

Readiness Assessment Guidance Assessing Students with Disabilities

This document provides guidance for administering the prekindergarten (4K) and kindergarten (5K) assessments to students with disabilities. Readiness assessments must be administered to all students, including students with disabilities, who are enrolled in publicly funded prekindergarten or kindergarten.

Participation Requirements

All students enrolled in a publicly funded prekindergarten must take one of the three approved 4K readiness assessments: Teaching Strategies GOLD™, Individual Growth and Development Indicators (myIGDIs™), or Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS™) during the first 45 days and the last 45 days of the school year. All public-school students enrolled in kindergarten must take the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) during the first 45 days of the school year.

Most students with disabilities should be able to participate in the readiness assessments as presented, but some items may be access-limited for students with specific needs.

Selection of a Prekindergarten Assessment for Students with Disabilities

Following review of this guidance, the IEP team may determine that the 4K assessment best suited to meet the specific accessibility needs of one or more students with disabilities is not the primary selected for administration in the district. If the district or IEP team determines that a different assessment is best for one or more students, the District Test Coordinator (DTC) should contact Dr. Meghan Walters at mgwalters@ed.sc.gov and Angela Blackwell-Smith at ablackwellsmith@ed.sc.gov.

Team-Based Decision Making

Teachers administering readiness assessments to students with disabilities should collaborate with the student's instructional team (e.g., IEP team, 504 team, general education teacher, special education teacher, English Language Acquisition teacher, and parents) to identify needed supports. The team is responsible for determining *how* a student will participate in the assessment (with or without accommodations) *not whether* the student will participate.

If the team determines that a student requires a non-standard accommodation in order to equitably access the assessment, the DTC should submit a completed special circumstance request form to the Office of Assessment. This request form must be submitted no later than 2 weeks prior to administration.

IEP

Depending upon the 4K readiness assessment administered and accommodations listed, IEP teams may need to reconvene for the purposes of determining students' meaningful participation. These instances should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Notwithstanding any changes made by an IEP team, the instructional accommodations listed on the child's IEP, which are in effect during the testing window, will serve as the testing accommodations for the 4K and 5K readiness assessments. The IEP teams are encouraged to discuss these readiness assessments with parents during future IEP team meetings. Districts are also reminded to ensure compliance for students covered by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

A notification letter template is attached for districts to send to the parents of each participating child with a disability. The notification indicates that, for the purposes of the 4K and 5K readiness assessments, the instructional accommodations outlined in each child's IEP that are in effect during the

testing window, if applicable, will suffice as testing accommodations on these readiness assessments if the accommodations do not change the constructs that are being assessed. The notification also contains language that offers parents the opportunity to reconvene the IEP team at any time to review and discuss the accommodations.

Please note, as of August 2021, a notice and link are included in Enrich for reference and documentation purposes. The notice states: *The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) must be administered for all kindergarten students within the first 45 days of school. Accommodations used in daily instruction, indicated in the Accommodations section, will be allowable during testing.*

Prekindergarten (4K) Readiness Assessments

Individual Growth and Development Indicators (MyIGDIs)

This assessment is composed of five subtests listed below. For all students, the Discontinue Criteria (stopping rule) outlined in the Test Administration Manual (TAM) should be followed. Listed below are recommendations for alternative presentation and response options to access each subtest. In some instances, it is recommended that certain subtests not be administered due to accessibility constraints. If the IEP/504 team determines that a special circumstance request for additional accommodations or customized materials are needed, please refer to this document.

Picture Naming

- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for students with vision impairments, deaf/hard of hearing, or non-verbal with no mode of communication. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide access to the subtest. If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, follow the Discontinue Criteria (stopping rule) that is outlined in the TAM.

Rhyming

- Allow students who are blind to respond orally.
- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for students who are deaf/hard of hearing, use eye gaze or use an Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) device to respond. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide access to the subtest. If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, follow the Discontinue Criteria (stopping rule) that is outlined in the TAM.

