

# Universal Reading Screener Guidance

## Alternate Growth Score

### Introduction

The Tennessee Literacy Success Act requires all school districts to screen each student in grades kindergarten through grade 3 three times a year. See T.C.A. § 49-1-905(c)(1). The screener data will help educators and the department better understand how students are learning to read across the state and help all stakeholders provide targeted supports to increase reading skills across Tennessee. Further, the law also allows school districts to use the results of the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (TN-URS) or another universal reading screener, approved by the State Board of Education, as an approved alternative growth measure for pre-kindergarten (pre-k) through grade 2 teachers. See State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-03-.15(5)(c).

On July 23rd, 2021, the State Board of Education approved seven universal reading screeners eligible for alternative growth measures (AGM). These approved screeners include **Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus), DIBELS, 8th Edition, easyCBM, FastBridge/FAST Suite, i-Ready + i-Ready Early Reading Tasks, Measures of Academic Progress Suite (MAP), and STAR Assessment Suite**. In pre-kindergarten, only TN-URS, FastBridge/FAST Suite, or STAR Assessment Suite may be utilized. Districts must identify any changes to the the TN-URS or a State Board of Education-approved screener for AGM that they plan to implement no later than July 1.

When evaluating screener data for growth measures, districts must take a different approach because screeners are normative assessments, not criterion referenced assessments such as the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program. NOTE: For a screener to produce a growth score, the data set must include point A and point B data from at least six (6) students to generate a score.

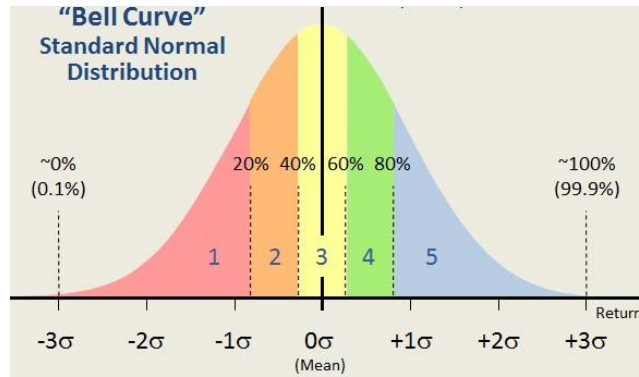
### Normative Assessments, Criterion Referenced Assessments, and Student Growth Portfolios

#### Normative Assessments

The Tennessee Universal Reading Screener and the six other universal reading screeners approved by the State Board of Education are nationally normed assessments. National normed assessments or normative assessments compare individual student performance to the performance of same-grade level peers. These normative assessments are designed to highlight differences in student performance on skills-based assessments. They are not designed to assess mastery of standards. Students do not pass or fail normative assessments. They receive a score that compares them to other students who have also taken the assessment. If a student scores at the 50th percentile on a normative assessment, that means the student has scored as well as or better than 50 percent of other test takers.

Normative assessments are designed to rank students along a normative curve. The visual below represents the score distributions occurring along the normative curve. Two characteristics of the normative curve distribution are the mean and standard deviation. The mean is the arithmetic average of the scores and provides a representative score for the entire group. Standard deviation is the average number of points between all the scores and the average score. It tells how far off students' scores are from the average

score. It shows the diversity of the group of students that tested. A low standard deviation means that students' scores are closely aligned. A high standard deviation means a greater diversity of students' scores. The normative curve distribution allows for students to move up or down the curve based on individual performance on the universal screener over time.



\*σ – standard deviation

### ***Student Growth Portfolios***

Student growth portfolios may be used to generate a growth score for pre-k through grade 2 teachers. Portfolios are a streamlined approach to standards selection focused on skills-based mastery. There is a clear alignment between grade level standards and student expectations and an increased focus on foundational reading skills. Portfolios have embedded tasks provided to give clear expectations of student performance of the standard.

### ***Criterion Referenced Assessments***

Criterion referenced assessments, such as the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program, are designed to assess what a student has mastered against a set of grade level standards. Criterion referenced assessments do not compare students, they evaluate a student's knowledge against a set of criteria. It measures what students know or do not know at the time of assessment. Most criterion referenced tests have a cut score. If a student scores higher than the cut score, the student meets or exceeds expectations, if a student scores below the cut score the student does not meet expectations.

### ***Selection of Teacher Effectiveness Measure***

Normative assessments, criterion referenced assessments, and student growth portfolios are three types of assessments that may be used to generate the student growth measure component of a teacher's level of overall effectiveness (LOE) score. They represent distinct types of assessment data. Teachers in non-tested grades may access a student growth portfolio or an alternative growth measure, such as the TN-URS or an approved alternative growth model, to represent their individual impact on academic growth.

