindergarten Readiness Remotely Family Guide (Spanish) Coming Soon

What happens if parents refuse to bring their child to school?

If districts chose in-person administration, then the district should make three attempts to contact the parent and test the child. If the parent refuses to bring the child, please keep or have access to written documentation of this contact. The final contact would be best documented through certified mail.

Can the Beginning-of-Year (BOY) testing window be extended?

State law requires students to be tested within the first thirty (30) days of school. Districts must make every effort to complete the screener within the window. If your district is planning on opening earlier or later than the currently scheduled window, please contact Melissa Beck at mbeck@mdek12.org.

Does there have to be a proctor and hall monitor present?

No. Proctors and hall monitors are not required for screening assessments. A test administrator is required. Please use best practices to ensure validity and reliability.

Can students be screened in their classrooms?

Yes. CDC social distancing recommendations must be followed. Please see CDC guidelines at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html

Do shared devices need to be cleaned after every student?

Yes. All devices must be cleaned after each use.

Will students have to be screened three times this year?

Yes. State law requires all K-3 students be tested within the first thirty (30) days of school and at Middle-of-Year (MOY), and End-of-Year (EOY).

Can students test outside of the thirty (30) day BOY window?

Districts must make every effort to complete the screener within the window.

Can students be screened in small groups or one-on-one?

Yes. Districts may make accommodations to support small group or one-on-one administration as needed.

What should schools/districts do if students are absent and miss testing due to being out for quarantine because they or someone in their household has tested positive?

Test the student upon their return. If their return falls outside of the first 30 days of school, please keep written documentation (i.e., a doctor's note, parent excuse, etc.) to justify the testing date.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Dyslexia Screener (Fall 2020)

Can students test from home?

At this time, the expectation is that all districts will administer the dyslexia screeners in-person for students in a traditional or hybrid setting. Districts should consider how to administer screeners in a small group setting on campus to allow for social distancing among students. For students receiving 100% virtual instruction, districts may choose to screen these students virtually or in-person for the dyslexia screener. Please use recommendations for remote administration from your screener vendor.

Will students have to be screened for dyslexia in first grade and in kindergarten?

Yes. State law requires all K-1 students be screened for dyslexia. First grade students will be screened in the fall semester and kindergarten students will be screened in the spring.

Are special qualifications required to administer the dyslexia screener?

No special qualifications are required to administer any of the state approved dyslexia screeners.

Can the fall screener for first grade students window be extended?

State law requires students to be tested during the fall semester. Districts must make every effort to complete the screener within the window. If your district is planning on opening earlier or later than the currently scheduled window, please contact Laurie Weathersby at lweathersby@mdek12.org

We are planning to screen our first graders for dyslexia who are distance learners through a virtual meeting. Would this be acceptable?

However you decide to screen for your distance learners should be consistent. Ensure that you use that same platform for all of your students.