- Sound ID

- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for students who have vision impairments, are deaf/hard of hearing, or use eye gaze or an AAC device to respond. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide access to the subtest. If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, follow the Discontinue Criteria (stopping rule) that is outlined in the TAM.

Which One Doesn't Belong?

- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for students who have vision impairments, deaf/hard of hearing, or use eye gaze or an AAC device to respond. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide access to the subtest. If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, follow the Discontinue Criteria (stopping rule) that is outlined in the TAM.

Alliteration

- Allow students who are blind to respond orally.
- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for students who are deaf/hard of hearing, use

eye gaze, or AAC devices to respond. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide access to the subtest. If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, follow the Discontinue Criteria (stopping rule) that is outlined in the TAM.

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)

This assessment is composed of six subtests listed below. PALS is designed to be flexible, responsive, and accessible to meet the wide range of needs of students. Most students who have special needs can access PALS through a standard administration, sometimes with the aid of one or more of the allowable accommodations. Listed below are recommendations for alternative presentation and response options to allow students to access each subtest.

Please refer to this document <https://ed.sc.gov/tests/tests-files/pre-k-and-kindergarten-readiness-assessments/pals-and-students-with-special-needs-including-students-with-disabilities-or-english-language-learners/> for more information regarding the use of allowable practices, accommodations, or modifications. If modifications are required, resulting in a non-standard administration, the PALS Online System provides a mechanism for entering these scores. In some instances, it is recommended that certain subtests not be administered to specific populations of students due to accessibility constraints. If the IEP/504 team determines that a special circumstance request for additional accommodations or customized materials are needed, please refer to this document. <https://ed.sc.gov/tests/tests-files/students-with-disabilities/special-circumstances-request-form>

Name Writing

- Allow a student who is blind to use a braillewriter to demonstrate writing skills and omit the drawing portion of the section.
- Allow student to finger spell his/her name.

Alphabet Knowledge

- **Uppercase Letters and Lowercase Letters Subsections**
 - Provide braille letter cards for students who are blind. Note: Braille materials are secure test materials.
 - Allow students who are deaf/hard of hearing to respond using sign language.
 - This subtest may present accessibility constraints for some students who are non-verbal with no mode of communication. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide access to the subtest. If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, the team can determine that a special circumstance request is needed to request the use of a non-standard support or the use of modifications are required for accessibility purposes.
- **Letter Sounds Subsection**
 - Provide braille letter cards for students who are blind. Note: Braille materials are secure test materials.
 - This subtest may present accessibility constraints for some students who are deaf/hard of hearing or may be non-verbal with no mode of communication. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide access to the subtest. If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, the team can determine that a special circumstance request is needed to request the use of a non-standard support or the use of modifications are required for accessibility purposes

Beginning Sound Awareness

- Say the name of each picture as it is presented to students who are blind and ask if the picture begins with the same sound as “man,” “sock,” or “bag.”

- Display a picture of a “man,” a “sock,” and a “bag” on the student’s communication device for a student who uses eye gaze or an AAC device. The student should use these pictures to communicate his/her response.
- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for some students who are deaf/hard of hearing. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide appropriate access to the subtest.
- If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, the team can determine that a special circumstance request is needed to request the use of a non-standard support or the use of modifications are required for accessibility purposes.

Print and Word Awareness

- Provide a braille copy of the book for students who are blind. Each page should contain the same content as the print version. Note: Braille materials are secure test materials.
- Administer this section in sign language for students who are deaf/hard of hearing.

Rhyme Awareness

- Allow students who are blind to respond orally.
- Present the answer choices in picture format for students who use eye gaze or AAC devices. The pictures should be as similar to the original pictures as possible.
- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for some students who are deaf/hard of hearing. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide appropriate access to the subtest.
- If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, the team can determine that a special circumstance request is needed to request the use of a non-standard support or the use of modifications are required for accessibility purposes. Please refer to this document, <https://ed.sc.gov/tests/tests-files/pre-k-and-kindergarten-readiness-assessments/pals-and-students-with-special-needs-including-students-with-disabilities-or-english-language-learners/> for more information regarding the use of modifications on PALS assessment.

