EIRI FAQs

What is the EIRI?
The Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) was established by Virginia’s General Assembly for the purpose of identifying students in need of early intervention in order to reduce the number of students with persistent reading problems.

What is PALS?
PALS-K (PALS for Kindergarten) and PALS 1-3 (PALS for grades 1-3) are assessments that were developed to screen and identify students in need of additional instruction and to provide teachers with data to inform instruction for all students.

How is PALS given?
Teachers administer PALS to students. Some of the tasks are given in a small group, and some are administered individually. Schools and/or divisions determine specific administration. Schools and/or divisions determine specific administration guidelines.

How many times a year is PALS given?
There are three (3) assessment periods: Fall, Mid-Year, and Spring. Administration frequency is determined by state and division requirements.

Who takes PALS?
Virginia requires that Kindergarten students are administered PALS in Fall and Spring. All First and Second graders are required to take PALS in Spring. First and Second graders who are new to Virginia, and those who received summer intervention, must be screened in Fall.

How is a student “identified” by PALS?
Students who fall below the Summed Score Benchmark (PALS-K) or the Entry Level Summed Score Benchmark (1-3) are identified by PALS.

What does it mean if a student is “identified” by PALS?
Students who are identified by PALS are required to have two and one-half hours of additional literacy instruction per week. This instruction is above and beyond typical classroom instruction and should be provided in a small-group setting of no more than five (5) students.

My student is doing really well now. Can I stop PALS intervention?
No. A student must continue to receive two and one-half hours of additional instruction per week until s/he is assessed by PALS and is “un-identified.”

My student was in all the Mid-Year Ranges. Why is the student still ID’ed?
Mid-Year is not an identification period. Therefore, a student who was ID’d previously will continue to be identified until s/he is “un-identified” in a future Fall or Spring assessment period.

Who should provide reading intervention for an identified student?
Each school/division determines how PALS intervention is implemented and who provides the intervention.
**What do PALS Benchmarks mean?**
Fall and Spring benchmarks exist for each task. If a student meets the benchmark for a task, it means that the student is “minimally competent” in that area, and that if offered excellent classroom instruction, the student should make adequate progress. Meeting particular Benchmarks *does not mean* that teachers do not need to teach components and assess progress.

**How are PALS Fall and Spring Benchmarks different from Mid-Year Ranges?**
Whereas Fall and Spring Benchmarks designate *minimal competency* for particular tasks, Mid-Year Ranges identify the ranges in which students who finish the school year *on grade level* typically score at Mid-Year.

**Can you “pass” PALS?**
No. Students are either identified or not identified by PALS. They do not “pass PALS,” nor do they “fail PALS.”