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2020-2021 Move on When Reading Guidance- COVID

Introduction

Plans for the start of the 2020-21 school year in Arizona have adjusted to include remote or hybrid learning opportunities due to COVID-19. Changes to the expectations for Move on When Reading (MOWR) would have to be made at the legislative level, which is not possible at this time. While the requirements for Move on When Reading remain the same for this school year, there is additional information to help guide decisions and allow for flexibility. Executive Order 2020-44 changes the date for the start of in-person instruction and allows for benchmark testing within six weeks of that date. Understanding the laws and Executive Orders currently in place, best practices for thoughtful intervention, and current realities, it is understood that delivery of assessments and requirements of MOWR may not look the same this year, as in previous years. **The MOWR team understands this nuance and is here to guide and support LEAs through the unusual circumstance. We will work with LEAs to make reasonable accommodations during this time. Please reach out at any time for support or clarification.**

In order to provide clarification, the Department of Education has crafted the following guidance to assist and support schools through the 2020-21 school year.

Literacy Plans

Move on When Reading legislation requires school districts to submit a K-3 Literacy Plan by October 1st of each year. In even numbered years, such as the upcoming 2020-2021 school year, only districts and charters with letter grades of C, D, or F are required to submit. With the absence of current district letter grades, **any district/charter with one or more schools with school letter grades of C, D, or F (from the 2018-19 school year) will submit a plan for all schools within the district/charter.** This includes schools/charters without a letter grade as of 2018. Please see the MOWR homepage for a list of districts/charters required to submit. www.azed.gov/mowr/

A literacy plan is the opportunity to share the plans for K-3 literacy initiatives for the coming school year. While this year may have unique challenges, a plan is still necessary and warranted to ensure best practice and compliance of the law. Schools should complete the literacy plan to reflect traditional literacy practices, outside of temporary remote learning. Core programs, intervention and special education programs, assessment information, and literacy block schedules should reflect the typical school and district-wide practices. Understanding that schools may be utilizing different curriculum in the interim and following alternate MTSS schedules, we want to allow for constructive conversations and feedback with and from the Move on When Reading team. Therefore, it is most helpful for the literacy plan to best reflect the practices that would traditionally be in place for a typical school year.

Optional: District LEA Approvers may utilize the notes' section within the aggregate literacy plan to provide additional information regarding alternate practices taking place during current remote learning.



Assessment

Assessment in early literacy is critical to fill identified learning gaps quickly and efficiently. With the changes to the beginning of the 2020-21 school year and the potential need for assessing remotely, there are several considerations in the collection and interpretation of data.

- Student Environment - Students/families may have no or poor internet quality or lack of appropriate device(s) needed. Students may also have distractions during the assessments.
- Administration - Reach out to the vendor for any potential changes in delivery via a remote process. Vendors themselves will have the most current guidance available on the best use of their tool and can help provide specific guidance for any one school's unique challenges. Train staff in changes necessary to provide remote delivery of assessment.
- Data Validity - Many tools used for early literacy screening may not have been validated using remote delivery methods. Additionally, they may not provide as accurate of information due to the change in delivery. Therefore, there is a high likelihood of some impact on the interpretation of results. Consult vendors to discuss any concerns.
- Universal Literacy Screener Selection - Schools are still expected to use 2020-21 to research and select an ADE approved universal literacy and dyslexia screener, which is to be in full implementation for the 2021-2022 school year.

Important: Do not allow current challenges to discourage the use of universal screening and/or progress monitoring altogether. Assessment vendors have teams of experts working to ensure schools can and will successfully implement effective screening and progress monitoring protocols.

