Louisiana Believes

PreK-Third Grade Guidebook for Site and System Leaders

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Session Objectives

As a result of this presentation, site and system leaders will **use the Guidebook to**:

- Discuss qualities of a successful PreK-3 system.
- Self-assess current strengths and weaknesses in implementing high-quality curriculum and assessments and develop key actions to improve the use of each.

Opening Activity

What do successful PreK-3 systems look like?

Discuss this question with a neighbor and jot down some characteristics of effective PreK-3 systems.

Case for Action

- The years between pre-kindergarten and third grade are vital for creating the foundation for later school success.

- The skills our children develop in one grade must be built upon and reinforced in later grades.

- Despite efforts to close the achievement gap early, disparities in learning exist even in PreK and continue grow larger throughout early elementary school.

- In fact, recent results for LEAP show fewer than 50% of third graders achieve mastery in reading or math.

- This picture is even more troubling for our most vulnerable youth.

PreK Through Third Grade ELA and Math Skills Progression

Area	PreK	Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade
ELA Examples					
Language	Uses frequently occurring nouns	Uses frequently occurring verbs	Uses frequently occurring adjectives	Uses frequently occurring adverbs	Uses subordinating conjunctions
Writing About Texts	Names topic or book	Describes a single event	Describes two sequenced events	Recounts well elaborated events	Develops descriptive event sequences
Phonemic Awareness	Identifies initial sounds	Segments sounds in CVC words	Segments sounds in one syllable words	Segment sounds in multisyllabic words	Word analysis
Phonics	Recognizes written name	Knows sound/letter correspondence	Decodes regularly spelled words	Decodes two-syllable words	Applies grade-level phonics/word analysis
Fluency	Pretend reads	Reads emergent-reader texts	Reads grade-level texts fluently	Reads grade-level texts fluently	Reads grade-level texts fluently
Comprehension	Identifies main topic of a text	Retells key details of a text	Connects two details in a text	Identifies main topic of a text	Describes main idea of a text
Math Examples					
Numbers/ Operations	Adds and subtracts up to 5 objects	Adds/subtracts numbers within 10	Adds and subtracts numbers within 20	Adds/subtracts numbers within 100	Use multiplication and division within 100
Measurement	Measures an object using cubes	Compares lengths of two similar objects	Order three objects by length	Estimates lengths using standard units	Measures liquid volume and masses using standard units

Challenges

Though school districts across Louisiana are working hard on many fronts to improve the quality of education in PreK-3, **challenges remain**. These include:

- misaligned curriculum programs or ineffective implementation of quality programs;

- disconnected assessment methods (e.g., screening and progress monitoring);

- conflicting goals and priorities for professional development;

- inconsistent use of teacher observation systems; and

- lack of family engagement and awareness of support services available for children and families.

Vision

To eliminate these barriers, **we need to build a seamless support system for early learning -- one that prepares all of our children to achieve mastery in reading and math in third grade and beyond.**

Achieving this vision will require implementers at all levels -- from site and system leaders to classroom teachers -- to embrace policies and practices that support a consistent approach to children's education beginning in PreK.

Five Strategies to Create Successful PreK-3 Systems Aligned with LDOE's Academic Strategy

Research identifies five strategies that have been and continue to be critical to alignment efforts in effective PreK-3 system. Successful systems:

1. implement high-quality curricula;

2. use meaningful assessment methods, including early and accurate identification;

3. create shared, curriculum and content specific professional development between PreK and K-3 teachers;

4. use teacher observation systems effectively; and

5. provide positive support systems for children and families.

STRATEGY 1: IMPLEMENT HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULA

In Louisiana, high-quality curricula:

- fully align with state standards for early learning, ELA, and math;
- cover the learning domains that it proposes to cover in a sequenced, progressive manner;
- use a combination of child-focused and teacher-directed strategies, including whole group, small group, and centers;
- include highly interactive, developmentally appropriate learning experiences;
- provide guidelines on how to adapt activities to meet different levels of need;
- include ongoing assessment to monitor children's progress and inform future learning activities; and
- provide materials for families to support their children's learning.

STRATEGY 1: IMPLEMENT HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULA

Self-Assessment

1. Which level on the [Curriculum Implementation Scale](#) best reflects the site's current status for each age/grade span and content area?

STRATEGY	KEY ACTIION
STRATEGY 1: IMPLEMENT HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULA	

STRATEGY 2: USE MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT METHODS, INCLUDING EARLY AND ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION

