

Texas Education Agency

Miscellaneous Document

Request for Kindergarten Assessment Instruments, Including Multidimensional Assessment Tools

Filing Date. February 15, 2017

Filing Authority. Texas Education Code, §28.006

Description. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is notifying publishers, school districts, charter schools, and other organizations that kindergarten assessment tools (English and Spanish) may be submitted for review for inclusion on the *2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Kindergarten Assessment Instruments*. The *2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Kindergarten Assessment Instruments* will be available in spring 2017 so that school districts and open-enrollment charter schools may order instruments for implementation in the 2017-2018 school year. Instruments selected for the commissioner's list will remain on the list for a minimum of two school years. Inclusion on the *2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Kindergarten Assessment Instruments* will be evaluated in terms of psychometric properties (reliability and validity), administrative features, scoring, and efficiency (e.g., cost, time to administer, feasibility of implementation). TEA will give priority to multidimensional assessments; unidimensional assessments will also be considered (see criteria as follows).

Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.006, authorizes the commissioner of education to develop recommendations for school districts to use multidimensional assessment tools to measure and monitor students' developmental skills. In accordance with the TEC, §28.006(b), the commissioner shall include on the commissioner's list at least two multidimensional assessment tools. A multidimensional assessment tool on the commissioner's list must (a) test at least three developmental skills, including literacy, or (b) test at least two developmental skills, other than literacy, and be administered in conjunction with a separate reading instrument that is on the list of approved assessment tools. Other developmental skills include (1) social and emotional development, (2) language and communication, (3) gross and fine motor development, (4) mathematics, and (5) cognitive development.

Criteria Specific to Kindergarten Assessment Instruments. Publishers, school districts, charter schools, and other organizations will be responsible for submitting kindergarten tools to be considered for inclusion on the *2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Kindergarten Assessment Instruments*. Submissions must include a concise summary of the evidence base for each requested component in this request along with a brief discussion of how the instrument aligns with the cited research. Submissions must include supporting documentation. See the following

*Guidelines for the Implementation of TEA Criteria for the Evaluation of English and Spanish Kindergarten Assessment Instruments* for additional information.

*Guidelines for the Implementation of TEA Criteria for the Evaluation of English and Spanish Kindergarten Assessment Instruments*

1. The instrument must be intended for use in kindergarten. Kindergarten tools may be limited to kindergarten entry (screening measures) or may assess entry and also track progress throughout the school year (progress monitoring).

*Screening measures* are brief assessments of skills that are important early indicators of later school competence.

These provide information on entry-level skills at the beginning of the kindergarten year. *Progress monitoring* refers to brief measures that are conducted on a routine basis to provide information on what children are learning and rates of improvement across the kindergarten year. As progress monitoring measures are brief, teachers can conduct them at least three times across a school year and learn which students are or are not demonstrating adequate progress. Results of measures should be predictive of comprehensive standardized measures.

2. Teachers must use a standardized measure to assess student performance. This means the assessment has a common set of questions, tasks, and materials and the child's score is based on a normative sample of children.

3. Whenever possible, skill levels of children who speak a language other than English should be assessed in both their home language and English. Measurement of home language skill level is essential when children are enrolled in bilingual instructional programs. In particular, assessments that are able to assess students in both English and Spanish are preferred.

4. The cumulative assessment time must not exceed 60 minutes per student. Some criteria may be measured through observation, informal assessments, reflection, collection of children's work in portfolios, or checklists. Informal assessments may not be the primary method for monitoring children's progress.

5. A measure must directly assess five domains of health and wellness development, language and communication, emergent literacy - reading, emergent literacy - writing, and mathematics, as they are specified in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines respectively.

Criteria for Review: Multidimensional Assessments. In order to be considered for review, multidimensional instruments must measure at least three domains of development, including literacy. Assessments that measure more than three domains are preferred.

Criteria for Review: Unidimensional Assessments. In order to be considered for review, unidimensional instruments must fully measure all the concepts in the respective domain. This means that a score for individual concepts within the domain must be provided as well as a single composite score for the domain. For example, an assessment that measures only expressive vocabulary will not be considered as a full assessment of language and communication.

6. The measure should have a scoring structure that yields a separate score for each domain included for kindergarten. For this review, an instrument is only considered to "assess" a domain if it provides a score for that domain.

7. The assessment tool may be individually administered, may be group administered, and/or may consist of an observation checklist. Domain scores for each individual child must be provided.

8. Administration of the instrument by a classroom teacher must be allowable. Specifically, the qualifications for those who administer and interpret the instrument (as specified in publisher's guidelines) should be within the coursework and/or licenses typically completed by teachers certified to teach in Texas public schools.

