

September 1, 2018

Dear K-5 Teachers and Administrators,

This year all students in grades 1-5 will be participating in a district-wide student assessment in the fall, winter, and spring. Kindergarten students will take the assessment during the winter and spring trimesters. The additional assessment students will be taking is the adaptive Star Reading Diagnostic Assessment. The table below outlines what assessments are to be given to students in each grade level.

**Information about the Star Early Literacy and Star Reading Adaptive Assessments**

We have selected the Star Early Literacy and Star Reading assessments in an effort to refine and improve our ongoing assessment of the strengths and needs of each student’s early literacy skills; these are skills vital to their broader ability to access and learn across all subject areas.

A more structured and comprehensive approach to assessing early literacy needs in detail allows us to better customize our classroom instruction to best meet every student’s needs. Classroom teachers will be able to use the information provided in reports as a measure for screening and progress monitoring, which will help to inform day to day instruction. The following table delineates the assessment windows and assessment types we will be using moving forward.

Grade Level	Fall (9/13-10/5)	Winter (1/7-1/18)	Spring (5/28-6/14)
K	<b>Deferred until winter trimester</b>	Early Literacy	Early Literacy
1	Early Literacy	Early Literacy Star Reading (above G only)	Early Literacy Star Reading (above G only)
2	Early Literacy	Star Reading	Star Reading
3-5	Star Reading	Star Reading	Star Reading

We recognize that the addition of these assessments, alongside the critical phonics component we are implementing concurrently, constitute an increase in the number of tools that we are asking you to use to assess these critical early literacy skills. Please know that as we roll out these new assessment elements, which we believe are critical, we are simultaneously exploring what elements of our current literacy and language assessment battery might be reorganized or reduced in the early grades so that a balance between a need for more in-depth student performance data and long-term sustainability for teachers can be achieved. We hope to involve as many of you in that conversation through principals and literacy coaches as the year moves forward.

Star Early Literacy **tracks development in multiple domains for grades TK-1 including:**

- Word Facility and Skills
- Alphabetic Principle
- Concept of Word
- Visual Discrimination
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Structural Analysis
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning
- Sentence-Level Comprehension
- Paragraph-Level Comprehension

Star Reading **also tracks multiple domains for grades 1-5:**

- Word Knowledge and Skills
- Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning
- Analyzing Literary Text
- Understanding Author's Craft
- Analyzing Argument and Evaluating Text

### Key Details

- Principals, Lit Coaches and RTI Teachers will have been trained by the end of August.
- Training for all K-5 Teachers will be given at staff meetings on September 19th.
- Parents/Guardians will receive the attached explanatory letter.
- Data will be used to help inform instruction.
- There will no longer be a requirement to administer the BEAR assessment.

### Administration

- Students use chromebooks to take the test.
- Students will use headphones for the Early Literacy assessment
- The test takes an average of 20 minutes to complete.
- It is recommended that K take the test in a small group setting similar to a guided reading group, 1st could take in a small group setting or as a whole class, 2-5 can be given the assessment as a whole class test.

### Technology

- Headphones will be provide for the Early Literacy test.
- Chromebooks from grades 3-5 will need to be reallocated to K-2 classrooms; this needs to be considered when scheduling class use of technology during the testing window.

More information is also available in the parent guide at <https://tinyurl.com/STAREarlyLiteracy-Reading> and you will be receiving more detailed information from your principal, literacy coach or RTI teacher before the assessment window opens.