

An Introduction to Valid and Reliable Screening and Progress Monitoring Tools in NYS Administered Prekindergarten Programs

Commissioner's Regulations 151-1 and 117 require districts and agencies operating State Administered Prekindergarten programs to screen and progress monitor students using valid and reliable assessment tools. This document aims to provide guidance on conducting these assessments.

Form of Assessment	Description	Administration
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A brief assessment to identify, from within a large population of children, those who may need further assessment to verify developmental and/or health risks	Once upon student entry
Progress Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An interim progress monitoring assessment is used to examine students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.• The first administration will establish a student's developmental baseline.• The last administration will serve as an outcome assessment to document how much learning has occurred throughout the year.	Two to three times per school year

What does Valid and Reliable Mean?

A **valid** form of assessment is one which measures what it is supposed to measure. The data taken from valid assessments can be used to draw conclusions that are appropriate and meaningful. **Reliability** is a measure of consistency. This means the assessment has consistent results regardless of who is scoring the assessment or when the assessment is administered. A reliable assessment will produce the same results on re-test and will produce similar results with a similar cohort of students, so it is consistent in its methods and criteria¹. Assessment tools that are valid and reliable will have research-based evidence verifying the validity and reliability.

A Note Regarding Locally-Created Assessment Tools

If a school district chooses to use a locally developed assessment, it must partner with an organization, typically, a university, to go through the psychometric process (typically two years of developing targets of measurement, performance level descriptors, field testing, data review, evaluation, and analysis of resulting field test scores) to deem the assessment valid (measures what it is supposed to) and reliable (consistent scoring results). ***As per Commissioner's Regulations 151-1.3(b), until a school district's locally developed assessment is deemed valid and reliable, it is required to use assessments that have already been deemed valid and reliable.***

If a tool is valid and reliable, this information will be readily available on the publisher's website.

¹ The Center on Standards & Assessment Implementation (March 2018). Valid and Reliable Assessments. *CSAI Update*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED588476.pdf>

Screening

In New York State, diagnostic screening is used to identify whether a child is meeting their developmental milestones. This assessment is designed to evaluate a broad range of abilities, including intellectual, emotional, social, and motor abilities. The results of this screening are used to determine if further evaluation is needed.

School districts are required by Commissioner’s Regulations (Part 117.3) to develop a plan for the screening of all new Prekindergarten entrants using a valid and reliable screening tool. The purpose of this screening is to determine which students are possibly gifted, are suspected of having a disability, and/or level of English proficiency. The screening must be conducted by appropriately trained or qualified staff, and in the student’s native language, if the language of the home is other than English.

Screening shall take place for new entrants prior to the school year, if possible, but no later than December 1st of the school year of entry, or within 15 days of student transfer.

Screening will include:

- Language and literacy skills, motor development, mathematical skills, and cognitive development
- a determination of the child’s home language ([EML Language Profile](#))
- Although not required, a screening for social emotional learning (SEL) is recommended

This table lists the most frequently used, valid and reliable screening assessment tools as reported by UPK grantees for the 2021-2022 school year. **A diagnostic screening is administered once, upon a student’s initial entry to the school district.**

EXAMPLES OF VALID AND RELIABLE EARLY CHILDHOOD SCREENING TOOLS	Language and Literacy Skills	Cognitive Skills	Motor Development	SEL <i>*optional</i>
• Brigance Early Childhood Screens	☒	☒	☒	☒
• Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL) *	☒	☒	☒	☒
• Ages and Stages (ASQ)	☒	☒	☒	☒
• Early Screening Inventory – Revised (ESI-R)	☒	☒	☒	-
• Battelle Developmental Inventory 3 (BDI-3) Screening Test	☒	☒	☒	☒
• Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) *	☒	-	-	-
• aimswebPlus	☒	☒	-	☒ <i>*add on</i>
• Ages and Stages Social-Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE)	-	-	-	☒
• Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)	-	-	-	☒

* Indicates that there is more than one version of the tool.

Progress Monitoring

In New York State Administered Prekindergarten programs, progress monitoring refers to the interim progress monitoring that takes place two to three times per year. More frequent progress monitoring (formal or informal) may occur throughout the year as needed.

A child’s developmental baseline is typically established by the first administration of the interim progress monitoring tool. This provides a comprehensive evaluation of the level of skills, abilities and/or knowledge that a child possesses prior to the beginning of formal instruction. The last administration of the interim progress monitoring tool for the year can also be used as the summative/outcome assessment showing how much learning has occurred at a point in time. Its purpose is to measure the level of child, school, or program success.

According to Commissioner’s regulations 151-1.3, school districts shall establish a process for assessing the progress of all children participating in the UPK program. This process must provide for on-going assessment throughout the year in the development of language, cognitive, and social skills. The tools used for assessment must be valid and reliable.

This table lists the most frequently used, valid and reliable progress monitoring assessment tools as reported by UPK grantees for the 2021-2022 school year.

EXAMPLES OF VALID AND RELIABLE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRESS MONITORING TOOLS	Language and Literacy Skills	Cognitive Skills	Social-Emotional Skills
• Brigance Inventory of Early Development	☒	☒	☒
• Teaching Strategies GOLD Developmental Continuum	☒	☒	☒
• Work Sampling System (WSS)	☒	☒	☒
• CIRCLE Progress Monitoring	☒	☒	☒
• HighScope Child Observation Record (COR)	☒	☒	☒
• Battelle Developmental Inventory *	☒	☒	☒
• STAR Early Literacy	☒	☒	-
• Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Mid-Year	☒	-	-
• Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)	-	-	☒
• Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) *	☒	-	-
• aimswebPlus	☒	☒	☒

* Indicates that there is more than one version of the tool.

Please Note: NYSED does not endorse the use of any particular assessment. These assessments have been reported to NYSED’s Office of Early Learning. They are a sampling of those being used by prekindergarten programs across the State.