### ***Student Growth Calculations and Universal Reading Screeners***

Normative assessments allow educators to determine how students are progressing throughout the year using standardized growth calculations. There are different types of standardized growth calculations used

depending upon the universal reading screener used. Student growth calculations such as student growth percentiles (SGP), risk factors, and annual growth scores all describe a student’s growth compared to another student with the same initial test score. The student growth calculation allows for the comparison of students at different performance levels. They are used to make student growth comparisons equitable by comparing the growth of students who begin in academically similar places. Student growth calculations are important because they allow educators to know if students are growing compared to their academic peers. All the models used by each of the screeners provide educators with the information needed to determine how students are progressing on the foundational literacy skills measured.

Educators should note, growth for each student will be different depending on students’ initial composite score. Students with a low composite score can show high growth and a student with a high composite score can demonstrate low growth. Likewise, students with different scale scores can have similar growth scores over the year. Every State Board of Education-approved universal reading screener will provide growth calculation norms specific to their screener. Here are descriptions of different types of standardized growth calculations referenced above:

- **SGPs** describe a student’s growth compared to other students with similar prior test scores. A SGP is a number between 1 and 99. If a student has a SGP of 88, we can say that the student shows more growth than 88 percent of this student’s academic peers.
- **Risk factors** describe a student’s growth based on an initial risk rating relative to national percentile cut scores determined by an algorithm using a composite of multiple measures. A student’s annual growth is documented by evaluating the change in risk factors over the year. Risk factors indicate the likelihood the student will meet yearly expectations.
- **Annual growth scores** show whether students are on track for their target growth projections by comparing initial performance with projected, differentiated growth-to-growth targets based on percentile scores.

Individual teacher growth scores will be determined by the same rounding rules as those applied to TVAAS (Tennessee Value Added Assessment System) single year growth scores:

Growth Score	Growth Score Range
1	0-1.44
2	1.45-2.44
3	2.45-3.44
4	3.45-4.44
5	4.45-5.00

- I. The **TN-URS, STAR, DIBELS, 8th edition, Fastbridge/FAST Suite, and MAP** universal reading screeners provide standardized student growth calculations that can be scaled to determine a **SGP**. For these screeners, SGPs will be provided for each student using the composite score reported during the Fall and Spring universal reading screening administrations. The approved screeners listed above generate an SGP report for individual teachers to track their students to ensure they are growing at expected rates based on the composite score from the initial screener. SGPs can be used as evidence that students are making adequate progress. Teachers can use this information to make instructional decisions to support student academic progress.

Please see the scales associated with each screener below:

**PreK – Grade 2 Generation of Alternate Growth Score Using TN-URS**

Level of Impact	Instructional Impact	SGP*	Class (20 students)	Calculation*
1	Least Effective	5-15	4	$1 \times 4 = 4$
2	Approaching Average Effectiveness	25-35	3	$3 \times 2 = 6$
3	Average Effectiveness	45-55	8	$3 \times 8 = 24$
4	Above Average Effectiveness	65-75	3	$4 \times 3 = 12$
5	Most Effective	85-95	2	$5 \times 2 = 10$
				$= 56$
				$56 \div 20 = 2.8$

\*ROI growth rates are converted to SGPs, which are reported at 10 levels ranging from 5 to 95. That is, the distribution of ROIs is parsed into ten levels with 10% of the national norm sample at each level. This results in ten SGPs that are reported as 5, 15, 25, 35, 45, 55, 65, 75, 85, and 95. The reported SGP corresponds to the midpoint in the range. For example, an SGP of 15 is the mid-point of the second decile, which ranges from 11 to 20. See the [aimswebPlus SGP Guide](#) for more information.