A comprehensive assessment plan for young children has three main purposes:
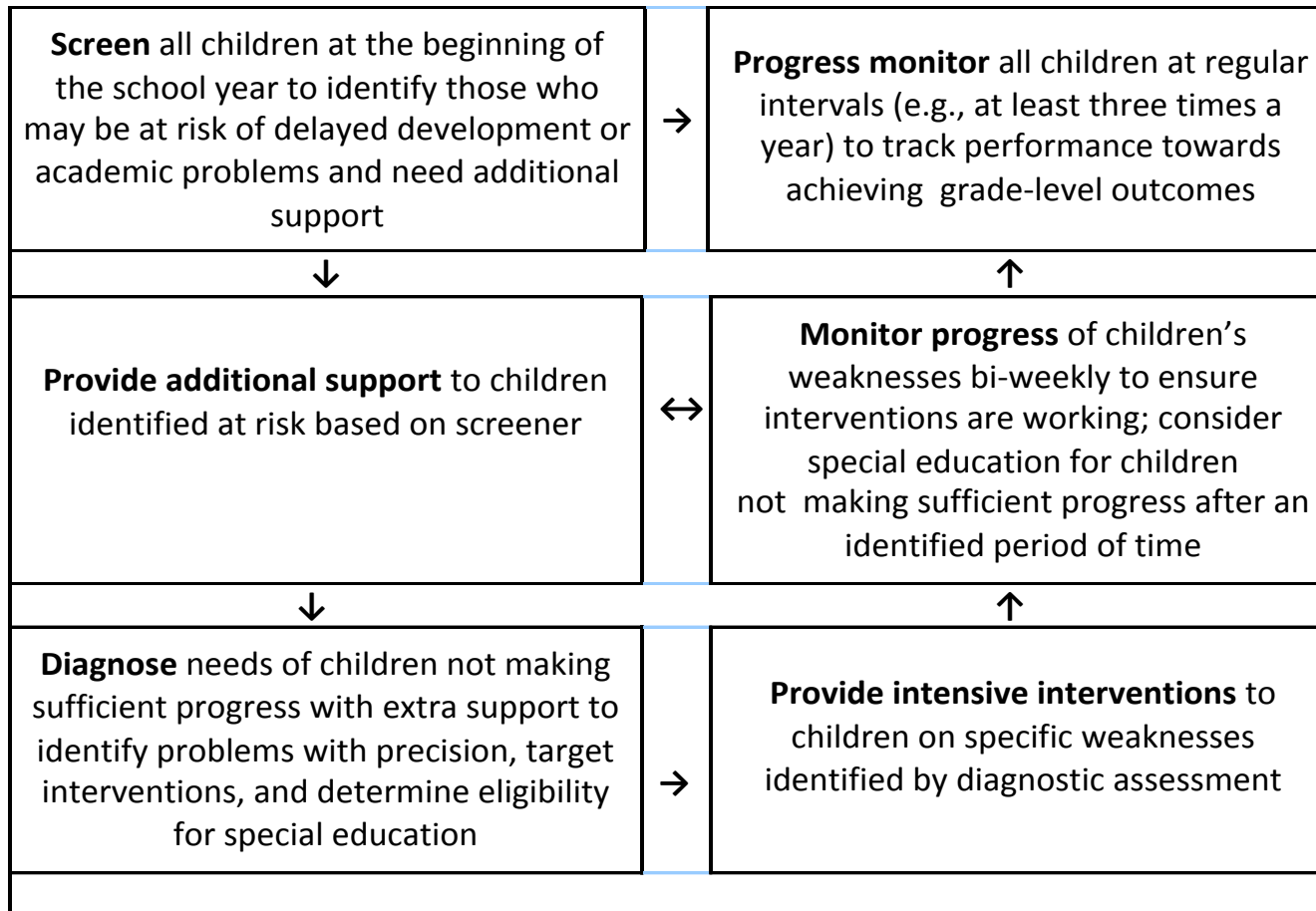
- to **screen** children at the beginning of the year to identify those who may be at risk for delayed development or academic failure and need additional support or intervention to achieve age- or grade-level standards by the end of the year;

- to **diagnose** the specific needs of at-risk children that will be helpful in providing additional instruction or services to meet their most critical learning needs; and

- to **progress monitor** children during the year to determine whether they are making adequate progress and to identify those who may be falling behind.

STRATEGY 2: USE MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT METHODS, INCLUDING EARLY AND ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION

When looking across the spectrum of measures designed to examine what young children know and/or can do, two types of methods surface: **direct assessment and observation-based assessment.**

- Direct assessments are formal measures that are typically standardized.
- Observation-based assessments are informal approaches in which teachers observe children on a daily basis.
- The younger the child, the more appropriate it is to use observation.

STRATEGY 2: USE MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT METHODS, INCLUDING EARLY AND ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION

Screen all children at the beginning of the school year to identify those who may be at risk of delayed development or academic problems and need additional support	→	**Progress monitor** all children at regular intervals (e.g., at least three times a year) to track performance towards achieving grade-level outcomes
↓		↑
Provide additional support to children identified at risk based on screener	↔	**Monitor progress** of children's weaknesses bi-weekly to ensure interventions are working; consider special education for children not making sufficient progress after an identified period of time
↓		↑
Diagnose needs of children not making sufficient progress with extra support to identify problems with precision, target interventions, and determine eligibility for special education	→	**Provide intensive interventions** to children on specific weaknesses identified by diagnostic assessment

STRATEGY 2: USE MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT METHODS, INCLUDING EARLY AND ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION

Self-Assessment

1. Are there multiple assessments that give the same information? Which ones could be eliminated?

STRATEGY	KEY ACTIION
STRATEGY 2: USE MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT METHODS, INCLUDING EARLY AND ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION	

Next Steps

STEP	DATE
1. Share Guidebook and new learnings with key staff (e.g., lead teachers).	By December 1
2. Begin to implement Curriculum and Assessment key action(s) you identified in the session. Involve key staff.	Monthly (e.g., Jan. 15, Feb. 15)
3. Monitor progress of key actions.	Monthly (e.g., Jan. 15, Feb. 15)
4. Contact jill.slack@la.gov or ivy.starns@la.gov with questions or for additional support.	Ongoing