

Universal Reading Screener Matrix for K-3

Optional Matrix and Guidance

Overview

As part of the *Literacy Success Act* (T.C.A. § 49-1-901 through T.C.A. § 49-1-909), districts are required to administer a universal reading screener annually to all students in kindergarten through third grade (K-3) during each of the three administration windows established by the Tennessee Department of Education (the department). Districts may choose the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (TN-URS) or another universal reading screener approved by the State Board of Education. In addition, districts must report to the department the data from the universal reading screener following each administration window.

In response to district feedback and engagement, as well as a review of all relevant laws and policies, the department is providing updated guidance and additional flexibility for districts related to the TN-URS¹ and dyslexia screening.

As noted in the department's Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) framework [manual](#), **all** children must participate in a universal screening process to identify those students who may need additional support and/or other types of instruction. Furthermore, the department's [Dyslexia Resource Guide](#), developed in compliance with the Tennessee Dyslexia Law (T.C.A. § 49-1-229), establishes procedures for screening for characteristics of dyslexia in connection with the universal screening process. This guidance states that students identified as "at risk" based on the universal screening process should be administered survey-level and/or diagnostic assessments to determine student intervention needs, and notes that in compliance with the Tennessee Dyslexia Law, these survey-level assessments for reading must explicitly measure characteristics of dyslexia.

The **Tennessee Literacy Success Act** also notes that districts **may** use the TN-URS or another approved screener to comply with the dyslexia screening requirements established in the Tennessee Dyslexia Law (T.C.A. § 49-1-229). Districts may also use other dyslexia screening procedures that comply with the requirements outlined in the department's [Dyslexia Resource Guide](#).

In order to provide districts with the additional flexibility afforded through existing guidance and law, the department is providing an alternate matrix for the TN-URS that allows districts to use additional district selected survey-level assessments or diagnostics for "at risk" students (or students for whom a request for this assessment has been made) for additional characteristics of dyslexia, as described in the [Dyslexia Resource Guide](#). Districts may continue to use the more comprehensive matrix, or they may opt to use this revised matrix, which still meets the minimum requirements in guidance and law related to universal reading screeners.

[Comprehensive URS Matrix \(original\)](#)
[Minimum Requirements URS Matrix \(new\)](#)

Please contact Jennifer.Jordan@tn.gov with questions related to this guidance.

¹ Please note that this guidance and the matrices included here are specific to universal screeners for reading. See the [RTI² framework](#) for universal screening guidelines related to mathematics and written expression.