**PreK – Grade 2 Generation of Alternate Growth Score Using STAR Assessment Suite**

Level of Impact	Instructional Impact	SGP	Class (20 students)	Calculation
1	Least Effective	1-20	4	$1 \times 4 = 4$
2	Approaching Average Effectiveness	21-40	3	$2 \times 3 = 6$

3	Average Effectiveness	41-60	8	$3 \times 8 = 24$
4	Above Average Effectiveness	61-80	3	$4 \times 3 = 12$
5	Most Effective	81-99	2	$5 \times 2 = 10$
				$= 56$
				$56 \div 20 = 2.8$

**Kindergarten – Grade 2 Generation of Alternate Growth Score Using DIBELS, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition**

Level of Impact	Instructional Impact	Growth Percentile	Class (20 students)	Calculation
1	Least Effective	0-19%ile	4	$1 \times 4 = 4$
2	Approaching Average Effectiveness	20-39%ile	3	$2 \times 3 = 6$
3	Average Effectiveness	40-59%ile	8	$3 \times 8 = 24$
4	Above Average Effectiveness	60-79%ile	3	$4 \times 3 = 12$
5	Most Effective	80-99%ile	2	$5 \times 2 = 10$
				$= 56$
				$56 \div 20 = 2.8$

**PreK – Grade 2 Generation of Alternate Growth Score Using FastBridge Suite/FAST**

Level of Impact	Instructional Impact	SGP	Class (20 students)	Calculation
1	Least Effective	1-10	4	$1 \times 4 = 4$

2	Approaching Average Effectiveness	11-24	3	$2 \times 3 = 6$
3	Average Effectiveness	25-75	8	$3 \times 8 = 24$
4	Above Average Effectiveness	76-89	3	$4 \times 3 = 12$
5	Most Effective	90-99	2	$5 \times 2 = 10$
				$= 56$
				$56 \div 20 = 2.8$

**Kindergarten – Grade 2 Generation of Alternate Growth Score Using MAP**

Level of Impact	Instructional Impact	Conditional Growth Percentile	Class (20 students)	Calculation
1	Least Effective	0-19%ile	4	$1 \times 4 = 4$
2	Approaching Average Effectiveness	20-39%ile	3	$2 \times 3 = 6$
3	Average Effectiveness	40-59%ile	8	$3 \times 8 = 24$
4	Above Average Effectiveness	60-79%ile	3	$4 \times 3 = 12$
5	Most Effective	80-99%ile	2	$5 \times 2 = 10$
				$= 56$
				$56 \div 20 = 2.8$

- II. Additionally, **i-Ready** uses a Student Growth Model to provide differentiated growth expectations to measure students' **Typical Growth** over the year. Typical Growth indicates how much students are growing compared to an average student nationally.

**Kindergarten – Grade 2 Generation of Alternate Growth Score Using i-Ready**

Level of Impact	Instructional Impact	Percentage Toward Typical Growth Goal	Class (20 Students)	Calculation
1	Least Effective	Less than 60%	4	$1 \times 4 = 4$
2	Approaching Average Effectiveness	At least 60%, but less than 90%	3	$2 \times 3 = 6$
3	Average Effectiveness	At least 90%, but less than 130%	8	$3 \times 8 = 24$
4	Above Average Effectiveness	At least 130%, but less than 160%	3	$4 \times 3 = 12$
5	Most Effective	At least 160% or greater	2	$5 \times 2 = 10$
				$= 56$
				$56 \div 20 = 2.8$

III. Finally, **easyCBM** uses a Risk Factor Analysis Growth model to document student growth throughout the year. Risk Factor Analysis indicates if student’s growth is at expected levels relative to changes in risk factor during the year based on national percentile cut scores.

**Kindergarten – Grade 2 Generation of Alternate Growth Score Using easyCBM**

Level of Impact	Instructional Impact	Risk Factor	Class (20 students)	Calculation
1	Least Effective	↓ 2	4	$1 \times 4 = 4$

2	Approaching Average Effectiveness	↓ <sub>1</sub>	3	2 x 3 = 6
3	Average Effectiveness	Expected Growth	8	3 X 8 = 24
4	Above Average Effectiveness	↑ <sub>1</sub>	3	4 X 3 = 12
5	Most Effective	↑ <sub>2</sub>	2	5 X 2 = 10
				= 56
				56 ÷ 20 = 2.8

**URS Growth Score Generation**

Educator LOE scores for teachers of record as identified in EIS by ELA/homeroom assignment in implementing districts and selected grades will be based on TN-URS data. In the absence of URS data, no growth score will be calculated. In this case, there will be no LOE score generated.

Teachers of record who do not meet n-count will revert to non-tested teachers.

Educators in implementing districts and selected grades rostered as ELA teachers in EIS will receive individual growth scores based on data from the selected Alternative Growth Measure-Universal Reading Screener (AGM-URS). In the absence of this data, no growth score can be calculated, and the educator will receive an incomplete. With an incomplete growth score, no LOE score will be generated.

Rostered teachers not meeting n-count will have LOEs generated as non-tested teachers using a school composite TVAAS score.