

Louisiana Believes

LEAD K Task Force
December 2018



Discussion of Louisiana Language Milestones

Task Force Objective

Per Act 455 (2018) the task force is charged identifying milestones for children who are deaf or hard of hearing by consulting with professionals trained in the language development and education of such children. The milestones shall be all of the following:

- a.) a resource for use by parents and educators to monitor and track such children's expressive and receptive language acquisition
- b.) able to be used to ensure that such children meet developmental milestones towards English literacy.
- c.) Evaluated by the use of existing formalized, evidence-based assessment.

Milestones for Consideration

During the September and November 2018 meetings the LEAD K task force discussed using the California Language Milestones as a framework for the Louisiana Language Milestones. Members were asked to use the month of October to review the California document and provide specific feedback on how the California Milestones could inform the development of the Louisiana Milestones in advance of the November 2018 meeting. Key considerations included:

- The importance of explaining that the milestones are not meant to replace formal assessment of a child's development of language and literacy and may produce different results than the formal assessment conducted as part of the IEP or IFSP process.
- Highlighting that the observations of progress towards milestones are important and should be considered in the IEP or IFSP planning process.
- Using the following age groupings for milestones: 0-3 months, 4-6 months, 6-9 months, 9-12 months, one year- 18 months, 18 months -2 years, two- three years, three-four years, and four-five years.
- Providing comprehensive milestones prior to age one and milestones for expressive and receptive language beginning at age one

Milestones for Consideration

Recommendation: The task force should review the proposed Louisiana Milestones document and determine any final revisions to be included in the report to the Legislature.



Additional Tools for Assessing Language Milestones

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Key Decision:

Determine additional assessments/tools to be recommended in the Task Force report.

Recommendation: The taskforce should review the following points raised in the survey process and make a final determination about what additional tools will be reflected in the report to the Legislature.

The Kansas LEAD K Report is a published document with assessment tools and recommendations included. It has been suggested that *Assessments portion* of that report be included in our report as an additional tool/resource

The 2015 assessment document sent out via Google Forms was also suggested and reviewed. There is concern that this document is not balanced. The author of this document did not intend for it to be included in national LEAD K resources so perhaps we should not consider it for our purposes.

A general statement should be added that allows a provider to use a tool based on clinical opinion/professional judgment—something like:

“The LEAD-K task force acknowledges that there may be additional appropriate assessment resources for young children who are deaf/hard of hearing. The task force relies on the expertise of the professional workforce to select the most appropriate tool for children that respects individual abilities and differences and relies on the shared experience between families and professionals and are developmentally appropriate. In addition, selected assessments should not penalize children for physical, sensory, or cultural differences and should accommodate individual strengths, preferences, abilities, and visual, auditory, and kinesthetic needs.”

--taken from the DEC/NAEYC joint position paper on curriculum, assessment and program evaluation, 2007.



Structure for Reporting Outcomes of Progress Towards Language Milestones

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Key Decision: Determine how often the tools should be used to assess the progress of students aged birth to five.

Survey Outcome:

- 5 out of 5 agreed with assessments being conducted and results reported every 6 months

Recommendation: The taskforce should recommend that progress towards language milestones of children who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing ages birth to five are assessed every six months using the SKi Hi tool.

Structure for Reporting Outcomes of Progress Towards Language Milestones

Key Decision: Identify procedures and methods for reporting language acquisition progress of children who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing to parents, teachers, and other professionals involved in the early intervention and education.

Survey Considerations:

Several possible agencies could be used to report and track these results. The LEA, Early Steps, and EHDI are the ones who I initially think could be the ones to report these test results to. EHDI seems to be the one who has records of all children identified along with the capability of tracking these scores from birth-5 years.

Clear identified procedures and methods should be identified for use by all professionals involved in early intervention and education. We need to be able to compare all students' language acquisition to each other using a defined tool.

Recommendation: The taskforce should identify the agency most appropriate for collecting, monitoring and sharing this information and make that recommendation in the report to the Legislature.



Additional State and Local Policies

LEAD K Task Force Schedule and Accommodations

LEAD K Task Force meetings will take place on the Louisiana School for the Deaf Campus from 9:30-12:30 on the dates listed below. Four sign language interpreters will be present at all meetings. Any additional accommodations needed by task force members must be submitted at least two weeks prior to each meeting.

Date
August 27, 2018
September 17, 2018
November 5, 2018
December 3, 2018
January 17, 2019