

Purpose

Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.006(c) requires each school district to administer, at the kindergarten, first and second grade levels, a reading instrument on the list adopted by the commissioner or by the district-level committee.

TEC §28.006(b) requires the commissioner to adopt a list of reading instruments that a school district may use to diagnose student reading development and comprehension. For use in diagnosing the reading development and comprehension of kindergarten students, the commissioner must adopt a multidimensional assessment tool that includes a reading instrument and tests at least three developmental skills, including literacy. Each reading instrument adopted by the commissioner must be based on scientific research concerning reading skills development and reading comprehension.

The goal of the commissioner's list is to ensure districts continue to have access to high-quality, standardized reading instruments aligned to current research on reading skills development and comprehension.

The purpose of this project is to conduct a competitive application process to identify a commissioner-approved alternative kindergarten reading instrument and to identify a list of grade 1 and grade 2 instruments.

No funding is awarded to selected applicants. All guidelines and instructions for selected applicants will be incorporated by reference into the notice of authorization.

Scope of Project

Alternative Kindergarten Reading Instrument

The selection for the alternative kindergarten reading instrument is a competitive authorization process. Only one reading instrument vendor will be selected.

Approved Providers of Reading Instruments for Grades 1 and 2

Reading instruments that meet the criteria outlined in this packet will be included on the commissioner's list of reading instruments available for use in grades 1 and 2.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include reading instrument vendors, or entities able to demonstrate the capacity to offer local educational agencies (LEAs) a commissioner-approved reading instrument that meets the specified criteria.

Overview of the Process for the Competitive Authorization for Kindergarten and Selection of Approved Providers for Grades 1 and 2

The following steps provide a high-level overview of the process for responding to an authorization opportunity, including application submission and selection:

1. TEA publishes the authorization program application and supporting documents on the TEA [program webpage](#).

2. Eligible applicants submit application, and any required attachments to TEA by the specified deadline.
3. Applications reviewed and scored. Note: The highest scoring applicants may be required to attend an oral interview or respond to questions regarding their application.
4. TEA announces selected applicant(s) on the TEA program webpage.
5. TEA staff conducts any negotiations on the application, if applicable.
6. Authorization notice issued.

Project Timeline and Information

All dates except the authorization ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Date	Event
October 25, 2024	Call for submissions posted and application available
November 8, 2024	Notice of Intent to Apply (NOI) due. Failure to notify TEA of the intent to apply will not disqualify the applicant from applying. Submit the NOI through this form.
November 8, 2024	Last date to submit questions to TEA. Submit questions through the ECE Support Portal and select "Call for Submissions".
November 22, 2024	Questions and Answers posted to the program webpage
December 12, 2024	Due date for the application. Application must be received by TEA by 5:00 p.m., Central Standard Time.
March 3, 2025	Applicants are notified of decision and authorization notices are issued
March 14, 2025	Public is informed of selected instruments
July 1, 2025	Beginning date of authorization
August 30, 2028	Ending date of authorization (if selected)

For all dates related to the application, including reporting dates, see the [program webpage](#). If a report due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be due the following business day. All dates except the authorization ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Where to Submit the Application

Submit completed application and supporting documents using the [Submission of Application for K–2 Reading Instruments form](#). The application must be received by TEA by 5:00 p.m., Central Standard Time, December 12, 2024.

Requirements

General Requirements

- All submitted assessments must be considered standardized assessments. This means the instrument measures skills using common sets of questions, tasks, and materials that are administered and scored in a consistent manner.
- Some criteria may be measured through observation, informal assessments, reflection, collection of children's work in portfolios, or checklists. However, these methods may not be the primary means of measuring any specific component.

Instrument Component Requirements

The instrument(s) must be intended for use for:

- **Progress Monitoring (also sometimes referred to as Diagnostic or Benchmark)**
 - Administered with all students at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.
 - Full administration at a specific point in time may be dependent upon performance on a screener (not required).
- **Dyslexia screening (Dyslexia screener required in kindergarten and first grade)**
 - Kindergarten
 - Administered at the end of kindergarten
 - In accordance with the Texas State Board of Education's approved Dyslexia Handbook, both the English and Spanish versions must assess:
 - 1) Letter sound knowledge or Letter Naming Fluency; and
 - 2) Phonological Awareness
 - Must take only a brief time to administer
 - First grade
 - Administered on or before January 31st of the academic year
 - In accordance with the Texas State Board of Education's approved Dyslexia Handbook both the English and Spanish versions must assess:
 - 1) Word Reading Accuracy or Fluency; and
 - 2) Phonological Awareness.
 - Must take only a brief time to administer

