



Early Literacy Screener Task Force

April 30, 2021
2:30-3:45 p.m.

Welcome

Co-Chair Trina Hall, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda for today.

Review Today's Outcomes

Trina provided an overview of the outcomes for this meeting:

- To become familiar with the OSPI 'Early Literacy Crosswalk' and have a general awareness of each screener on the crosswalk.
- To be able to explain the initial screening process done by our steering team.
- To be able to explain to a colleague the local criteria that we are prioritizing for our review.

Review Purpose of Task Force

- To select an Early Literacy Screener in response to 2018 legislation for implementation beginning fall 2021.
- Implementation and support within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) structure.
- Keep students at the center as our 'why'

Review Task Force Agreements

- Be Respectful
 - State concerns and interests clearly, listen carefully to and assume the best in others.
 - Ensure all voices are heard/everyone gets a chance to share their thoughts and feelings in multiple ways.
 - View differences of opinion as a constructive and important part of the problem-solving process.
- Be Productive
 - Respect time constraints.
 - Be forward-thinking, anticipate future needs.
 - Use "parking lot" for additional issues/questions.
 - Recognize non-closure as part of processing.
- Be Stewards of the Process
 - Seek creative ideas and solutions that have students at the center.
 - Balance advocacy with inquiry.
 - Ensure and support outreach for stakeholder input.
 - Work toward consensus and expect compromise.

Review Homework

Task force members were asked to engage with coworkers and get an idea of their understanding of the process for identifying and supporting students related to dyslexia and their role in it. Members broke into small groups and shared what they learned.

- Members discussed the number of referrals in our district; what the evaluation process looks like and how students are qualified in reading.

Members who attended the workshop *Identifying and Teaching Children at Risk for Dyslexia* on Saturday shared their learning and questions that surfaced. Material from the training is available to those unable to attend the conference.

- Members talked about the benefit of providing a common training for all school districts for alignment/consistency of content.

Assessments

Director of Research and Assessment, Brian Rick shared the Bellingham School District's assessments schedule and purpose for each of the ten (10) required district wide assessments, a universal screener, and annual state tests, and several (eight) optional assessments available to teachers to use as needed. The early literacy screener has its own purpose and fits inside of the bigger picture. Many assessments have a large capacity for what they can assess, others are more focused. The focus of this group is to find a screener that does what we need it to do well, then we can look at what else it provides.

OSPI's Crosswalk

This document is a decision-making guide to help schools and district fulfill the newly required literacy screening and provides the state advisory team's report on each screener that met the state criteria. Members spent time reviewing this document to become familiar with its formation, purpose, and content focusing on the guiding questions and skills required to be screened.

Guiding Questions:

- What do we as a district already have in place?
- What is our assessment administration capacity?
- Which combination of assessment would be most beneficial for our students?
- What is our current capacity to include additional assessments?
- What is our budget?

What are the skills required to be screened?

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonological Awareness
- Letter-Sound Knowledge
- Rapid Automatized Naming Skills

Thinking of Prior Knowledge

Prior to reviewing the state selected screeners, members engaged in an exercise focused on how our background knowledge and former experiences play into our thinking and decision making, and potential biases. The exercise came out of the work from Dr. Mylien Duong, senior research scientist at Committee for Children's work: Neuroscience of Implicit bias, the science behind it and how it can show up in our classrooms and schools, even when we do not intend for it to. This examination provided a framework for checking our implicit bias in a variety of settings.

Human beings have the ability to learn to associate two things together very quickly – that is innate. What we teach ourselves, what we choose to associate is up to us. Mahzarin R. BAnaji

State Screeners Selected

The Dyslexia Advisory Council is recommending the following literacy screening tools to implement [RCW 28A.320.260](#) in the 2021-22 school year.

- Pals by Illuminate
- Renaissance
- mClass, DIBELS 8th
- AimswebPlus
- Fastbridge Learning
- Amira
- I-Station
- Acadience Reading K-6 (DIBELS Next)
- i-Ready
- MAP Reading
- GANDER (RAN)

Initial Screening Criteria

Trina shared the focus of the initial screening criteria used by the steering team.

- Skills screened:
 - all strands required are represented (excluding RAN)
 - all elements of each strand are assessed,
- Administration
 - time to administer and the how,
 - data entry mechanisms
 - ability to hear the child
- Cognitive load,
- Modality,
- Early literacy screener as not an 'add on' or not original intent

Initial Results of Steering Team

Trina shared the results from the initial screening from the steering team. The goal was to identify screeners to continue to review. Six screeners were pulled forward for additional consideration; rationale was given for those screeners not selected for further review. Those moving forward include:

- Pals by Illuminate,
- mClass, Dibels 8th,
- Aimswebplus,
- Amira,
- i-Ready
- GANDER (RAN)

As state screeners were reviewed, members were reminded that the focus is on the assessment tools that assess for Phonemic Awareness, Phonological Awareness, and Letter-Sound Knowledge. Rapid Automatized Naming Skills (RAN) will be explored in depth at the May 14 meeting.

Members were reminded that the selection of these screeners is fluid as we continue to learn more about each screener. There is still an opportunity for those screeners eliminated for further review to come back to the selection process.

Task for Next Meeting

- Familiarize yourself with the screeners that were eliminated from review using the links provided. Share any concerns with Trina, Jenny, or Brian prior to the next meeting.

Exit Task

- Prioritize your top three criteria for continued evaluation of early literacy screeners. What is most important to you?

Next Meeting: May 14, 2021, 2:30-3:45 via Zoom.