TN Universal Reading Screener
Frequently Asked Questions

1) How do I choose to opt in to using the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener for my district?

Any Tennessee district or public charter school is welcome to sign up for the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener. A district interested in signing up should complete the interest survey and should attend one of the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener Launch Webinar. After a district completes the survey, the district point of contact will receive information about how to log on to the launch webinar information.

2) If a district was planning on using a different screener for 2021-22, can they choose to use the TN Universal Reading Screener this year or next year?

Any Tennessee district or public charter school is welcome to sign up for the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener at any point in time. A district interested in signing up should attend the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener launch webinar and complete the interest survey .

3) What if a district has already paid for a different screener for the 2021-22 school year?

Districts who purchased other screeners for this year would have the option to opt into the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener before October 1, 2021; however, the department will not reimburse costs paid to another vendor. A district can choose to sign up for the 2022-23 school year.

4) What if I already use aimswebPlus, do I have to have my account switched to a central Tennessee Department of Education account to use the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener?

A district will maintain your current account, however; the district representative should:

a) *contact Pearson account representative, Louellen.marlatt@pearson.com for adding the K-3 Tennessee Universal Reading Screener to the district account and reconciling purchasing for grades 4-up,*
b) *complete the Pearson data sharing agreement, and*
c) *attend a launch webinar.*

* Please see also **Pearson Reimbursement Policy** for additional information

5) Do districts need to establish their own contract if wishing to use aimswebPlus for grades 4-5? Who is the best contact for this?

Districts interested in using Pearson aimswebPlus for additional grades will need to have a contract with Pearson. They can begin this process by contacting their Pearson representative louellen.marlatt@pearson.com for purchases or continuation of service for grades outside of the K through third.

6) Is the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener only going to be offered/supplied at no cost for this school year?

The Tennessee Literacy Success Act requires that the department provide a free universal reading screener that can be used in grades Pre-K through third grade. There is no end date for the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener.

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7) Will a district need to purchase anything for reading or math screening in addition to the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener?

The Tennessee Universal Reading Screener will include all required reading and math assessments for the Say Dyslexia law and the reading and math components of the RTI[2] framework. Benchmarking three times a year and progress monitoring will be included for grades K through 3. For a full list of tools within the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener, please see included **suite**.

8) Who is the Tennessee Department of Education contact for more information?

If a district needs to reach out to the department for more information regarding the new Tennessee Universal Reading Screener account after the launch webinar, please reach out to Jennifer Jordan at Jennifer.jordan@tn.gov.

9) Who is the Pearson contact for more information on logistics and contracting?

If a district needs to reach out to a Pearson representative regarding the launch of their account, logistics of their existing accounts or the training offerings, please reach out to Andrea.press@pearson.com .

10) When will districts have access and be able to begin using the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener?
   a) *After completion of the launch webinar, the department will facilitate the launch of your Tennessee Universal Reading Screener account with Pearson. It typically takes five business days from the time that the district launches their account until the district will receive a detailed launch email.*

11) How long does it take for students to take the screener for reading? (Pearson)

For Kindergarten and 1st grade students, screening administration will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes, but can be divided into multiple sessions as this assessment will require a 1:1 assessment. For students in 2nd and 3rd grade screening will take approximately 45 minutes. The upper grades assessment can be accomplished in group administration. As a reminder, teachers cannot assess students within their own classrooms.

12) Can the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener be administered in a lab situation or in individual classrooms?

While aimswebPlus can be administered flexibly, districts must ensure students are administered the assessment by an educator who is **not** their primary teacher of record. Districts must create test administration procedures and protocols that ensure proper secure administration of the assessments which includes proper training for test administrators. Teachers **cannot** assess their own students.

13) Will there be a standard testing window similar to the window districts are currently using for screening all students?

The department has set windows and reporting timelines for all universal reading screener reporting as required by the Tennessee Literacy Success Act. All approved screeners must be able to be administered at a minimum three times per academic year in the fall, winter, and spring. For the 2021-2022 School Year, all universal reading screeners will need to have accurate classifications, testing administration, and submission from an approved screener using nationally normed percentiles within the following windows:

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Screener Benchmarking Window	Window Administration Dates	Due Date for Accurate Data in SIS and/or via Tennessee Universal Reading Screener platform
Fall	Aug 2 – Oct 1	Oct 15
Winter	Jan 1 – Feb 4	Feb 18
Spring	April 11 – May 20	May 27

14) What about students who arrive after a window?

Follow the technical guidance of the universal reading screening tool to assess in the nearest date that will allow for the reporting of nationally normed percentiles. While the screening windows are open continuously through the calendar year to allow for flexibility, the department recommends that data be collected as close as possible to the actual dates that the national norms were collected. These would be September to mid-October (Fall), January (Winter), and May (Spring). The department also suggests collecting screening data within a short two-week window so that local data comparisons are fair.

