

Universal Reading Screener Guidance

Pre-K Alternate Growth Score

The Tennessee Literacy Success Act, codified at T.C.A. § 49-1-901 et. seq., allows for districts and public charter schools to use a Universal Reading Screener as an approved alternative growth measure for Pre-K -2 teachers.

A list of state board approved screeners can be found [here](#). The law also allows school districts to use the results of the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (TN-URS) or another universal reading screener, approved by the state board of education, as an alternative growth measure for Pre-K-2 teachers. Districts can access the department's full guidance [here](#).

Universal reading screeners are normative measures (see more about normative measures [here](#)). When evaluating screener data for growth measures, a different approach must be taken because screeners are normative assessments not criterion referenced assessments, such as the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP). As such, they are not designed to assess mastery of standards; students do not pass or fail normative assessments. Students receive a score that compares them to other students who have also taken the assessment.

Use of Universal Reading Screener for Pre-K

The Tennessee Literacy Success Act allows for a district to use any of the state board approved normative universal reading screeners for Pre-K-2 as an alternative growth score.

Within the state board approved screeners, three providers have a Pre-K option: FastBridge earlyReading, Star Early Literacy, and TN-URS (Pearson aimswebPlus). Districts may choose any of these options for alternative growth measures. It is important to note that there are limits to using the Pearson aimswebPlus screener for Pre-K. Pearson aimswebPlus allow for rostering of Pre-K students but uses **kindergarten national norms** and does not have Pre-K norms.

These norms may limit the equity of using Pearson aimswebPlus for an alternative growth measure.

Student Growth Portfolio

The Pre-K Quality Act allows a student growth portfolio to be included for all Pre-K and K teachers that are in a district receiving a Voluntary Pre-K grant. Therefore, districts can continue to use student growth portfolio to generate a growth score for Pre-K-2 teachers. Portfolios, which focus on skills-based mastery, are an approach to standards selection. There exists clear alignment between grade level standards and student expectations and an increased focus on foundational reading skills. Portfolios have embedded tasks to give clear expectations of student performance of the standard. For more information about the Pre-K portfolio, please email portfolio.questions@tn.gov.

For information implementing an approved universal reading screener with Pre-K students, please email tn.universalscreener@tn.gov.