Skill Sets Requirements (by grade level):

- Table 1 below lists the skill sets that must be addressed (minimally) in submitted instruments (by grade level).
- The skills assessed should align with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
 - English assessments are expected to align with the TEKS for English Language Arts and Reading.
 - Spanish assessments are expected to align with the TEKS for Spanish Language Arts and Reading.
- The instrument must provide a separate score for each required skill set (minimally). An instrument will only be considered to "assess" a skill set if it provides a separate score for that skill set.
- Instruments may address (but are not required to address) additional Language Arts and Reading domains and skill sets as well as additional subject area skills (e.g., math, science, social-emotional, cognitive, etc.).

Table 1. Required skill sets based on TEKS

Strand	Skill Set	K	1	2
Developing and sustaining foundational language	Phonological awareness	✓	✓	✓
	Phonetic knowledge	✓	✓	✓
	Spelling knowledge	✓	✓	✓
	Print awareness	✓	✓	X

Vocabulary	Vocabulary	✓	✓	✓
Fluency	Accuracy, rate and prosody	✗	✓	✓
Comprehension	Listening	✓	✓	✗
	Reading	✗	✓	✓

Psychometric Requirements

General requirements

- Complete psychometric data must be submitted for all components of the instrument and for both the English and Spanish versions.
- All normative and technical data for the instrument must be no more than 15 years old (2009+).
- All normative and technical data must be representative of the current version of the instrument. For example, if items, stories read or heard, etc. have been modified over the lifespan of the instrument, the required psychometric evidence (below) must be for the current set of items and content, not a previous version of the instrument.
- If the instrument is norm referenced, the norming sample must be a representative sample in terms of the sample size and the student populations represented. Norming samples should be representative of the demographics of the student population in Texas at the grade levels assessed.

Reliability

- An instrument must possess adequate reliability as demonstrated by independent research.
- Reliability should be reported for all test, subtest, domain, etc. scores generated by the instrument.
- Reliability should be reported for student demographic subgroups – preferably by gender, race/ethnicity, emergent bilingual status, and economic strata.
- Reliability data/information should include internal consistency (e.g., alpha coefficients), alternate form reliability (when applicable), and test-retest reliability. Instruments that depend on subjective ratings or observations must demonstrate inter-rater reliability.
- For instruments 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.

Validity

- An instrument must possess adequate validity as demonstrated by independent research.
- Validity should be reported for all test, subtest, domain, etc. scores generated by the assessment.
- The following types of validity evidence should be provided:
 - Content validity
 - For example, alignment of instrument content to grade level TEKS, expert review of alignment etc.
 - Convergent and discriminant validity
 - For example, correlations with measures of similar and/or dissimilar constructs at the same point in time, results of confirmatory factor analysis, etc.
 - Predictive validity

- Evidence of predictive validity should be submitted for measures that claim to predict future status or the likelihood of subsequent success.
- Predictive validity for the following should be reported (if applicable):
 - Evidence that performance on a beginning of year screener is related to future performance on the middle and end of portions of the instrument.
 - Evidence that performance on the beginning and or middle of year portions of the instrument is related to end of year performance.
 - Evidence that performance on the end of year portion of the instrument (minimally) is related to future performance on the Texas STAAR reading assessment.

Classification Accuracy and Consistency

- Classification accuracy (e.g., sensitivity and specificity rates, Receiver Operating Characteristics (ROC) analysis, etc.) and classification consistency data should be presented for **any** classification of a student based on the instrument data (e.g., mastery, non-mastery, at-risk, impairment, assignment to a performance category, etc.). This includes classifications based on screening data as well as classifications made using progress monitoring (e.g., BOY, MOY and EOY) data.
- Ideally, classification accuracy and consistency data would also be reported for different subgroups of students along the following dimensions: gender, race and ethnicity, English learner status, economic status, and special education status.

Test Bias

- Evidence of analyses aimed at identifying bias in items and scores, and efforts to mitigate identified bias should be included for all components of the instrument and include information at the item level, for subtest scores, and overall scores (e.g., DIF analyses, factor analyses, etc.).
- Preferably, bias would be analyzed for different subgroups of students along the following dimensions: gender, race and ethnicity, emergent bilingual status, economic status, and special education status.

Language Requirements

- The instrument must provide both an English and Spanish version of all components.
 - English and Spanish versions of the instrument must assess the skills, unless differentiated based on specific differences outlined in the English and Spanish TEKS.
 - The Spanish version of the instrument must be linguistically authentic (e.g., not simply a translation of the English version)
- The instrument (both the English and Spanish versions) should be reflective of the cultural diversity in Texas.