15) What devices (iPad, Chromebook, etc.) can be used to administer the screener?

aimswebPlus is a browser-based application that supports all current and previous versions of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, and Safari. The hardware/software guidelines are available **here**. TestNav is the student testing application for students in grades 2 and above. TestNav supports both iPads and Chromebooks.

16) Is the report user friendly for teachers, students, and parents?

Pearson offers a wide range of educator reports that will be reviewed during their launch training series. The *Tennessee Literacy Success Act* requires that districts adapt these reports to provide family-friendly Home Literacy Reports after each screening window for all Kindergarten through third grade students who are identified as having a significant reading deficiency. The department strongly recommends that these Home Literacy Reports are provided for all Kindergarten through third grade students. These reports, written in family-friendly language, share that a student has been identified as having a significant reading deficiency based on the results of the administered universal reading screener and at-home activities for families to partner in creating strong literacy environments in the home. In addition, the Home Literacy Reports should provide information about the importance of being able to read, reading intervention activities families can do at home, and information about the specific reading interventions the school recommends for the student, which may include RTI[2].

17) Is there an option for students to take the test if they happen to be remote learners? (Pearson?)

Yes, some students may be quarantined or home-bound during assessment windows. Pearson has created remote testing protocols available. https://www.pearsonassessments.com/professional-assessments/digital-solutions/telepractice/telepractice-and-aimswebplus.html . Video recording of best practices for remote assessment can be found at:
https://www.brainshark.com/1/player/en/pearsonassessments?pi=zGMz3rhZEzMU1Cz0&r3f1=&fb=0

18) What grade levels does the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener serve?

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The Tennessee Literacy Success Act provides the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener at no cost for districts in grades Kindergarten through third grade. The department is working with Pearson to apply existing Kindergarten screeners for PreK use. This process will not be available for the beginning of the 2021-22 school year.

19) Does the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener screen for Reading only?

The Tennessee Universal Reading Screener provides a suite of free resources for districts that include all screening and progress monitoring resources for reading and mathematics. Please see the **assessment matrix** for all of the resources available.

20) What data can districts gain from this program?

The Reports Quick Guide provides a high-level overview of all data components included in the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener. The department recommends that districts attend the **launch webinar** to learn about all the data reports available.

21) *What reporting will be required of districts for the state?*

Districts will enter data into the Pearson platform for all benchmarking assessments provided three times a year. This data submission is required in the *Tennessee Literacy Success Act*, section 49-1-905(c)(6). For more information, see the Tennessee Literacy Success Act. The Pearson platform will upload data to the department automatically. Therefore, districts using the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener will not have additional upload steps that other districts will have using other approved screeners.

22) Does the suite of assessments provide additional/specific information the characteristics of dyslexia?

The "Say Dyslexia" law requires screening in the following areas: phonological and phonemic awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, encoding skills, and rapid naming skills. aimswebPlus meets this standard in through their Tests of Early Literacy and Reading domains along with the supplemental RAN task. In addition, the Shaywitz Dyslexia Screening tool, which is included in the TN Universal Reading Screener through aimswebPlus, is an optional rating scale that districts can use for targeted screening when a student's universal screening data indicates at risk for characteristics of dyslexia.

23) Do the assessment results provide guidance on how to support students with Dyslexia?

The "Say Dyslexia" law requires districts convene a school-based problem-solving team to analyze screening and progress monitoring data to assist teachers in planning and implementing appropriate instruction and evidence-based interventions for all students, including those who exhibit characteristics of dyslexia. Data reporting from aimswebPlus Early Literacy and Reading domains allow districts to identify critical literacy skill deficits for students at-risk for reading deficiencies, including characteristics of dyslexia.

Automated rostering via aimswebPlus allows a district to collect and input data in in the most streamlined, accurate, and time sensitive manner. Pearson technology support is available to support districts with initial setup. A manual option also exists. Districts may elect either option.

24) Can parents opt their students out of universal screening?

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The state and federal law requires student participation in state assessments and in appropriate child find activities. In fact, these statutes specifically reference the expectation that all students enrolled in public schools in Tennessee will complete annual assessments. Given both the importance and legal obligation, parents may not refuse or opt a child out of participating in state assessments, including universal screening required by State Board Rule and state and federal law. Therefore, school districts are not authorized to adopt policies allowing these actions. School districts must address student absences on testing days in the same manner as they would address a student's failure to participate in any other mandatory activity at school by applying the district's or school's attendance policies and providing ample make-up testing opportunities for students who were not present on district testing days.

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