



SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

Fall 2014 Readiness Assessment Implementation

State Board of Education
November 12, 2014

Proviso 1A.76

- All students entering a publicly funded prekindergarten or public kindergarten must be administered a readiness assessment:
 - Focused on early language and literacy development and
 - Administered no later than the forty fifth day of the 2014-15 school year.
- The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended (or services needed to address the child's identified needs) must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian.
- The readiness assessment may not be used to deny a student:
 - admission to school or
 - progress to kindergarten or first grade.

Read to Succeed Act, Section 59-155-150

- Every student entering publically funded prekindergarten and kindergarten will be administered a readiness assessment by the forty-fifth day of the school year beginning in Fiscal Year 2014-2015
- Initially, the assessment shall focus on early language and literacy development.
- The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive, social, emotional, health problems, and concerning appropriate instruction for each child.
- The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian.
- Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities for children whose oral language skills are assessed to be below the norm of their peers in the State must be aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each student.

Typical Assessment Preparation Schedule

Activity Begins	Activity
18 months before testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine the purpose of the assessment, desired test design, grades and subjects to be tested.• Write and submit an RFP for BCB to Procure
15 months before testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BCB activities (review and release RFP, receive proposals, award a contract)
9 months before testing	<p>Major Activities, Decisions, and Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reconcile differences between state and contractor procedures and understandings• Ensure access for students with disabilities, determine valid accommodations (communicate list of valid accommodations to districts in time for IEPs to be written during the spring before testing)• Determine how data will be transferred to and from contractor (e.g., data layouts)• Determine processes to keep tests secure• Train districts; Complete/Print/Ship test administration manuals to districts 2 months before testing

2014 Readiness Assessment Activities

Activity Began		Activity
Date	Weeks Before Testing	
June 5, 2014	17 weeks	Proviso ratified mandating assessment and purpose of assessment, BCB activities began (e.g., RFP written and posted)
August 21, 2014	6 weeks	BCB awarded the contract to Amplify Education Inc. for the Circle assessment.
August 21 , 2014	6 weeks	Planned and scheduled training sessions, determined how to best test students with disabilities, reconciled state and contractor's processes - added procedures policy decisions, manual work, etc.
September 17-25, 2014	2 weeks, 2 days	Amplify conducted 23 regional in-person and 3 online training sessions over 7 business days.
September 26, 2014	1 week	Test Administration Manuals (TAM), that included all available accommodations, sent to districts.
October 3, 2014	--	Testing Window Began (Mandate is to complete testing during the first 45 days of school.)
October 16, 2014	9 days after testing began	Supplemental Guidance about accommodations sent to districts.

Readiness Assessment concerns:

Concern

SCDE required teachers to administer the assessment in public schools, however, First Steps allowed administration by the teacher of the class.

During training, accommodations had not been finalized and anxiety resulted.

Questions to Amplify trainers regarding State testing procedures were not always answered correctly.

Test could not be used throughout the 5 year old kindergarten school year

Response

Not all classroom teachers in First Steps programs are certified teachers.

Accommodations were specified in the Test Administration Manual (TAM) and through additional guidance.

SCDE received reports that this occurred.

RFP called for a readiness assessment for use at the beginning of the school year.

Readiness Assessment concerns:

Concern

Emails from Amplify regarding web access were not received.

Emails sent to schools rather than to the districts.

Training in some districts occurred the day before testing.

Some class lists entered by teachers were deleted.

Student birthdates were incorrect in the preloaded data.

Response

Firewall problems solved within 10 days.

This was necessary due to the time crunch.

State training concluded on September 25th – testing could not begin prior to October 6th.

Amplify indicated that this was a user error.

This was an SCDE error that could be corrected by the teacher or through a reloading of the data.

Questions?



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