K–3 News You Can Use

For school year 2020–2021 use **Form B (blue) materials**.
Check your **Home** page, **Recommendations** section for important resources for the Fall.

**Virginia Public Schools/ EIRI Fall Screening Requirements**

All students may be assessed. The following students must be assessed:

- All Kindergartners
- All 1st graders
- All 2nd graders
- 3rd graders who are new to Virginia Public Schools
- 3rd graders who received summer intervention

**Changes to Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Fall Testing Window for Grades K–3** (Superintendent’s Memo #150–20) which explains changes in requirements is on your Home page in the Recommendations section.

**When does the assessment period begin?**

Contact your PALS Division Representative for division-specific requirements.

The fall testing window for the 2020–2021 school year will be extended to allow for greater flexibility. Score entry is available from **Wednesday, July 15, 2020** through **Thursday, November 19, 2020**.

Traditionally, the PALS assessment is administered within a two-week (10-instructional-day) window, within a four-week assessment period, dependent upon your school’s start date. Although optional this fall, you may want to use the assessment calendar as a guide for planning. It is located in the Helpful Links section on the Login Page.

We are here for you and will do our best to offer what information we have, knowing that specifics around the fall testing guidance will continue to evolve. Supportive resources to help guide you in planning for the PALS K–3 testing are available on your Home page in the Recommendations section.

**Who is Identified?**

All students who carry the ID status require 2.5 hours of additional literacy instruction per week, regardless of the lack of Spring screening. Students who fall below the Summed Score Benchmark are Identified for additional instruction. Students will remain Identified until they are unIdentified during a screening window (Fall or Spring). PALS must be given in person in order for a student to be Identified or unIdentified.

**Get Ready for Fall**

- Need to reset your password? Select Set/Reset Password on the Login Page.
- Create class lists:
  - by Student Import: Division administrators upload files,
  - by School Pool: Teachers pull returning students, or
  - by Add or Transfer a Student: Enter STI and birth date for new students
- To inform instruction, consult the new Previous Terms reports to view last year’s Fall and Mid-Year data.
- Consumable materials PDFs are located on the Resources tab, K–3 Fall & Spring Consumables page.
- Before entering scores, update students’ information using Modify Student Information (Assess tab, PreK–3 page). The disability status MUST be entered before assessing; once scores are entered, the disability menu is locked, and you may need to re-enter scores if the status is incorrect.
What’s New?

- **Verification Page:** After clicking on OAW Score Entry or Traditional Score Entry, you will be directed to select: Conventional: All tasks administered in person or Remote / Hybrid: One or more tasks administered remotely. Select an option; click I Accept on the next page; and proceed to enter scores.

- **New Kindergarten Tasks:** Blending and Sound-to-Letter, previously available only on PALS 1–3, are now available for Kindergarten students. These tasks allow you to get additional information on students’ phonological awareness. Although they are optional tasks, the PALS Office recommends them for every Kindergarten student. An introductory letter and administration instructions to add to your PALS binder are available on the Resources tab, Administering PALS page, K–3 Assessment Section. A new Student Summary Sheet is located on the Resources tab, K–3 Fall & Spring Consumables page, K Fall section.

- **Previous Term Reports:** On the Reports tab, in place of Back-to-School reports, we provide snapshots of last year’s Fall and Mid-Year data. Be advised that these scores are at least six months old — these are *not* current data. With Mid-Year Reports, note that there are *no* benchmarks, but rather Mid-Year Ranges. Mid-Year Ranges represent grade-level performance.