Staff Training

When determining who should be delivering a district's chosen universal screener/benchmark, training is critical, since assessment administration will be different in the remote environment. Ensure proper training so assessors are more comfortable using the tools in a modified or online setting. One suggestion is that these assessors could become a cadre of "expert" members (at district or school levels) focused on completing the required assessments. Their specific training and supports should begin with training from vendors of the chosen tool. Vendors should have guidance for delivering their tool remotely in a manner that attempts to retain validity and reliability. Schools should reach out to their literacy assessment vendor to see if they are offering training in using the tool remotely. Training should also consider procedures and requirements for remote and/or in-person administration, including various technology issues that may arise. Additionally, clear procedures should be established to support assessors in the event of student environment issues. Finally, cadre members or other assessors should have protocols in place for communicating with families about remote assessment administration.



Screening Windows

MOWR legislation defines when screening should occur, along with three specific due dates for literacy assessment data submissions. During typical school years, it is recommended that screening occurs within the first four weeks of the start of school. Data submission dates are October 1, February 1, and June 1 of each year. While these dates have not changed, it is understood that with remote learning, the benchmark extension from the executive order, and the challenges managed daily, flexibility is a necessity. Consider the following recommendations:

- Give time and space - While it is best practice to begin screening as soon as possible to begin intervention as needed, situations are different this year. Provide time to build relationships, establish new routines and support social emotional needs.
- Be consistent - Try to complete assessments within a similar window as previous years, as well as similar time lapse between each window to gather consistency in the local data. Typically, any fall, winter, or spring screening window should not exceed three weeks to collect data.
- Reach out - The submission dates have not changed, however, consider the timing needed to complete the assessments based on the information within the Executive Order, best practices, and nuances of remote learning. **Should there be additional concerns or extenuating circumstances, reach out to the MOWR Team (emails below) at the Arizona Department of Education.**

Create a Screening Plan

The best assessment scenario would be in-person testing according to the assessment tool expectations and following specified timeframes. While remote learning is a part of Arizona's back to school plans, it should be every school's goal to support students with their specific needs, based on current data. If remote screening is necessary, consider prioritizing the following:

- Screen students who are *not consistently* well above or well below benchmark, as these students are most likely already receiving additional supports.
 - This would exclude incoming kindergartners who do not have baseline data.
- Seek collaboration from the previous-year's teacher to analyze end of 3rd quarter data.
- Regardless of timelines to complete screeners, begin by focusing on strong Tier I instruction for all students and ongoing formative assessments.
- For students on an IEP, the IEP team should determine the best course of action to monitor progress that is reasonable and meaningful to the specific circumstances of the student. Consult the school's IEP team and/or Exceptional Student Services prior to making any decisions.

Keep in mind, screening is intended to be *brief* and provides an indication of the students predicted to meet the next benchmark.



Progress Monitoring Recommendations

Progress monitoring is an integral part of purposeful intervention and the MOWR Literacy Plan, as it helps define necessary changes in instructional practice. With school starting via remote or blended learning, it will be important to adjust progress monitoring expectations.

- Focus on progress monitoring students below benchmark in-between BOY, MOY, EOY screening/benchmark periods.
- Keep the purpose of progress monitoring to identify when intervention needs to be intensified or adapted.
- For students on an IEP, the IEP team should determine the best course of action to monitor progress that is reasonable and meaningful to the specific goals of the student.

Data Considerations

Data drives appropriate instructional and intervention practice. With the changes to remote learning scenarios, assessment data must continue to be used with the following considerations:

- Screening significantly outside of the normal window may not produce results that are equivalent to screening during the standard window, so use caution when comparing results.
- Validate screening results with other data sources to get a more accurate picture of student performance.
- Be informed and prepared to explain to others why results collected via remote administration must be interpreted with caution.

**Ultimately, data should be collected, however with careful consideration.

More Information

For questions or additional information, please see the MOWR website listed below or reach out directly to Dr. Amy Boza or Sarah Bondy at the Arizona Department of Education. Additional resources to support assessment during remote learning are included below as well.

<https://www.azed.gov/mowr/>

https://intensiveintervention.org/sites/default/files/DataFidelity_Final508.pdf

<https://intensiveintervention.org/resource/FAQ-collecting-progress-monitoring-data-virtually>

ADE would like to thank the Iowa Department of Education for their work on their guidance, which was used as a sample for this document.