



OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

# OSSE Universal Screener List

Updated April 2024

This document is intended to support Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with the implementation of [DC Law 23-191](#) Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020.

For questions, contact Dustin Tamsen at [Dustin.Tamsen@dc.gov](mailto:Dustin.Tamsen@dc.gov).



## K-2 Universal Literacy Screener Selection Guidance

This document provides guidance to LEAs for selecting a tool to screen kindergarten through second grade students for potential reading difficulties, including dyslexia.

Schools should implement early screening and targeted intervention for all students in kindergarten to grade 2 at least three times a year (beginning, middle and end of school year), regardless of a student's performance in the classroom. This recommendation is grounded in research on the prevention and early remediation of reading difficulties, including dyslexia<sup>1</sup>. Students who arrive at schools outside of the initial testing windows should still be screened to establish a baseline of that student's reading skills.

### What is Screening?

Screening is a brief, time-limited assessment of a skill or ability that is highly predictive of a later outcome. Screening measures are designed to quickly differentiate students into one of two groups: 1) those who may require intervention at this time; and 2) those who do not require intervention.

Universal screening emphasizes specific skills that are highly correlated with broader measures of reading achievement. **Universal screening is not intended to be diagnostic of reading difficulties** including dyslexia, but to determine risk levels of reading difficulties in general and the potential risk of having or developing dyslexia.

### How to Use Universal Screeners?

Screeners should be used to:	Screeners should NOT be used to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gather data on all k-grade 2 students three times each year (within the first 45 days of the school year, middle of year, end of year) to identify students at risk for reading difficulties.</li><li>• Determine which students need tier 2 and 3 interventions within an MTSS framework.</li><li>• Evaluate the effectiveness of core literacy curriculum and instruction for all students, as well as subgroups of students, by aggregated and disaggregated data.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote or retain students.</li><li>• Determine specific student grades.</li><li>• Diagnosis or determine specific reading deficiencies.</li><li>• Serve as the sole source of identifying students needing additional support.</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> **PLEASE NOTE:** The information contained in, or adherence to, this guidance does not eliminate the obligations of an LEA under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including the obligation to identify children with disabilities who require special education and the obligation to provide a free and appropriate public education.

<sup>2</sup> In July 2010, the District of Columbia adopted the Common Core Standards, a state-led initiative coordinated by the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. See <https://osse.dc.gov/service/common-core-state-standards>.

## K-2 Reading Screener Required and Recommended Domains

Based on [guidance from the International Dyslexia Association](#), and in alignment with the English Language Arts (ELA) Common Core State Standards on foundational skills that lead to success in kindergarten to second grade, screeners must address the following skills in the respective grade levels:

DOMAIN	DEFINITION	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE	SECOND GRADE
<b>PHONOLOGICAL/ PHONEMIC AWARENESS</b>	The ability to recognize and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in words.	Required	Required	Recommended
<b>RAPID AUTOMATIZED NAMING (RAN)</b>	The rapid automatic naming of familiar objects, such as colors, shapes, numbers, letters and/or objects.	Required	Required	Recommended
<b>PHONICS</b>	A system that focuses on the relationship between letters and sounds and applying that knowledge to the decoding of words.	Required	Required	Required
<b>WORD RECOGNITION</b>	The ability to instantly read words.	Recommended	Required	Required
<b>LISTENING COMPREHENSION</b>	The ability to understand what one hears in multiple contexts or for a stated purpose.	Recommended	N/A	N/A
<b>READING COMPREHENSION</b>	A multicomponent process in which readers extract, construct and interpret the meaning of written language.	N/A	Recommended	Recommended
<b>ORAL READING FLUENCY</b>	The ability to read with the appropriate rate, accuracy, and expression to gain meaning.	N/A	Recommend (mid-year)	Recommended

*(Adapted from International Dyslexia Association, 2019; Smartt, & Hougen, 2012; Kilpatrick 2015)*

## SY 2022-2023 OSSE-Approved Kindergarten – Second Grade Universal Screeners

The universal screeners identified below are approved by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for use to identify students who are at risk of reading difficulties in kindergarten through second grade. These screeners meet the criteria of universal literacy screening as outlined in [D.C. Law 23-191 Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020](#).

The identified screeners were reviewed to meet the minimum technical criteria outlined by the National Center on Intensive Intervention [Screening Tools Chart Rating System](#).

Technical criteria considered for screener selection include:

- Classification Accuracy:** partially convincing evidence *or* convincing evidence
- Reliability:** partially convincing evidence *or* convincing evidence
- Validity:** partially convincing *or* convincing evidence

The chart on the next page indicates the approved screener and whether it assesses the recommended and required domains. This list will be updated as additional screeners are approved by OSSE.

## OSSE-APPROVED UNIVERSAL SCREENERS

SCREENER NAME	RAPID AUTOMATIZED NAMING (RAN)	PHONOLOGICAL & PHONEMIC AWARENESS	PHONICS	WORD RECOGNITION	LISTENING COMPREHENSION RECOMMENDED	LISTENING COMPREHENSION RECOMMENDED	ORAL READING FLUENCY RECOMMENDED
<a href="#">Acadience Reading (K-6)</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
<a href="#">Aimsweb</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">CUBED Pearl (for K) Insight (1-2)</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Early Bird</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
<a href="#">FastBridge</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">mClass DIBELS 8th Edition</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓

## Additional Considerations

OSSE recommends that LEAs select a screener that has all required domains. All screeners produce a composite score to indicate overall risk, making it challenging to combine screeners for an accurate composite score.

**LEAs that select a screener that is not on the approved list may be requested to submit a justification to OSSE.**

### Additional Universal Literacy Screening Resources

- [Best Practices in Universal Screening | National Center on Improving Literacy](#)
- [Considerations in Universal Screening | National Center on Improving Literacy](#)
- [Four Questions to Ask After Universal Screening | National Center on Improving Literacy](#)
- [Understanding Screening: What Do the Screening Standards Mean? | NCII \(intensiveintervention.org\)](#)