Nursery Rhyme Awareness

- Administer this section in sign language for students who are deaf/hard of hearing.
- This subtest may present accessibility constraints for some students who may be non-verbal with no mode of communication. The team should determine if routinely used and allowable accommodations would provide appropriate access to the subtest.
- If the team determines this subtest is not accessible, even with the allowable supports, the team can determine that a special circumstance request is needed to request the use of a non-standard support or the use of modifications are required for accessibility purposes. Please refer to this document, <https://ed.sc.gov/tests/tests-files/pre-k-and-kindergarten-readiness-assessments/pals-and-students-with-special-needs-including-students-with-disabilities-or-english-language-learners/> for more information regarding the use of modifications on PALS assessment.

Teaching Strategies GOLD

This assessment is composed of thirty-eight objectives. Eight of the thirty-eight objectives **must** be administered to each student. The language and literacy objectives that **must** be administered are: Objective 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19. These objectives are measured through classroom observations. Listed below are recommendations for alternative presentation and response options to allow as many students as possible to access each subtest. In some instances, it is recommended that certain sections not be administered to specific students due to accessibility constraints.

Objective 15

The following subsections may present accessibility constraints for some students who are deaf/hard of hearing. Do not administer these sections to students who are deaf/hard of hearing.

- Notices and Discriminates Rhyme

- Notices and Discriminates Alliteration
- Notices and Discriminates Smaller and Smaller Units of Sound

Objective 16

The following subsection may present accessibility constraints for some students who are deaf/hard of hearing. Do not administer this section to students who are deaf/hard of hearing.

- Uses Letter-Sound Knowledge

Objective 19

- Allow a student who is blind to braille his or her name.
- Allow a student who is blind to use a braillewriter to demonstrate writing skills.
- Allow a student to finger spell his/her name.

Administration Guidance for the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)

The KRA offers universally designed allowances to provide all students with equal opportunities to demonstrate kindergarten readiness. Level the Field supports are provided in addition to universally designed allowances when/if needed. However, some assessment skills may not be accessible to the students even with allowable universal supports or Level the Field accommodations. These items would be considered as access- limited.

KRA Item/skill that may be considered access-limited

An item or skill on the KRA may be marked as “Not Scorable” when the assessment activity is not accessible to the student, even with use of universal designed allowances or Level the Field supports, or if the skill being assessed is not appropriate, given the characteristics of the student’s disability. Students who receive a “Not Scorable” response will be given an overall performance score and domain scores on the KRA 2.0.

For further guidance, test administrators can refer to the ***Quick Guide Administering the KRA to Students with Disabilities and for Students with Disabilities, the Quick Guide Administering the KRA to Multilingual Learners and the***

Teachers who are administering the KRA 2.0 to students who are deaf or hard of hearing should, refer to the ***Teacher Administration Manual: Guidance Document KRA 2.0 Form A Deaf/Hard of Hearing Version*** for specific procedures on item administration and scoring.

Support and guidance for administering KRA to Deaf and Hard of Hearing students can be found by accessing the document called ***KRA 2.0 TAM supplement-Deaf or Hard of Hearing*** found in the KReady dashboard under Professional Development and Resources> PD content>Supports and Resources>Important Documents. There are also supplemental videos for administering specific test items using American Sign Language.

If the IEP/504 team determines that a special circumstance request for additional accommodations or customized materials may be needed for access to a particular subtest, please contact Dr. Meghan Walters at mgwalters@ed.sc.gov

If you have questions, please contact the following SCDE staff.

- Training and materials for administration of readiness assessments: Dr. Meghan at mgwalters@ed.sc.gov
- Accommodations and accessibility: Angela Blackwell-Smith at ablackwellsmith@ed.sc.gov.
- IEP documentation: Jenny May at jmay@ed.sc.gov