**School-Level Reports** (these reports pull ALL of last year’s students and are available even if class lists have not yet been created):

- Grade-Level Summaries (the grade level represents last year’s grade level, e.g., a student in 1st grade last year will be on the 1st grade report)
- Spelling/Phonics
- Alphabet and Letter Sounds (Kindergarten)
- Upper-Case Alphabet (PreK)

**Teacher-Level Reports** (once your class list has been created, Previous Term reports (Fall and Mid-Year) will populate for your newly created class):

- Class Summary (Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd)
- Class Upper-Case Alphabet (Kindergarten)
- Class Alphabet and Letter Sounds (Kindergarten)
- Class Reading Levels (2nd and 3rd grade)
- Class Spelling/Phonics (2nd and 3rd grade)
- Grouping (2nd and 3rd grade)

- **Class Summary: Student ID History Column:** Being below the Summed Score Benchmark even once indicates an elevated risk for reading difficulties, so the Class Summary report now displays a student’s ID History. This number represents the number of times a student has fallen below the Summed Score Benchmark relative to the total number of times a student has been screened (Fall and/or Spring). For example, 2/4 means that the student fell below the Summed Score Benchmark in 2 out of 4 screening periods. Mid-Year assessments are not included in this tally because students are not ID’d or un-ID’d at Mid-Year.

- **Student History Icons in Class List:**
  - Orange circle: This student has been previously Identified, but is *not currently* Identified.
  - Dashes (--): This student has never been screened in Fall or Spring.

- **Concept of Word (COW) Tasks:** These tasks are *not required* per the VDOE memo. Please check with your Division Representative to find out your division’s plan for assessment. If you are not giving COW, you may put in zeros to get the completed checkmark and hat & wand (OAW), or full pencil (Traditional).

- **Renamed Reports:** We renamed a number of reports to better reflect their contents.

- **Professional Learning Tab:** Assessment Videos, Webinars, Certification Tutorials, and Modules are now all in one place! Check out the new tab in the blue bar at the top of each PALS page.

- **Two New Professional Learning Modules:**
  1) **Putting PALS in a Developmental Context** is a module designed to contextualize PALS in a broader developmental context for deeper understanding.
  2) **Using PALS Data More Fully Across the Year** is a module designed for on-site coaches or instructional leaders to support K–2 teachers in utilizing their PALS data to inform instructional decisions across the school year.

- **My Account Tab:** This tab used to be called the Manage tab. From the My Profile page you can update/confirm your account information. From the My Classes page you can add or remove classes from your account.

- **Spring Data Reports:** Any reports that require last year’s Spring data (e.g., Cohort reports) will *not* populate, as there are no Spring PALS data due to school closures.
Assessment Reminders

- We recommend that teachers administer the assessment, as testing behaviors provide valuable instructional information.
- Meeting the *Summed Score Benchmark* does not imply a student is on grade level. Rather, being below the *Summed Score Benchmark* indicates a significant level of risk for reading difficulties. Closely monitor students who are on or just above the *Summed Score Benchmark* and those who do not meet task benchmarks. The new ID History column on the *Class Summary* will assist in noting which students have been previously identified.
- If an asterisk appears next to a student’s IORL, it indicates that the reading rate falls within the bottom 10th percentile of readers who are instructional at that level. Consider dropping down a passage level to get more information.
- Particular tasks are required to find your students’ instructional oral reading level. In some cases, this means reading more than one passage. Familiarize yourself with thresholds and requirements (*PALS* binder, pages 2.9 and 2.10). The *OAW* will highlight the particular requirements.
- Consider administering more than just the required tasks to better inform your instruction and to illustrate student growth over the year. For example, give additional wordlists, passages, or level B or C tasks. We recommend giving all Kindergartners and 1st graders *Blending* and *Sound-to-Letter*. Additionally, we recommend giving all 1st graders *Alphabet Recognition*.
- Using the *Electronic-Word Recognition in Isolation (E-WRI)* feature standardizes the administration of the task and provides more reliable results.
- Do NOT pre-teach the word lists! Pre-teaching invalidates the results of the task.
- If teaching the COW rhyme, do NOT expose students to the text. Use the pictures provided to teach the rhyme. The only time students see the written rhyme is once the assessment has begun.
- Plan instruction before the Fall assessment window (K teachers) and between windows (K–3) by administering *PALS Quick Checks*! For information on this valuable resource, select the *Resources* tab, *Quick Checks Materials* page. To enter *Quick Check* scores, select the *Assess* tab, *Quick Checks* page. To view *Quick Check* reports and progress, select the *Reports* tab, *Quick Checks* section. *Quick Checks* are designed to be given at least two weeks apart.

**Welcome back! We are here for you.**