Administration Requirements

- All components of the instrument must be individually administered.
- All submissions must provide an estimated administration time for each component, as well as for each subtest within each specific component.

- Administration by a classroom teacher must be allowable and feasible. Specifically, the qualifications for those who administer the instrument (as specified in publisher's guidelines) should be within the coursework and/or licenses typically completed by certified teachers in Texas public schools. Administration procedures requiring extensive timing, the establishment of a basal and ceiling, complex judgments, and/or subjective ratings that require the special training of a diagnostician are not considered feasible for teacher administration.

Scoring Requirements

- All submissions must provide an estimated scoring time for each component, as well as an estimated scoring time for each subtest within a component.
- Scoring and interpretation of the instrument by a classroom teacher must be allowable (if not done automatically) and feasible. 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 certified teachers in Texas public schools. Administration procedures requiring extensive timing, the establishment of a basal and ceiling, complex judgments, and/or subjective ratings that require the special training of a diagnostician are not considered feasible for teacher administration.

Reporting Requirements

- Must provide easy to understand, immediate reports of assessment results for educators, administrators, and parents.
- Instrument must allow for the generation of easy to understand parent reports in both English and Spanish.

Accessibility and Accommodation Requirements

- Meets requirements for accessibility as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Data Sharing Requirements

- The following requirements must be met:
 - Campuses must have the ability to upload student demographic information and student assessment data in accordance with the [Texas Student Data System \(TSDS\) data standards](#), specifications, and processes to support integration with state longitudinal data system.
 - To assist TEA with improving teaching and learning, in accordance with the Texas Education Code §7.021(b), approved vendors will be required to develop and implement a process to initiate optional data sharing agreements with participating school systems for the sharing of student-level reading instrument data with TEA. While approved vendors will be required to have this process in place, it is not a critical factor in the vendor evaluation. School system participation is entirely voluntary and has no impact on the vendor's standing or inclusion on the approved list.

Cost Requirements

- Assurance that the instrument will be provided at no cost to LEAs. This includes the scoring, reporting, and initial training for the instrument to ensure LEAs are able to meet statutory requirements at no cost.

Instruments that also have the following are preferred:

- Instrument allows for additional monitoring of students between BOY, MOY and EOY assessment windows (i.e., response to intervention based on identified needs)
- Instructional resources for teachers that are aligned to/support the instrument (e.g., teacher grouping support, instructional activities targeting specific student or student group instructional needs, etc.).
- Instructional resources for families that are aligned to/support the instrument (e.g., family activities aligned to student needs, etc.).
- Ongoing training resources

Rubric

The following criteria will be used to evaluate both the English and Spanish versions of the instruments.

Vendors must submit comprehensive information for each language version, including but not limited to full test content, psychometric data, administration procedures, and reporting capabilities. The Spanish version must demonstrate equivalency to the English version in skills assessment, administration methods, and reporting features. Each language version will be evaluated independently against the following criteria. Incomplete submissions or failure to demonstrate version equivalency will impact evaluation scores.

General Criteria

General criteria are examined and recorded as Yes or No (see Table 1).

Table 1. General Criteria

GENERAL CRITERIA (Yes, No)	K	1	2
Intended for progress monitoring use			
Includes required dyslexia screener			
Offered in English and Spanish			
Administered three times a year (beginning, middle, and end)			
Provides administration time per student for each component of the instrument			
Provides scoring time per student for each component of the instrument			
Individually administered to each student			
English and Spanish versions assess same domains/skill sets			
Normative/technical data no more than 15 years old (i.e., 2009+)			
Technical and normative data provided for both English and Spanish instruments			
Parent reports			
PREFERENCES (Yes, No)	K	1	2
Includes additional monitoring between beginning, middle, and end assessments			
Instructional resources for teachers			
Instructional resources for families			

Content Alignment to TEKS

Each required domain or skill is scored based on the degree to which the instrument addresses the expectations of the TEKS. Required domains and skills are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Content Alignment to TEKS

CONTENT ALIGNMENT TO TEKS			
Score (<i>Addresses key aspects of skill</i>) <i>3 = Strongly; 2 = Moderately; 1 = Minimally; 0 = Does not address</i>			
Skills	K	1	2
Developing and Sustaining Foundational Language			
Phonological awareness	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Phonetic knowledge	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Spelling knowledge	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Print awareness	0 - 3	0 - 3	-----
Vocabulary	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Fluency			
Accuracy	-----	0 - 3	0 - 3
Rate	-----	0 - 3	0 - 3
Prosody	-----	0 - 3	0 - 3
Comprehension			
Listening	0 - 3	0 - 3	-----
Reading	-----	0 - 3	0 - 3
Overall Average Content Score	3	3	3