Administration procedures requiring timing, the establishment of basals and ceilings, complex judgments, and/or subjective ratings that require the special training of a diagnostician are inappropriate for teacher administration.

9. If the instrument is norm-referenced, it must have a representative norming sample in terms of the sample size and the groups represented. Norm-referenced tests must be representative of the population of students in the grade(s) for which the measure is intended. Criterion-referenced decisions about criterion mastery, non-mastery, risk, and impairment have special requirements for reliability and validity (see Guidelines 10 and 11).

10. At a minimum, a measure must possess adequate reliability as demonstrated by independent research. For tests built using classical test theory, this should include internal consistency and alternate form and/or test-retest reliability data as appropriate for the measure's purpose and intended use. Evidence of alternate-form reliability should be submitted.

For tests developed using item response models, suitable psychometric data from the test development process should be submitted, including, but not limited to, the standard error of measurement, indices of item discrimination and difficulty, and total test information. Classifications resulting from criterion-referenced tests must be shown to be reliable. Instruments that depend on examiner ratings must demonstrate appropriate forms of inter-rater reliability.

11. Decisions based on test results must be supported by validity evidence established by independent research. Evidence of construct, content, criterion validity (concurrent or predictive), and discriminant and convergent validity are appropriate, depending on the purpose and intended uses of the measure. Classifications resulting from criterion-referenced tests must be shown to be valid and must demonstrate both sensitivity and specificity. Submissions should include evidence of internal consistency reliability (e.g., alpha coefficients) and construct/criterion validity (e.g., correlations with measures of similar and/or dissimilar constructs, results of confirmatory factor analyses). Evidence of predictive validity should be submitted for measures that claim to predict future status or the likelihood of subsequent success.
12. Normative and technical data for the instrument must be no more than 15 years old (2001 or later).
13. Instruments that include reliable and valid measures of phonological awareness and single-word decoding will satisfy the commissioner's requirements related to the identification of risk for disability or dyslexia, pending further research and further communication from TEA.
14. Assessments in English and/or Spanish may be submitted for review.

#### Instructions

1. Please complete the form included in this document. Provide written response to all inquiries, and attach any supporting technical evidence using the prompts provided in each section.

#### Figure-Kindergarten Submission Form

2. Email this completed form with all attachments embedded to [core@smu.edu](mailto:core@smu.edu) no later than 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) on Friday, March 17, 2017.
3. Submit three paper copies of the form, including all attachments, to the SMU Center on Research and Evaluation at the address provided in this notice no later than 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) on Friday, March 17, 2017 (submissions must be received at this time).
4. Submit two jump drives, including electronic versions of the submission form and all supporting documentation, to the SMU Center on Research and Evaluation at the address provided in this notice no later than 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) on Friday, March 17, 2017 (submissions must be received at this time).
5. Clearly mark packages with the following: name of submitting agency, date of submission, contact name, contact phone number, and contact email address. A confirmation of receipt of all required materials will be emailed to the contact email address provided.

6. Submissions that do not include all required materials (email of form and attachments, three paper copies of form and attachments, two jump drives with form and attachments, and supporting materials) or submissions that are not received by the deadline will not be reviewed.

Please note that all submissions will be reviewed using the *Guidelines for the Implementation of TEA Criteria for the Evaluation of English and Spanish Kindergarten Assessment Instruments* and responses to the questions provided in the kindergarten submission form. Further, online or electronic tests submitted for evaluation must include online access information (e.g., web address, login, password) and/or an installable copy of the software. At least three (3) paper versions of all submission materials (the submission form) and all supporting attachments must be received by the deadline. Submissions must include the name, direct line phone number, and email address for a primary contact person who can be contacted in the event reviewers need to ask questions or request more information pertaining to the submission. Delays in responding to reviewers' questions may result in an incomplete review; products with incomplete reviews will not be considered for inclusion on the *2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Kindergarten Assessment Instruments*.

Proposals must be submitted to:

SMU Center on Research and Evaluation

Attn: Dylan Farmer

3140 Dyer St # 750511

Dallas, TX 75205

A rolling review will be implemented and instruments will be reviewed in the order they are received. To be considered for inclusion on the *2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Kindergarten Assessment Instruments*, all materials, including paper versions and jump drives, must be received no later than 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) on Friday, March 17, 2017.

Further Information. For clarifying information, contact the TEA Office of Early Childhood Education at (512) 463-8886.

Issued in Austin, Texas, on February 15, 2017.

Cristina De La Fuente-Valadez

Director, Rulemaking

Texas Education Agency

