VPI News
State-funded Virginia PreK programs, such as Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) sites, are required to screen all children during the fall and spring screening windows. These programs are also required to enter PALS scores online. Please note that while each screening window is four weeks long, teachers are to screen the students in their class in a contiguous two-week period.

Entering Scores Online
Begin at the PALS website (http://pals.virginia.edu) and log in with your name and password. If you do not have a PALS account, please register. Click “Add Child” to list students in your class. Then click “Enter Scores.” Once scores have been entered, the following reports are available immediately: Class Summary, Student Summaries, and Parent Letters.

Forgot your password?
There are two ways to check your password. One way is to use the Password Reminder function under the log in box to have your password emailed to the email address for your account. Another way is to have your Program Director check the Teacher Status report in their PALS account.

What’s the best way to view the PALS website?
The PALS office advises using Mozilla Firefox as the Internet browser when using the PALS website. Other supported browsers are Internet Explorer 7 (PCs only) and Safari 1.2.

PALS Activities!
The PALS website contains many useful resources for teachers. Developmentally appropriate instructional activities are included under the instructional resources tab on the PALS website. Under the activities link, teachers can find PreK lessons that build phonological awareness and literacy skills. The activities link also includes a list of children’s books that can be used when teaching phonological awareness and literacy skills.

Fall 2007 Recommended Screening Window

October 15 – November 9
(or 6 weeks after the start of school)
All scores must be entered into the PALS website by November 21.

Mid-Year 2008 Recommended Screening Window

January 2 – February 1
All scores must be entered into the PALS website by February 15.

Spring 2008 Recommended Screening Window

April 28 – May 23
All scores must be entered into the PALS website by June 6.
Teacher Checklist of Literacy Practices

This checklist presents different activities that help to foster literacy development in preschool-age children. Teachers can use this list to evaluate their own literacy practices by checking each box that applies to their classrooms and looking at unchecked boxes for additional ideas.

Oral Language and Vocabulary — the teacher:
- Chooses a theme to explore and points out vocabulary words and concepts related to that theme throughout each day
- Encourages children to share experiences, describe and plan activities, have longer conversations, and ask questions
- Helps children think and talk about books during shared read alouds. Discusses the structure of the book or story, what the book is about, and/or what happens in it
- Connects books and stories to children's lives
- Supports children in acting out stories

Phonological Awareness — the teacher:
- Displays and recites poems and nursery rhymes
- Provides listening centers for replaying books on tape or children's records
- Gives children a chance to imitate, play with, and manipulate language through poetry, nursery rhymes, and songs
- Encourages children to create and recognize rhyming words
- Teaches children to recognize beginning sounds of words and match those sounds to letters
- Calls attention to rhymes, syllables within words, and beginning sounds during book reading

Print Functions and Units — the teacher:
- Reads aloud every day
- Re-reads the same book aloud several times
- Encourages “pretend reading”
- Displays age-appropriate books where children can easily see and reach them
- Sets up large group, small group, and individual “reading” times throughout the day
- Displays charts, big books, poems, and nursery rhymes in classroom and discusses them during circle time
- Calls attention to features of books (i.e. cover, author's name, title, print directionality)
- Labels items in the classroom, at children's eye level

Writing — the teacher:
- Models writing for a variety of purposes
- Makes paper, writing, and drawing implements available to children
- Praises all children's writing efforts, including scribbling, letter-like forms, or invented spelling
- Teaches children how to form the letters of the alphabet, especially the letters in their own names
- Displays children's written names prominently in the classroom
- Includes literacy activities in play centers, including any of the following:
  - Restaurant play area has notepads so that waiters or waitresses can take orders
  - Doctor's office has prescription pad
  - Housekeeping has scrap paper for writing recipes or grocery lists
  - Post office play area has envelopes and “stamp” stickers
  - School play area has blackboard, books, paper, and writing implements

Knowledge of the Alphabet — the teacher:
- Provides alphabet toys such as magnetic letters, letter cards, or foam letters
- Posts letters of the alphabet on writing tables and on classroom walls at children's eye level
- Directs children's attention to letters of the alphabet and printed words in books and environment
- Provides access to alphabet games
- Teaches the names of the letters and the letter sounds
- Displays alphabet books at children's eye level and within easy reach
- Helps each child learn the letters in his or her name and matches the letters to sounds

General Practices — the teacher:
- Models reading and writing
- Chooses activities appropriate for each child's level of development (i.e. some children are learning how to hold a pencil while others can already practice writing their own names)

Questions?
Website: http://pals.virginia.edu
Email: pals@virginia.edu
Phone: 1-888-UV A-PALS (1-888-882-7257)
Fax: (434) 982-2793

PALS Office
617 West Main St., 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 800785
Charlottesville, VA 22908-8785

CURRY UNIVERSITY VIRGINIA