Psychometrics

Psychometric properties to be reviewed fall into six categories: (1) reliability, (2) validity, (3) classification accuracy and consistency, (4) test bias analysis and mitigation, (5) evidence of sensitivity to growth/improvement, and (6) generalizability. Ratings of psychometrics will focus on the assessment scores relevant to the required domains and skills. Because different assessments create and apply scores in different ways, the exact number of assessment “scores” reviewed for the ratings will differ somewhat across instruments. Because the number of scores may vary across instruments, ratings for specific aspects of reliability and validity will be averaged (separately). Hence, all instruments receive reliability and validity scores on the same scale (0-3).

All ratings for each type of evidence are summed (separately by type) across instrument components and averaged based on the total number of applicable components for each instrument. Resulting average scores for types of evidence are then summed and averaged, resulting in one overall score for each type.

Table 3: Psychometric Features: Reliability, Validity, Classification, Bias, Growth and Generalizability Rubric

PSYCHOMETRIC EVIDENCE			
Score <i>3 = Strong; 2 = Moderate; 1 = Minimal; 0 = No evidence; NA = Not applicable</i>	K	1	2
Reliability (average of reliability components)	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Internal Consistency	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Test-Retest	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3

Inter-rater reliability	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Alternate form	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Validity (average of validity components)	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Construct	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Convergent/Discriminative	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Predictive	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Classification Accuracy and Consistency	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Test Bias Analysis and Mitigation	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Growth and Improvement	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Generalizability (average of generalizability components)	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Sample size	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3
Representativeness	0 - 3	0 - 3	0 - 3

Administrative Feasibility

Feasibility is rated holistically regarding teacher feasibility, student feasibility, and administrator feasibility (see Table 4).

Table 4: Feasibility Scoring Rubric

FEASIBILITY	Score <i>3 = Strong; 2 = Moderate; 1 = Minimal; 0 = No evidence</i>	K, 1, 2
Teacher Friendly	Administration time is manageable, training requirements are minimal, and minimal additional materials are required for administration. Scores and score reports are immediately available, easy to interpret, and reports for parents are easily generated. Aggregated score reports are easily generated (e.g., groups, whole class, skills).	0 - 3
Student Friendly	Time requirement is manageable, directions and tasks are easy to understand. Assessment is visually appealing and engaging.	0 - 3
Administrator Friendly	Administration requirements are minimal. Scoring requires minimal time and easy to interpret. Score reports for parents and aggregated score reports are easily generated.	0 - 3
Overall Average Feasibility Score		3

Overall Instrument Score

An overall score will be calculated for each instrument using the overall scores for different features described above (see Table 5).

Table 5. Total Overall Instrument Score Calculations

OVERALL	Score
Overall Content Alignment to TEKS	0 - 3
Overall Reliability	0 - 3
Overall Validity	0 - 3
Classification	0 - 3
Test Bias	0 - 3
Growth/Improvement	0 - 3

Overall Generalizability	0 - 3
Overall Feasibility	0 - 3
Total Sum	0 - 24
Overall Percent Score (percentage of total possible score)	0 - 100%

Application Assistance

The following types of assistance are available to applicants for this authorization program:

Contact for Clarifying Information

The following TEA staff members should be contacted with questions about the authorization program:

Sylina Valdez
 Director of Early Childhood Programs
 Office of School Programs
sylina.valdez@tea.texas.gov
 Phone: (512) 463-9662

Magali Farooqi
 Early Childhood Assessment Specialist
 Office of School Programs
magali.farooqi@tea.texas.gov
 Phone: (512) 463-9114

Questions and Answers

Questions and Answers for this application will be posted to the [program webpage](#) no later than the date listed on the Authorization Program Timeline. Applicants may submit their questions to the [ECE Support Portal](#) by selecting the “Call for Submissions” topic or by submitting their questions on the [Notice of Intent to Apply](#).

Errata Notices

Any errata notices will be posted to the program webpage.

GovDelivery Email Bulletins

The division of Early Childhood Education publishes a monthly newsletter that often includes important information. To subscribe to the division newsletter, go to the [ECE LISTSERV Registration page](#) and select Early Childhood Education to receive updates by email.